

Bloom Where You Are Planted: Place Identity Construction of
Third Culture Kids

by

Anastasia Aldelina Lijadi

Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology

2015



Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Macau

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Abstract

A place called home possesses emotional implications, provides some degree of stability and serves as a reference for past action, memories and meaning. Home for most people is their place identity that provides a critical locale and antecedent for continuity in the face of change. Third Culture Kids (TCK) experiences numerous life disruptions moving between countries and continents following their parents during their developmental years. Their high mobility lifestyle affects the negotiation and maintenance of a coherent sense of self (identity) in relation to a place called home due to movement between different parts of the world and across multiple cultures. The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how TCK construct meaning of their high mobility lifestyle and how their sense of place influenced their identity construction. Using qualitative inquiry, the research was divided into two studies: Study 1 used a semi-structured interview approach that employed the Collage Life Story Elicitation Technique to obtain life stories of 27 TCK (aged 7-17 years); Study 2 involved an asynchronous Facebook online focus group with 33 adult TCK participants (aged 19 and above). The findings indicate that a place called home manifest itself in different ways across the cohorts. All cohorts claim home is family, familiar traditions and rituals, the places from where the family came, and all places where they have lived. TCK in pre-adolescence and older claim that in a place called home they need to expand their social network and continue to learn and deal with their losses. Adolescent TCK claim they need to deal with frequent changes, and that they are longing for direction for their future. The adult TCK report accumulated implications of the high mobility lifestyles they led as children, all of which affected their sense of belonging and sense of community. This dissertation concludes, therefore, by proposing five enabling modalities of place

identity construction for TCK: sense of stability, sense of belonging, sense of direction, sense of connectedness, and sense of community.

Keywords: Collage Life-story Elicitation Technique; Home; Identity; Mobility; Online focus groups; Place identity; Social constructionism; Social relationships; Third Culture Kid.

Declaration

I declare that the thesis here submitted is original except for the source materials explicitly acknowledged and that this thesis as a whole, or any part of this thesis has not been previously submitted for the same degree or for a different degree.

I also acknowledge that I have read and understood the Rules on Handling Student Academic Dishonesty and the Regulations of the Student Discipline of the University of Macau.

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List of Abbreviations

- CLET: Collage Life-story Elicitation Technique. A semi-structured interview technique that aims to use collage making as scaffold for eliciting autobiographical memories and narratives about a designated core phenomenon (Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013, in press)
- CCK: Cross Culture Kids. A Cross-Cultural Kid is a person who has lived in or meaningfully interacted with two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during developmental years (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001)
- TCK: Third Culture Kids. A term coined in the early 1960's by John and Ruth Hill Useem to describe individuals who experience a high mobility lifestyle and cross-cultural upbringing in their developmental years. Pollock and Van Reken (2001) added to the definition of TCK that these individuals find their sense of belonging with others in a similar situation and that they expect repatriation to the passport country at some point of their life.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Four years ago, I casually asked a 10 year old boy, “Where is home?” He put on a long face before answering quietly: “It is complicated...” I was a bit shocked as I noticed a sad and uncertain tone in his voice. He added that he has lived in four countries and attended four different schools. He has never lived in his passport country, except for annual summer holidays; consequently, he does not even speak the language of his passport country. He was not sure where his home is, as he knew the family soon would have to move again. I went home and asked my daughters the same question. We have moved to three different countries, following my husband’s career in the hospitality industry, and currently live in Macau. My younger daughter, who was born in Taiwan and four years old at the time, insisted that her home is in Austria in accordance with her Austrian passport and her last name. My elder daughter, who was born in Indonesia and who was six years old at the time, said that home could be anywhere as long as the whole family is together. They also asked me why we could not settle in one place like the local children and why all their friends kept moving to new destinations. I was stunned and started to realize that I am raising two children who might also have difficulty explaining where is home. This event lingered in my mind and subsequently triggered my interest in studying the phenomenon of individuals who moved to and lived in several countries throughout their developmental years.

As a parent, and for many other parents in a similar situation—that is, moving between countries due to a spouse’s career—I would like to know if we are making the right decision for the future of our children by continuing to live our expatriate lifestyle. I have become very observant and sensitive to the expatriate families in Macau (our current “home”) as well as in other parts of the world, mainly

in Hong Kong, and in Jakarta, Indonesia (my hometown) and Salzburg, Austria (my husband's hometown) where we spend alternate summer and winter vacations.

Many expatriate families are not aware of the impact of their high mobility lifestyle on their children (Adams & Kirova, 2007). I argue that the core of the TCK phenomenon lies in geographical displacement, which leads to disruption in making a home and establishing a sense of belonging, and adds a further dimension to the complexity of identity development for this group of people.

1.1 Rationale of The Study

An integral part of identity development is place identity, generally defined as an individual's meaning making related to a place and sense of belongingness (Easthope, 2009; Seamon, 2011). For the individual, a place or home possesses emotional implications, provides some degree of stability, and serves as a reference for past action, memories and meaning. Home, for most people, provides a critical locale and antecedent for continuity in the face of change (Chow & Healey, 2008; Storti, 2001). A high mobility lifestyle may result in insufficient time for people to learn the important intricacies and nuances of the local culture, such as behaviours, language, and social skills required for the passport country and for other countries in which they live (Dewaele, & Van Oudenhoven, 2009; Hervey, 2009). Fullilove (1996) claimed that people who move to different place(s) are exposed to problems of nostalgia, disorientation and alienation. Thus, a high mobility lifestyle might cause these individuals to feel confused about which place to call home, and their sense of belongingness is always questioned, which may further lead to the confusion of their identity (Bowman, 2001; Brown & Perkins, 1992; Easthope, 2009).

As social, political and economic changes happen globally, the number of families worldwide moving cross-border is rising (Andreason, 2003; Green, 2002).

More people than ever are living abroad. In 2013, the United Nations reported that 232 million people, or 3.2 per cent of the world's population, were international migrants. The growth in the past 13 years has been exponential compared to the 175 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990. The northern hemisphere, or the more developed countries of the world, is home to 136 million international migrants, compared to 96 million in the southern hemisphere or in developing countries. For many individuals who grow up in several countries following their parents, home is constantly being re-created as they move across borders.

John and Ruth Hill Useem first coined the term Third Culture Kids (TCK) in the early 1960s to describe individuals who experience a high mobility lifestyle and a cross-cultural upbringing in their developmental years. Pollock and Van Reken (2001) added to the definition of TCK claiming that individuals find their sense of belonging with others in a similar situation and expect repatriation (to the passport country) at some point in their lives. Most TCK families move to a new location at the discretion of their sponsor organizations, which include Foreign affairs Departments (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001), Military Departments (this is mostly American-based military organizations; Cottrell, 2002; Wertsch, 2006), religious based missionary organization (Bikos, et al, 2009; Cameron, 2006; Firmin, Warner, & Lowe, 2009; Huff, 2001), and multinational/business/education organizations (Fry, 2007; Walters, 2009; Zilber, 2005). There are also other individuals who move away from their passport countries at a young age and who are being exposed to multiple cultures, such as children of minority groups, children of refugees, children adopted overseas, and children of multicultural parents (Bacialupe & Càmara, 2012; Carlisle-Frank, 1992; Gu & Patkin, 2013; Hsu, 2010). Ruth Van Reken defined this latter group as Cross-Cultural Kids (CCK) who experience geographical

displacement but not a high mobility lifestyle similar to the TCK. She defined CCK as persons who have lived in—or meaningfully interacted with—two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during their developmental years. All these individuals are vulnerable to the discomfort resulting from the discrepancy between the names of the country printed on their passport and their sense of identification with that country as home (Cockburn, 2002; Easthope, 2009; Gu & Patkin, 2013; Liu, 2014). Gaining a coherent identity is difficult for TCK, as well as CCK, when their sense of belonging is constantly being challenged from a very young age (Downie, Koestner, ElGeledi, & Cree, 2004; Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005).

The society often tries to fit the TCK into their own mono-cultural mould. In so doing, they often interpret a single fragment of the TCK's identity as representative of the whole person while disregarding all other parts of their background and life experiences. TCK, on the other hand, find it challenging to establish who they are in relation to others when only a fragment of their identity is being validated (see Downie, Koestner, Elgeledi & Cree, 2004; Misra, Crist, & Burant, 2003). The TCK have to repeatedly adjust to living in new places, and claimed that the hardest adjustment is during repatriation, when they return to their passport countries. There are even some TCK who have never lived in their passport country, and might only know the place during holiday visits (Eakin, 1998; Gilbert, 2008). Consequently, TCK seem to find their sense of belonging with others who share the third culture experience, which can be very problematic in adulthood as the number of TCK is relatively small in any society and often dispersed amongst the local population in the host country (Bowman, 2001; Gilbert, 2008; McLachlan, 2007; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009).

An integral part of everyone's psychosocial development is identity construction, which Erikson (1968) describes as an overall path of an average person's progression through the successive stages of development. The interaction between the person and the environment where they live may result in individual differences in identity construction. In addition, earlier developmental stages can be revisited in later life and later stages can reach ascendancy (Sneed, Whitbourne, & Culang, 2006). A change of environment in the lives of TCK may affect the identity construction process. Compared with non-TCK, I argue that the TCK have additional tasks to fulfil in the process of their identity construction, due mainly to the geographical disruption.

Unable to find balance in managing the so-called identity construction crises from a very young age, TCK may tumble into adulthood without a clear sense of self and become confused and unable to see clearly or at all whom they are and how they can relate positively with their environment and other people (Årseth, Kroger, Bagnall, 2012; Martinussen, & Marcia, 2009; Bowman, 2001; Gu & Patkin, 2013). Some TCK, those who are unable to resolve their identity positioning, express a sense of loss by adopting what Erikson (2008) called a "negative identity" (p. 236) where being different is their identity and which can come across to others as being arrogant (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Their inability to fit in with the dominant culture causes them to "learn more about who they are not, rather than who they are" (Walters, 2009, p. 79). As a result, TCK often struggle to build and maintain relationships, and their friends who mean the most to them are scattered across the globe (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014). This negative identity of the TCK is different to what Erikson (1959) scripted as "the young individual must learn to be

mostly himself [sic – universal male] where he means most to others—those others, to be sure, who have come to mean most to him” (p. 102).

Existing work on TCK has focused mainly on describing the nature and experiences of TCK in an attempt to raise awareness of the struggles they go through and the benefits regarding the outcomes of their high mobility or cross-cultural lifestyles (see reports in Bell-Vilada, Sichel, Eidse, & Orr, 2011). For example, during their developmental years the TCK have experienced a number of challenges such as dealing with relocation and adjustments (Lyttle, Barker, & Cornwell, 2011; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001), cultural norms and values (Downie, Koestner, ElGeledi & Cree, 2004; Hervey, 2009; Moore & Barker, 2011), language (Dewaele & Van Oudenhoven, 2009), and education systems (Cottrell, 2002; Hill, 2006; Huff, 2001; Pearce, 2011; Sears, 2011). Melles and Frey (2014) and Vercruyssen (2002) expressed the need for counselling of TCK who reportedly felt culturally unfit, alienated and rootless when they returned to the home country (i.e., the passport country) and faced difficulties in adjusting to the home culture. However, what is lacking in the literature of TCK—both academic research and popular literature—are studies related to the impact of geographical displacement and place in the complexity of identity construction of TCK, especially with regard to how the high mobility lifestyle influences the psychosocial development during their lifespan.

1.2 Purpose of The Study

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how TCK construct meaning of their high mobility lifestyle and how their sense of place influenced their identity construction. The focus was how on TCK in middle childhood, pre-adolescence, adolescence, young adulthood and adulthood made sense of their high mobility lifestyle and the meanings they attributed to a place called home. I assumed

that identity is constructed through interaction with the historical and social contexts that people experience during their developmental years. I also assumed that people develop an attachment and belonging to a place constantly rebuilding and renewing identity throughout life in order to fit in with the social structure where they find themselves at any given time. Places where we live also change depending on the social discourses evident among people involved within these places. Therefore I believe that place plays an important role in shaping the person and the identity construction process.

A high mobility lifestyle affects the negotiation and maintenance of a coherent sense of self (identity) in relation to movement between different parts of the world, as well as movement between multiplicities of cultures within the same place. In order to elicit the narratives of TCK on their meaning-making living in different places, the central question in this qualitative study was: How do TCK make sense of the world amidst their high mobility lifestyle, and what meanings do they attribute to a place called home? Further questions emerged with regard to what is a place called home for TCK, whether they considered all the places where they have lived as home, what kind of place interactions have occurred in the current place where they live, and how the past places where the TCK have lived will affect their sense of direction for their future. Similar to their non-TCK peers, all TCK are dealing with a psychosocial crisis at each stage of their identity construction. For the TCK, however, the high mobility lifestyle adds further dimensions when the individual engages in repeated efforts to adjust to new places, particularly when the TCK feel unfit or struggle to build their sense of belonging in the society where they are residing at any given time. Their constant adjustment and re-adjustment efforts could cause TCK to face additional tasks in constructing their identity. Ultimately, I

proposed enabling modalities for TCK in middle childhood, pre-adolescent, adolescent, young adult and adulthood that could provide for a greater understanding and explaining of the place identity construction of high mobility individuals.

1.3 Framework of the Study

The meaning of place has been captured in various concepts that have overlapping and parallel definitions, such as place attachment, sense of community, home and sense of belonging, and place-identity (consult Chapter 2.3 for a discussion of these concepts). However these conceptual meanings are challenged when places keep changing, as in the case of TCK. Due to their high mobility lifestyle, the element of place in the TCK identity construction is challenged compared with the non-TCK. The high mobility lifestyle also exposed TCK to life disruption at various stages of their life. “Places are not static or fixed backgrounds to social action; places are dynamic arenas that are both socially constituted and constructive of the social” (Dixon & Durrheim, 2000, p. 27).

I adopted social constructionism as meta-theory and in this study accepted that meanings are constructed and interpreted within the social interactions of everyday life. Social constructionism emphasises language as a means of co-constructing both the person and the worlds in which we live. By narrating their life stories, individuals create a consistent thread allowing them to make sense of what they have experienced (in the past), what they are experiencing in the present, and what they expect to experience in the future. In other words, the self is the sum of life experiences and social interactions that continuously construct and re-construct who we are in relation to others and to the world in which we live.

In my exploration of the meanings constructed by TCK of their perceptions and experiences of a high mobility lifestyle, I considered language and narrating as

important elements in the process of attributing meanings to a place called home. These meanings are diverse and multiple and contain pluralistic and subjective truths of those telling their stories. Therefore, in the study, I examined the complexity of participants' views, rather than classifying meanings into a few categories or ideas. My objective was to explain how TCK maintained a persistent sense of self, despite their unpredictable and continuously shifting lives. I focused on the relative truths of each participant avoiding generalizing their explanations as supposedly valid for all groups of people, cultures, traditions, or races. Rather than searching for certainty and universality, I explored the patterns emerging from the TCK concrete experiences and acknowledged that the outcome of each one's own experience will necessarily be unique and relative.

Therefore, I adopted qualitative research methodologies that allowed me to interact directly with the TCK participants and to listen to their narratives about what the place called home meant to them. Narrative inquiry and ethnography were considered appropriate methodologies, and I conducted field observations and collaborative action research with individuals or organizations ecologically involved in the upbringing of TCK, including families of TCK, organizations or companies where the parents work, and educational settings such as international schools. In order to capture the voices of TCK in different age groups, I conducted Study 1 using semi-structured interviewing with TCK aged 7 to 17, and Study 2 using online focus groups with adult TCK aged 18 and above. The target population for both studies was TCK who had moved and lived in several places during their developmental years from birth to age 17. In order to capture the nuances of high mobility lifestyle and to separate the target populations from any other CCK who moved only once or lived in a foreign country for an extended period of time, I

recruited TCK participants who were proficient in English, who had lived at least in three countries during their developmental years, and who had personal experience of a high mobility lifestyle. All participants were recruited through purposive snowball sampling. Being the parent of TCK myself, I have the advantage and know-how of connecting and reaching out to the TCK communities.

In Study 1, for younger participants (middle childhood to adolescent), I used a children-friendly Collage Life story Elicitation Technique (CLET; Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013), a semi-structured interview technique using collage making as scaffolding method for eliciting narratives. The adult TCK were hard-to-reach participants as they live around the world. Therefore, in Study 2, I conducted online asynchronous focus groups (Schneider, Kerwin, Frechtling, & Vivari, 2002; Stancanelli, 2010; Williams, Clausen, Robertson, Peacock, & McPherson, 2012). The data were analysed using thematic analysis as it fitted the primary goal of this study, namely, to explore how the TCK made sense of their high mobility lifestyle experiences. Despite being part of the TCK community myself, I maintained reflexivity by continuously checking and crosschecking my interpretations and collaborating with the participants as co-researchers and with colleagues to ensure the credibility and plausibility of my understanding of the topic being studied. The findings were subsequently discussed to explain the role of place in the trajectories and complexity of place identity construction of TCK.

1.4 Implications and Contribution

The study of place identity construction of TCK contributes to the literature of the third culture phenomenon and high mobility individuals. The enabling modalities I propose for TCK in the final chapter of this dissertation could serve as a platform for understanding and explaining the multiple tasks that high mobility

individuals and their families face at different phases in their lifespan development. The findings can also be extended to explain place identity construction of Cross Culture Kids, individuals who are exposed to multicultural settings, without necessarily having moved to different places but living in one or more countries outside of their country of origin. Institutions and societies engaging with mobility of families for work reasons might benefit from this study in various ways. For example, families and parents raising TCK could relate and get validation of their life experience. Clinical psychologists, psychotherapists and counsellors with a better understanding of the challenges faced by TCK, would be better able to assist the TCK by anticipating the needs of this group and creating interventions that would ensure the wellbeing of TCK throughout the world.

Educators worldwide—particularly those in schools responsible for the education of TCK—could prepare a suitable environment to help TCK during various transition phases, as well as incorporating elements of multiculturalism in their classrooms. School psychologists, in response to the needs of TCK in different age groups, could develop appropriate mechanisms to help TCK succeed academically, socially, behaviourally, and emotionally. Overall I foresee greater collaboration among parents, educators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy and supportive (learning) environments that would strengthen the connections between home, school, and the community for TCK and other students.

Finally, I believe that the study contributes to the literature on qualitative methodologies adding further evidence in support of the Collage Life Story Elicitation Technique (CLET) being an effective semi-structured interview technique with children across cultures. The CLET provided a worthy platform upon which to rigorously elicit the voices of the young participants. This study is also, as far as

could be determined, the first scientific research using Facebook (social media) for online asynchronous focus group discussion. The online asynchronous focus group proved to be an effective method for gathering the perspectives and narratives from hard to reach participants such as adult TCK who are scattered around the world.

1.5 Statement of Originality

The following is the list of publication and manuscript under review during my PhD study in University of Macau:

1. Van Schalkwyk, G. J. & Lijadi, A. A. (n.d.). Utilization of Collage Life Story Elicitation Technique. Unpublished manuscript, University of Macau.
2. Lijadi, A. A., & Van Schalkwyk, G. J. (2015). Online Facebook focus group research for hard-to-reach participants. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1-9. doi: 10.1177/1609406915621383.
3. Lijadi, A. A. (2014). Ethnic estrangement and social mobility in Macau: Perspective of youth on intergenerational transfer of ritual and tradition. *International Proceeding of Economic Development and Research*, 71, 74-78. doi: 10.7763/IPEDR. 2014. V71. 14
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Chapter 2. Literature Review

Place is an inseparable component of any human's life. Place is more than mere geography. It is a logical and emotional blend of associations and perceptions that are part physical, part science and part history, cultural artefacts and social remembrance. Place bears testimony to a range of life phenomena in which emotional attachments were developed between people and place (Seamon, 2008). The meaning of place is subjective and personal; people identify with the place in which they live and at the same time, the place itself provides for the social interaction between individuals who live in the place and, along with other aspects of the lifespan development, provides for the process of identity construction (Prohansky, 1978; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996, Wester-Herber, 2004). The notion of place-identity develops from the interaction between individuals and their environments, in which individuals establish their identity related to a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to a place comprised of the memories, ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings and conceptions evident within one but not another place (Proshansky, 1978; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983).

In this chapter, I review the literature related to social constructionism as my worldview, the definition and profile of Third Culture Kids (TCK), and the concept of place and the interaction between TCK and the places they have lived. The chapter starts with an exposition of social constructionism as underlying my ontology and epistemology. I continue with a brief history and review of the terminology related to TCK from when the terms was first coined in the 1960s, discussing the benefits and challenges of being TCK as explicated in the existing literature about the phenomenon. I also present enculturation and acculturation theory, language, the role of the international school, and the repatriation affliction

as potential implications of high mobility and cross-cultural lifestyles. In the third part of this chapter, I review the concept of place and place interaction experienced by human beings and in particular by TCK, including the theory of primal landscape, the definition of home and sense of belongingness, place attachment and place identity.

2.1 Social Constructionism

A person's *Weltanschauung* or worldview is a comprehensive notion or appreciation of the world from a specific standpoint. Social constructionism is a meta-theory that claims the world we experience and the persons we become are products of social processes rather than fixed realities (Burr, 1995). By adopting a social constructionist worldview for this study, I argue that knowledge is embedded in how people (the TCK) make meaning of their life experiences through their social and interpersonal interactions (Gergen, 1991, 2009). People are relational beings constituted by and constituting their sense of self through engagement with others and within a particular time and place. This infers that language, both as the medium of social interaction and as the dominant carrier of meanings, is central to the study of psychological phenomena. The language(s) we use to describe the world we live in and ourselves provides the texts or scripts of our lived experiences and are viable sources of knowledge—albeit subjective knowledge—about who we are and how others believe we are. These texts then provide the co-constructed meanings within a particular time and place that could be suitable for analysis.

Furthermore, social constructionism leads us to highlight that the way we talk about the world and the way people interact with one another will vary depending on the cultures that produce and sustain them. In social constructionism, realities are local and exclusive in the sense that they vary between groups of individuals (Guba

& Lincoln, 1994). The social discourses embedded in different cultures change over time and vary greatly from place to place. Constructions are not completely true or accurate in any sense. Rather, reality is actively constructed and co-constructed in relationships and interactions, and can thus not be purely discovered. Hence, what constitutes reality for each individual depends on his or her values (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) as well as the time and context in which these realities are co-constructed with others. Reality is socially constructed (Dahlbom, 1992) and although perception and thinking are unavoidably individual, the construction process engages social discourses and other artefacts, thus becoming predictably social.

Moreover, social constructionism attributes individuals as being integral to cultural, political and historical evolution in specific times and places. Apart from the inherited and developmental aspects of humanity, social constructionism proposes that *all* other aspects of humanity are created, sustained and ended in our interactions with others through time. The social practices of all life begin, are recreated in the present, and eventually end when the relationship ends. Thus, as we enter new places the social practices start all over again as we co-create new relationships and discourses about what it means to be human. What social constructionism shows to be important are the ways in which socialization and enculturation, amongst the people we have known, plus the current interactions with those involved in our lives in the present, are actively shaping our mutual existence with others. As Burr (1995, p. 5) puts it, “knowledge and social action go together.”

Knowledge about the identity construction of TCK is thus inseparably linked to, and develops as a product of interaction, activity and purpose within a particular time and place. Within the social constructionist perspective, knowledge is relative

and this has implications for what can be known and the methodologies we employ to gain knowledge about human lived experiences. I accept that there can be no facts that are true in every culture and for all time. Therefore, in this (re)search for the meanings and implications of a high mobility lifestyle for the individual's sense of self and identity construction, I accept that knowledge about TCK is multi-dimensional and that there could be multiple "truths" depending on the social discourses evident in the many places TCK have lived. I thus ask how a place called home emerged in the co-construction and re-construction of who the TCK are and how they perceived their place identity. It is not a search for absolute truths but a search for the patterns emerging from the multiple truths in the life experiences and stories of TCK.

2.2 Third Culture Kids

Dimensions of space and time are continuously shrinking through advancement of technology and global mobility is a distinctive feature of today's world. People travel across borders for various reasons and hardly anyone lives in only one place throughout his or her lifetime. In 2011, a United Nations report estimated that over 232 million families lived outside their passport country, moving voluntarily or involuntarily across borders and around the globe (United Nation Report, 2013). Moving and living in different places is becoming a norm. There are families who hop between countries as the parents pursue further education or have the opportunity to work overseas.

The children of these high-mobility parents grow up moving between places and cultures, and they have a unique lifestyle experience compared to other children who stay in one place throughout their childhood. McCaig (1994) refers to these children as "global nomad," but the more commonly used term is Third Culture Kids

(TCK), coined by sociologists John and Ruth Hill Useem in the early 1960s when they conducted field study research on American children of families living and working in India. John and Ruth Hill Useem defined the first culture of TCK as that of their passport country from which their parents originated, the second culture as the current country of residence or the host culture, while the third culture referred to global and trans-cultural belongingness (Useem, Useem, & Donoghue, 1963).

Whereas the first and second cultures constitute tangible structures, the third culture is intangible and transient in nature, a culture that is continuously changing as the TCK group together with others in the same position thereby giving them a sense of belongingness despite their obvious differences from the host cultures (Lijadi, 2014).

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) reassessed the concept of the third culture and expanded it to reflect what they identified as international mobility and cross-cultural phenomena. In this regard, TCK are often classified but not limited to four subgroups according to the sponsoring organizations or companies that the parent works for (Hervey, 2009; Lijadi, 2014): (1) children whose parents are in the military, (2) children of foreign service affairs or diplomats, (3) children whose parents live abroad for business, and (4) children whose parents are in missionary or non-profit work. Included in the above groups are some families of TCK in which the father and mother come from different countries, commonly defined as bi/multicultural families (Sand-Hart, 2010). In these bi/multicultural families, there are additional adjustments of culture including values, beliefs, rituals and daily interactions between spouses that may contribute another nuance to the third culture phenomenon. To capture the children from bi/multicultural families, as well as “children who are living or had lived in—or meaningfully interacted with—two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during childhood”

(Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 31), Van Reken coined the expression Cross Culture Kids (CCK). The characteristics of CCK are not merely dependent on whether the individuals have lived outside their passport countries, but “more on multiple and varied layering of cultural environments that are impacting the individual’s life rather than the actual place where the events occur” (p. 32). Thus, TCK are also CCK, with significant difference of high mobility lifestyles and expected repatriation.

While each subgroup of TCK shows different patterns in terms of length of residence in a foreign country, the degree of interaction with the local culture and the exposure to other norms, Pollock and Van Reken (2001) found common experiences including being physically distinct from those around them, an expectation that they will eventually return to their parents’ home countries, a privileged lifestyle as compared to many local citizens, and connectedness to the ‘greater good’ represented by the values of the sponsoring organization. Common examples of connectedness to the sponsoring organizations are the TCK who call themselves “Army brats,” growing up as children of military parents (Wertsch, 2006), and “MK kids” growing up as children of missionary families (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). Nevertheless, TCK build “relationships to all of the cultures while not having full ownership in any...the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background” (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 23).

2.2.1 TCK Transition Cycle

Relocation of TCK requires adjustment both for the parents and for the children every time they move to a new country. For some the adjustment might come naturally, while others, particularly children, might have difficulty having to establish a new sense of belongingness. Pollock and Van Reken (2001) proposed a transition cycle for TCK starting from the country of origin when the TCK were

involved in the community, then experienced the process of leaving the country, followed by entering a new country and going through the process of re-involvement (Table 2.1). The transition cycle presented by Pollock and Van Reken (2001) is claimed to be the “classic” and “normal” cycle, as it was the most common cycle found amongst TCK.

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) claim that TCK who undergo the classic and normal transition cycle would acquire their sense of belonging in the new or host culture when they proceed through all the phases and achieve re-involvement. However, I argue that nowadays, TCK might not be able to experience all the phases due to the age of the child—that is, for example, some TCK have travelled since they were born and have not established any community with the passport country. There is also the nature of the sponsoring organization and the length of employment, as some organizations move their employees as frequently as every four months.

Pollock and Van Reken’s model also does not apply to TCK in the twenty-first century experiencing cultural distance and adjustment (Hervey, 2009; Selmer & Lam, 2004), and spousal adjustment of bi/multicultural families (Andreason, 2003). Several researchers showed that due to their high mobility lifestyle, TCK do not belong to certain culture groups or social categories, and they are continuously being exposed to multiple cultural settings (Downie, Koestner, ElGeledi, & Cree, 2004; Hayden & Thompson, 1995; McLachlan, 2007; Sears, 2011). They become part of an international diaspora of globally mobile expatriates (Heyward, 2002). Therefore, I argue that after several relocations, the TCK would lose interest in the “re-involvement” cycle, as the TCK are pre-occupied with adjusting to new school systems, learning new languages and another adjustment to the new culture. Hervey (2009) stated that in addition to the cross-cultural elements of their upbringing, TCK

find change to be an ironic constant due to the number of moves by their own families and others around them.

Table 2.1

Classic Model of Normal Transition Cycle of TCK

Phase of Relocation	TCK self-reflection	Reaction from the TCK towards the community	Reaction from the community towards the TCK
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal stage • Settled • Comfortable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a sense of belonging • Follow customs and traditions • Maintain position • Involved in community affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stereotype • Prejudice • Acceptance or • Rejection
Leaving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excited • Confused, anxious • Anger, frustration • Denial of feelings of sadness / grief, rejection, unfinished business, and expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosening of emotional ties • Detachment from relationships and responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocal loosening of emotional ties • Role replacement • Farewell formalities • Distancing
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaos • Losses • Self-centred • Survival mode • Loss of self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statuslessness • New expectations • Normalcy bias • Withdrawal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment • Accommodate • Expectations
Entering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability • Ambivalent • Searching for mentor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to fit in • Learn new customs, values and day-to-day practices • Try to develop a sense of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncomfortable • Readjustment • Provide guidance and explanation of customs, values and beliefs • Establish relationships
Re-involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure • Feel accepted • Focus on the here and now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance • Establish position within community • Sense of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodative • Part of the community

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2.2.2 Benefits and Challenges from a High Mobility Lifestyle

Living and growing up in numerous places has provided TCK with benefits including a high level of cross-cultural understanding and adaptability (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009), multilingualism (Cameron, 2006; Cottrell, 2002), and tolerance of diversity. TCK generally are more sensitive to various culturally different lifestyles (Lyttle, et al., 2011) and they have an expanded worldview (Dewaele & Oudenhoven, 2009; Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004, Pearce, 2011; Sears, 2011) that serves them well when adapting to a new environment. Selmer and Lam (2008) noted that being trained to interact with people from various cultures allows TCK to develop potential leadership skills, which is a key characteristic of managers in multinational companies dealing with a variety of circumstances. TCK are used to being prompted with countless cycles of concealment, discovery, eye-opening and

rediscovery in which their understanding of the world is continuously challenged and modified or changed, depending on where they are. However, the notion of maturity and cultural savvy of TCK might be overrated, as the TCK might know the daily and common practices of many cultures, but they might not necessarily have internalised any one culture.

On the other hand, TCK are also challenged adjusting to adult life. Research focusing on high mobility lifestyle emphasizes the insecurity and unsettling impact of moving between places. For some it results in feelings of vulnerability (e.g., Gerner, Perry, Moselle, & Archibald, 1991; Willis, Enloe, & Minoura, 1994) while for others it adds to the complexity of identity development (e.g., Hsu, 2010). The TCK not only have to renegotiate their ethnicity to local, national and global communities, they also have to revisit their identity construction by incorporating the meanings of the places where they have lived. Gilbert (2008) also studied the loss and grief of 31 female and 12 male TCK (aged 18-61) coming from different nationalities. The women and men in Gilbert's study reported various life disruptions experienced as TCK in their developmental years, including displacement and losses (i.e., extended family members, familiar places, pets, possessions), and particularly *existential losses*. Existential loss, as interpreted by Gilbert refers to the loss of security in knowing that what TCK have thought is real is actually a reflection of reality; the loss of a safe and trustworthy world, the loss of "Who I thought I was?" and the loss of a place they could call home. Furthermore, the losses were described as being ambiguous and disenfranchised, which resulted in unresolved grief that haunted TCK in defining their identity. In Gilbert's view, existential losses are the most significant and influential challenge to the identity construction of TCK.

In a narrative study of friendships and relationships of TCK, Lijadi and Van Schalkwyk (2014) found that due to their high mobility lifestyle, TCK build a strong bond with their parents that may even be greater than in the case of non-TCK, as their parents are the only stable, constant and prominent figures throughout the drama of a series of geographical displacements occurring during their developmental years. TCK find less stability in relationships with their siblings, who may have to leave to pursue education, career or family life elsewhere, and with peers and society that are constantly changing. Moreover, TCK as well as those around them move, and places change. What are left for the TCK are the memories of place-bound life events and third culture lifestyles that provide the only sense of continuity in their life stories. The close bonds with parents and lack of depth in social relationships with peers affect the development of intimacy, social connectedness and cause confusion for TCK in commitment to social relationships (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014).

Given their situation, TCK learn to be cultural chameleons (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Cultural chameleons will quickly blend in to the surroundings, picking up the local practices, languages and behaviours from the host population (Blasco, Feldt, & Jakobsen, 2012; Earley & Peterson, 2004). They can easily switch the cultural knowledge found in their multiple and fragmented identity to help them act in accordance with the dominant culture (Lee & Sukoco, 2010). By being cultural chameleons, people from the dominant culture may easily relate to TCK and vice versa (Downie, Mageau, Koestner, & Liodden, 2006). However, Fail, Walker and Thompson (2004) found that some adult TCK experience constructive marginality. They appear optimistic about their ability to feel at home in different places and relate to people like themselves—that is, to other TCK.

Foreigner	Hidden Immigrant
Looks different Thinks different	Looks alike Thinks different
Adopted	Mirror
Looks different Thinks alike	Looks alike Thinks alike

Figure 2.1 TCK cultural Identity in Relationship to surrounding culture. Adapted from “Third culture kids: The experience of growing up among worlds” (3rd ed.), by D. C. Pollock & R. E. Van Reken, 2009, p. 55. Boston: Nicholas Brealey Pub.

Pollock and Van Reken (2009, p. 55) identified four possible ways a person can relate to the surrounding culture (Figure 2.1), proposing that cross-cultural lifestyles put TCK in four typical relationship patterns when interacting with the host country:

- The foreigner: TCK feel like a foreigner when they move to a country where there is a distinguishable difference between the TCK and the local people, mostly in terms of physical appearance and language. The TCK perceive themselves to look and think differently than the people in the host country.
- The adopted: TCK develop a feeling of being adopted when they perceive themselves to look physically different from the people at the host country but think like the locals.
- The hidden immigrant: TCK perceive themselves as looking alike but thinking differently from the people of the host country.
- The mirror: TCK perceive themselves to look and think like the people from the host country.

2.2.3 Enculturation and Acculturation

Enculturation is often considered as first culture learning and acculturation as second culture learning. Levine (1990) defined enculturation as the acquisition of cultural representations, in order for an individual to be accepted as a member and fulfil the required functions and responsibilities of the group. The enculturation process of TCK depends on the place of birth and the duration of time living in the country of one's birth. Some TCK were born in their passport country and the first culture they encountered was the culture of their passport country. However, for TCK born outside of their passport country, the first culture they encounter could be a combination of the culture of their parents and the culture of the host country. Thus, some TCK had been exposed to more than one culture from a very young age and the enculturation more complex.

Acculturation, on the other hand, is a process whereby groups of different cultural backgrounds and their individual members engage each other, leading to cultural and psychological changes (Berry, 2003, 2005, 2008). During the acculturation process, there is a need for negotiation in order to achieve outcomes that are adaptive for both parties. Whenever the TCK enter a new country, they experienced acculturation that involves not only people from the host country but also other TCK from different cultural backgrounds. Due to hefty group and individual differences, each member of the group may adopt a different strategy in the acculturation process, such as integration (interacting with other cultures and at the same time maintaining the existing culture), assimilation (adopting the dominant culture), separation (minimal interaction with other cultures while still maintaining the existing culture), and marginalization (rejecting both interaction with other cultures and the existing culture). Typically, those practicing the integration strategy

experience less stress and achieve better adaptations than those practicing marginalization while those practicing assimilation and separation experience intermediate levels of stress and adaptation (Berry, 2005).

Lee (2010) examined the relationship between dual cultural identities and intercultural effectiveness among 82 managers and workers with international experience in Switzerland, using polynomial regression and the response surface method. Employing Berry's acculturation strategies, Lee measured the intercultural effectiveness according to respondents' level of cultural appropriateness and communication. Lee found that employees adopting a marginalization identity during acculturation were more effective compared to those adopting a separation and assimilation identity. This implies that by not identifying with home or the host culture, and instead creating a marginal, hybrid or third culture (similar to TCK), managers and workers are more effective, compared with those who tried to acculturate with either host or home culture.

Cottrell (2002), however, argued that theory of acculturation is not adequate to explain the complex cross-cultural experiences of TCK as they are not expected to stay in any one place for long and are expected to repatriate once their parents' assignment is completed. In perhaps the largest survey of American TCK, 604 participants aged between 25 and 80 years and from various sponsoring organizations (i.e., missionary, military foreign diplomat, and business sector) reported struggling to define their identity, even after overcoming the re-entry pain and having settled back to life in the United States. Cottrell's study gave a broad overview of the profile of American TCK, with the TCK having gone abroad as young as at the age of 3 years old (47%) and with 29% of the participants having been born outside the United States. Length of stay abroad was between one and

nineteen years, with 45% having lived abroad for at least 10 years and 18% for more than 15 years. More than 60% of Cottrell's participants had lived in more than one country and 31% had lived and went to three or more schools. Most of them went to international schools, and a small number was home schooled. Cottrell concluded that the American adult TCK were more successful in their careers than their local peers because they consistently had a higher degree of education, were bi- or multilingual, and were often hired in the top ranks of their profession.

In my study, I argue that the enculturation and acculturation processes for TCK may overlap. TCK hold membership in three types of cultures simultaneously: (i) the first culture is their country of origin (or their "passport country"), (ii) the second culture is any and all countries where they have lived, and (iii) the third culture is the global trans-cultural and interstitial culture in which they have become competent (Lijadi, 2014; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). Enculturation takes place when the TCK adopt their first culture from their parents. However, from a very young age, TCK are prone to constantly spend extra effort acculturating, as they have to keep adjusting—consciously or unconsciously—to the places where they live. Daily life for TCK is a constant struggle dealing and interacting with people in the host culture or even in the passport country who do not share the same upbringing and lifestyle and who do not understand where they come from. Thus, the TCK face additional dilemmas, whether to stay marginal or isolated, or choosing to develop a sense of self that could relate effectively with different peoples in different places. Getting to know the social discourses and practices of a new country means that TCK continuously need to build strategies in order to deal with the culture shock of every move to another place or even repatriating to their passport country.

2.2.4 The International School

Bagnall (2008) considered the international school as an agent for the transformation of global citizens. The curriculum is designed to cater to the needs of TCK who at some point in their life will repatriate to their passport country. Thus, the curriculum is offered in English as a so-called universal language and includes a multidimensional and developmental model for intercultural literacy, as well as interaction with the local community necessary for effective cross-cultural engagement (Heyward, 2002; McLachlan, 2007; Sears 2011; Straffon, 2003, Wilkins, 2013). International schools are aware of the need for multicultural counselling competencies, including having school counsellors with knowledge and appreciation of diverse cultures along with counselling skills necessary to address the diverse needs of TCK (Limberg & Lambie, 2011; Melles & Frey, 2014).

The most up-to-date data reports that there are over 7,017 English-medium international schools serving over 3.5 million students worldwide (Keeling, 2015). Approximately one million of these students are TCK, with the remaining (2.5 million) being local children. The demand for a high quality, English-speaking education, an international exposure, and a head start in acquiring a place at a respected university in a developed country are the three main reasons for middle-class and wealthy local families to enrol their children in international schools. In Asia, most countries allow local students to enrol in international schools with the result that international schools often have more local students than international students or TCK.

International schools identify their students by their nationality, in most cases by the passport country of the students, as reported by their parents (Pearce, 2011). This situation often creates an irony for the TCK, as they might not be able to relate

themselves to their passport country for various reasons, such as they were born overseas, they were too young to remember the country before they relocated, they have had limited opportunity to visit their passport country. Yet, in the international school, they learn that their peers are in the same situation. Joining an international school helps TCK to feel a sense of belonging in the places they live (Pearce, 2011). School serves as a safe place for TCK to interact in a context that they understand and where they are being understood (McLachlan, 2007; Sears, 2011). Whereas TCK often find that their values and behaviours do not fit with the characteristics of the host culture, they feel more comfortable situated in the 'third place' or context of the international school. To some extent, the international school offers the likelihood of creating a third place that lies between the cultural practices of the passport country and the accumulated variety of cultures, which they have experienced due to their high mobility lifestyle. Thus, the international school may influence the construction of a sense of self for their students, in particular the TCK.

2.2.5 Language

Language is one of the key elements for success in conveying and internalizing culture. The individual learns his or her first language from parents and siblings, and mostly this is the language widely spoken within the family, and most likely the language of the parents and/or the country of origin. In the case of TCK, the first language they learn is not necessarily the same as the language widely spoken in the country in which they live at the time of language acquisition. Multilingualism is common amongst TCK and they are often required to learn a second or third (or more) language from a very young age in order to interact within the host culture.

Nguyen and Ahmadpanah (2014) propose a different process of learning a

second culture evident in the acquisition of a second language. They found that compound bilinguals (those who acquired two languages simultaneously) were better able to integrate the two cultures to a greater extent than coordinate bilinguals (who experienced sequential dual language acquisition). TCK can be both compound and coordinate bilinguals or multi-linguals. This is, for example, the case with my two daughters. They both speak German (their father's language) and Indonesian (their mother's language) and are thus compound bilinguals. They also learn English and Chinese in school and understand some Cantonese (the southern China dialect) as a result of playing with their local friends, making them sequential multilinguals. Multilingualism thus emerges not only within the family, but is also relevant to the many places where TCK have lived throughout their developmental years.

In middle childhood, TCK have the cognitive capacity and readiness to learn not only multiple languages but also the cultural values and social discourses in the host country. However, I believe that TCK may not be able to retain the local languages they have learned once they move to a new place. In addition they may only ever grasp the tip of iceberg of the local culture in the places where they have lived, such as the food, the cultural celebrations, the history and the landmarks.

It is also necessary to explore the memories of adult TCK regarding their early years of relocation including their efforts acquiring languages that made them multilingual individuals. Recent research on this topic mainly focuses on the discourses or narratives of second language practitioners (i.e., Benson, Barkhuizen, Bodycott, & Brown, 2013; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Gu & Patkin, 2013). The findings imply the need for a supportive learning environments in which people can utilize both their second and heritage language in the dominant culture without a sense of being of a lower status in the society, as well as praising bi/multilingualism

as part of the growth of society. Nonetheless, in my study the question arises as to how the early multilingualism influence TCK sense of self and the identity construction process in relation to the places where they have lived and the languages spoken in these host countries.

2.2.6 Repatriation Phenomenon

Many TCK are repatriated to their passport country when they enter college. Experiencing a lack of belongingness, loneliness and a persistence of transient friendships contributes to unique patterns of communication and relationships by the time a TCK attends college in the country of origin (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Hervey, 2009). For many TCK, relocating (back) to the passport country has the same implication as moving to a new country—they are foreigners in their country of origin. Depending on age, length of stay outside the passport country and language fluency, the transition to the passport country can be more overwhelming than moving to another country.

Repatriation requires a certain degree of re-entry adjustment when parents of TCK have difficulties adjusting to their career and social network back home (Lazarova & Cerdin, 2007; Stahl, Chua, Caligiuri, Cerdin, & Taniguchi, 2009; Stroh, Gregersen, & Black, 2000). For families that have been away for a relatively long time, the passport country becomes unfamiliar and foreign. Parents, for example, report experiencing nostalgia for foreign places and low job satisfaction after repatriating (Xi, Cable, Sedikides & Wildschut, 2014). Apart from the family repatriating as a whole, the parents may or may not accompany the TCK going back to the passport country. This is particularly the case for TCK who go back for academic reasons and who go to boarding school. For many TCK in this group, it could be the first experience being separated from their family and having to be

independent. Although it is common for most people at some stage in life to become independent and leave home, the task is more difficult for the TCK. They are not only leaving home, they are leaving one place to move yet again to another place with which they are not too familiar, and now without having an anchor in family togetherness or a place they can call home. Some TCK may not even be fluent in the language of the home country, as they have attended school in other languages adding further stress to their adjustment in the so-called home country (Fail et al., 2004).

Furthermore, when repatriating, TCK may have to establish a new social network and new friendships, a difficult task considering that the locals are predominantly non-TCK peers who are already embedded in their social circles and not particularly interested in including new members to their group. The non-TCK lack of understanding of the TCK lifestyles and their differing experiences in growing up, lead to exclusion and rejection further challenging the repatriation experience for young TCK. Social relationship development has been a central issue in research pertaining TCK (Firmin, Warner, & Lowe, 2006; Bikos, Kocheleva, King, Chang, McKenzie, Roenicke, Campbell, & Eckard, 2009; Russell, 2011). For example, TCK tend to develop relationships quickly as they do not know how long friends might stay in the same place (Bikos, et al., 2009). However, their relationships tend to be superficial (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009) as TCK are reticent making commitment and do not experience the richness of relationships found with non-TCK (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014).

Finally, Melles and Frey (2014) argue that not being successful in resolving the developmental stage of identity vs. role confusion as per Erikson's theory could be the reason why adult TCK struggle with relationships. Whereas young adults

who have had secure attachment since childhood tend to have closer and more durable relationships with their dating partners (Collins & Sroufe, 1999; Maysless & Scharf, 2007), participants in Melles and Frey's study reported behaviours and attitudes consistent with dismissive-avoidant and fearful-attachment styles. The question for me in the present study is whether TCK could overcome the challenges of their high mobility lifestyle to establish enduring relationships, particularly in their adult years.

2.3 Place Interactions and Identity Construction

The significance of place in the process of one's identity construction needs further explication as it forms the focus of my thesis. Throughout one's life, the places where we settle and live, and where we interact with others, bear testimony to the continuous efforts of constructing and co-constructing identity (Seamon, 2008, 2011). Place and the social interactions within the environment are thus tightly linked to a sense of self. Place-based identity seeks answers two questions: "Where are you from?" and "Where do you belong?" Lengen and Kisteman (2012) pose that having a conscious sense of place involves a distinct dimension in neural processing, including the body and emotions. Place acquires attention, creates behaviour, perception and memory, gives an orientation, and provides meaning in life.

Psychologists, human geographers and neuroscientists have different explanations for how place identity develops and how it becomes part of our self-identity and a benchmark for future experiences (see earlier works of Buttimer, 1980; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1980; and more recent works of Lengen & Kistemann, 2012; Sarbin, 2005; Seamon, 2011; Spencer, 2005). Traditionally, place-based identity referred to a single attachment to one place where an individual grew up, building a strong affiliation to that place (Creswell, 2004). The meaning of place is subjective

and personal. People not only identify with the place where they live but also see place as a space in which social interactions between individuals who live in the place take form and emerge as part of their self-identity construction process.

Scholars who studied the influence of place on identity are still debating the terminology and definitions of the term *place-identity*. Proshansky introduced the notion of place identity in 1978 and argued that individuals interact with their environment in ways that are important to their identity construction (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; Wester-Herber, 2004). Place identity thus refers to the importance of place for the development of identity through an on-going process of socialisation in and familiarity with the physical world (Giuliani, 2003; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Staying in one place could serve to prime one's place identity. From an early age one starts to identify with place, possibly a small niche in the family residence, then in the neighbourhood, and later in the school and the workplace or on a larger scale in the city and country. In response to the two questions (i.e., where are you from and where do you belong) people often refer to physical places where they live and may refer to themselves by describing what country they live in, what city or town they come from, or the building in which they work. The places in which people have lived may influence their environmental preferences. For example, someone might say "I am a tropical person" and this may affect the kind of environment they may look for or prefer as a future dwelling. The physical space in which identity emerges also serves as an on-going reference point for past and future interactions, memories and a sense of origin, and the symbolic attributes incorporated within an individual's place identity.

In the present study, I defined the construction of place identity as a process relating to a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to a place that comprises the memories, ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of and towards places that are part of a person's self-identity. Place creates the context in which meanings about the self evolve through social interactions and relationships. Identity development happens through the feedback one receives from others and the evaluation of the self in relation to others. Thus, belongingness and place are integral to identity development. The meaning of place could be captured in concepts such as home and sense of belonging, place attachment as the result of memories of interaction and feelings related to the place, and a sense of community. In the following sub-sections, I review the research literature pertaining to these concepts and discuss the interplay between the concepts as they become relevant for capturing the place identity construction of TCK.

2.3.1 Home and Sense of Belonging

Home—the physical component of the dwelling, town/city/country of residence—constitutes the primary locale for social interactions. Home is where the family (i.e., parents and siblings) reside and interact at any given point in time. It is the place or context in which people develop attachments during their early childhood years, engage in social interactions, and explore identity during adolescence explore identity. As a primary locale and antecedent for continuity in the face of change (Perkins & Thorns, 2012), home provides a context for identity development (Chow & Healey, 2008; Easthope, 2009). It is the place where people grow up, providing a sense of origin, and creating a sense of continuity. When one moves away from one place you need to build new relationships and create a new home in a new place. For individuals who reside in one place throughout their life

span, the home is a secure base from which to explore the world and create a sense of continuity and develop place identity. However, few individuals live in only one place throughout their lifetime, and thus the concept of home is not limited to a particular physical structure (landscape or dwelling), but more to the shared lived experiences with family, friends, and a social network in a particular context in time (Pherkins & Thorns, 2012).

Liu (2014) states that for the high mobility people, home serves as more than a physical location or dwelling, but also as a space of belonging, intimacy, security, relationship and identity. Home emotionally links people to significant places where they have lived (i.e., place of origin, place of birth, places where they grew up), a space in time that individuals and their family inhabited and where particular activities and relationships are lived. Home provides a sense of protection, comfort, joy and positivity. As the individual deals with emotional commitment and self-discovery, home and the people making home (i.e., the family) recognize our need for belonging and affirmation in the struggle for finding the self (Liu, 2014). One disheartening dimension of high mobility lifestyle in childhood is the potential for identity confusion, specifically to where one belongs and where is home when the family relocates often and sets up a new home. Even though the high mobility individuals flourish in a new country, their cognizance and memory of home would have been irrevocably altered, contributing in a different way to the construction of self-identity and belonging.

Home should therefore not be considered simplistically in either physical or emotional terms (Liu, 2014). Rather, home is a place for balanced levels of family adaptability and family cohesion (Olson, 1993), family connection (Berzonsky, 2004), parental involvement (Stringer & Kerpelman, 2010) and parental acceptance

(Arnett, 2001; Soenens, Berzonsky, Dunkel, & Papini, 2011), all of which are important aspects needed for identity development. For example, during the adolescent years when the focus is on finding a coherent sense of self, home is associated with parenting practices and levels of control within the family (Quintana & Lapsley, 1990). In a nine-year longitudinal study, Dumas, Lawford, Tieu and Prat (2009) found a positive relationship between perceived parenting in adolescence and the subsequent quality of life story narration in emerging adulthood. Thus, home serves as the place where one first explores identity construction in interaction with parents and siblings along with spaces and objects that all make up what is considered to be a home that gives one a sense of belonging.

2.3.2 Place Attachment

Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) and Spencer (2004) agree that place attachment refers to the reciprocal caretaking bond occurring in a particular place over time and generating an identification process. Attachment to place is the first stage in the development of a sense of self (Lin & Lockwood, 2014). Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) argued that individuals learn and integrate standards and values through social discourse evident in their environment—the rubrics of life inherent to the place they live in—and eventually end up identifying themselves with the place. Some environmental psychologists regard place attachment and place identity as two separate but shared constructs (Altman & Low, 1992; Giuliani, 2003; Hernandez, Hidalgo, Salazar-Laplace, & Hess, 2007). I believe that place attachment and place identity are interdependent and both contribute in the process of self-identity construction and re-construction.

Length of residence often affects the identification with a place (Fleury-Bahi, Félonneau, & Marchand, 2008) and the ensuing place attachment. When deciding to

move to a different country, after having lived in one place for many years, parents of TCK often face insecurities and a psychosocial crisis that may influence their adjustment to the new place. Their place attachment to a former locale may directly or indirectly influence not only their own but also their children's adjustment to the new place (Hamachek, 1988; Stewart & Barling, 1996). Moreover, parental negative emotionality and negative reactions to children's expressions of emotion when moving to a new place are associated with children's negative emotionality and low social competence (Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998). Infants and toddlers who experience high family disruption and parental distress about leaving the place they have become attached to might be prone to social-emotional/behavioural problems (Bayer, Sanson, & Hemphill, 2006; Briggs-Gowan, Carter, Bosson-Heenan, Guyer, Horwitz, 2006). Children in middle childhood could emerge with acting out behaviour, shyness and school incompetence.

In more complex cases, we find parents who were TCK themselves and who are parents of second generation of TCK. Fail, Thompson and Walker (2004) reported that "time has not actually made any difference to the feelings of marginality" (p. 332), and the adult TCK in their study claimed they had no real sense of place attachment or belonging in the communities where they resided. They raised their children in the same way—without place attachment—as they could not bear to stay in one place and opted for an international career. This brings up the question of place attachment and sense of community of adult TCK in the place where they are currently living and raising the next generation of TCK children, a phenomenon I explored in Study 2.

2.3.3 Sense of Community

McMillan and Chavis (1986) describe a sense of community as "a feeling

that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (p. 9). There are four elements required for a sense of community to emerge: (1) membership—the feeling of belonging or sharing a sense of personal relatedness, (2) influence—making a difference within the group, (3) integration and fulfilment of needs, and (4) shared emotional connection.

Community consists of people who interact with each other through a common language, people who create relationships and bonds with one another and whose presence can be felt concretely and directly. Community is established as people become habituated, are engaged in the daily customs, and get involved with the practises of the place where they are living.

Being part of a community can secure one's sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and "serves as major base of self-definition" (Sarason, 1974, p. 157). Even though the individuals in the group might not know all of the members of the community, they can imagine how other individuals in the community will interact within the group. As the daily customs and practices are passed between generations and become shared values and traditions of the community, culture emerges. By identifying with and responding to the culture, the individuals develop sense of belonging to the community.

However, developing a sense of community and friendships within a community does not come easy for TCK. Cottrell (2002) found that when they are abroad, TCK reported a feeling of loneliness, dislocation and being misunderstood as much by their local (host country) community as by their friends and family in the home/passport country communities. On one hand, TCK experience difficulties making friends and maintaining relationships as they frequently move and have to

re-establish community and form friendships with new people in a new culture. Their friendships form fast and with many people, but they also frequently face friendship losses, and the way they relate to people seems superficial and shallow. On the other hand, the home/passport country communities move on according to their own pace, and TCK often find it challenging to (re)integrate and re-establish friendships when repatriated.

2.3.4 Interplay between Various Concepts of Place and Place identity

How do home and a sense of belonging, place attachment and community interplay with place identity? How do TCK think of “I am coming home, this is where I belong?” Simple sentences yet with powerful meaning. For most people, home has the broader meaning than the mere physical structure where they live. Rather, home is the place where they find their sense of belonging, a fundamental need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) that heightens as people age (Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005). Casey (2001) proposes: “there is no place without self and no self without place” (p. 684). Thus, for most people, place identity roots in home as the main space in which psychological attachments developed. Home is a socially constructed term. Home is also a physical space that provides a sense of continuity, familiarity, soothing feelings of acceptance, comfort, privacy, rootedness, and belonging (Cuba & Hummon, 1993a; Cuba & Hummon, 1993b; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Sarbin, 2005; Spencer, 2004; Taylor, 2010).

In a recently published book, *Writing out of Limbo* (Bell-Vilada, Sichel, Eidse, & Orr, 2011), psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists and sojourners voice out the struggle of people with a high mobility lifestyle searching for a sense of belonging and a place called home. Bell-Vilada and colleagues (2011) claim:

Nations are becoming increasingly multicultural, migrations and

immigrations altering the texture and tone of a place as new people pass through or settle...humanity blends and expands, and new self-definitions are dizzying in their variety and complexity—cross-cultural, bi-cultural, multi-cultural, inter-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-national... perhaps a new language or model is needed in order to talk about the many permutations of individual identity (p. 6).

I also suggest that in order to understand the place identity construction for individuals with a high mobility lifestyle, we might have to find a different definition than the ones previously applied to the non-TCK.

Cuba and Hummon (1993) studied 432 immigrants in Massachusetts and found that migration at different stages of the life cycle had a diverse effect on place affiliation and attachment. Younger immigrants (aged 18 to 59 years) reportedly tend to base their identity not on a place but on affiliations with friendships, family and emotional self-attribution, whereas older immigrants (aged 60 years and above) identify with the place where they resided and their experiences related to the place of origin. Cuba and Hummon (1993a; 1993b) challenge the opinion that place identity is eroded by mobility. Instead they argue that place identification must be understood within the context of the changes at each stage of the life span and the reasons for mobility. Easthope (2009) concurs with Cuba and Hummon's (1993a; 1993b) findings, and argues that we cannot simply assume that there is a shift from a society of people with identities based on place to a society of people with identities based on mobility. Neither can we assume that increasing mobility will lead to increasingly dislocated identities. Through in-depth interviews and focus groups with 30 high mobility Tasmanian participants (aged 20-38 years), Easthope claims that mobility and place are fundamental aspects of the human condition, and the

process of place identity construction is tied up with how people maintain a sense of continuity amidst their high mobility lifestyle. Furthermore, although a place could provide a person with a sense of a positive self-esteem through association with the positive qualities of the place, people who live a high mobility lifestyle might opt to avoid attachment to one particular place or develop no salient place attachment. Rather, they might tend to find symbols of continuity with the past and the future or a “familiar place” to confirm their existence as a person (Giuliani, 2003; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996).

Chow and Healey (2008) further illustrate the meaning of home, suggesting that the place(s) we inhabit generate emotional bonds, affiliation, behavioural commitment, satisfaction and belongingness to where we were born and grew up, where we live now, or where we have had a particularly moving experience. However, a high mobility lifestyle implies that such a sense of belongingness does not develop. Rather, high mobility individuals experience feelings of not belonging, dissatisfaction and rebellion (Downie, Koestner, ElGeledi, & Cree, 2004; Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005). The feeling of not belonging can be experienced in the loss of social connectedness and friendship rather than to losing meaningful places in our lives such as losing our home. The lack of a sense of belonging to social groups could also be associated with increased vulnerability to depression with diminished psychological and social functioning (Choenarom, Willimas, & Hagerty, 2005).

The place interaction of TCK is different from that of the non-TCK. From the moment the parents of TCK leave their home and travel to a new place with which they are less familiar to reside temporarily, there is a sense of leaving the old home and creating a new home. For the first move, the old home most likely refers

to country of origin (Wiles, 2008). With the second and next other moves, the old home could refer to a previous dwelling or residence in which they lived or had a moving experience. Subsequently, it involves the challenge of establishing a new home, often knowing that they will have to move again in due course. The process of building a place attachment thus becomes a continual, multi-dimensional and complex phenomenon for the parents of TCK. On one hand, parents wish to provide a better life and joy for the family members at home by relocating to another country (Gorman-Murray & Dowling, 2007). On the other hand, knowing that they will have to move again before they repatriate, there is a cloud of uncertainty in the process of homemaking and sometimes many aspects of creating a home are discounted (Bonebright, 2010; Liu, 2013, Nette & Hayden, 2007).

Sterling and Pang (2013) also explored the repatriation phenomenon and identity construction of Chinese children aged 11-19 years who returned to China from Venezuela. The researchers argue that moving from the birth place (Venezuela) to the so-called place of origin or origins of the parents (i.e., to their ethnic group in China), the youth was exposed to multiple discourses of identity that were unfamiliar and multi-layered. This group of Chinese youth developed a reflexive strategy to cope with repatriation and acted out their complex identities upon the move to China. The identity and sense of belonging for this Venezuelan-born Chinese group involved constant negotiations related to (1) language—they were more fluent in Spanish (their first language) and mixed Spanish-Chinese (Epinghua, the language spoken at home), (2) the education system, and (3) the culture albeit that they have the same ethnic background. Having similar physical appearance did not ease the adjustment and the effort to blend in with local Chinese children and the culture of their so-called homeland demanded a re-negotiation of

their self-concepts. Being a Chinese, but born and raised partly in Venezuela, they faced the necessary task of considering the influence of the place where they have lived before (in this case, Venezuela) as part of constructing their identity.

Finally, place also plays a role in how one plans for the future or decides on a career identity. Being able to speak more than one language opens up a way for TCK to relate to different places and social interactions and to choose a career that could serve diverse communities. Ruth Van Reken, co-author of *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds* (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001), reflected that being born and raised in Nigeria before returning to live in the United States had led her to pursue a career in nursing in order to help people. In her interview with The New York Times, Van Reken (2002) disclosed that, she became a nurse as she had seen many very sick people around her as a child growing up in Nigeria and she wanted to make a difference. The significance of place for Van Reken is one example of how place influences identity in the process of establishing a coherent sense of self, and in planning one's future career. Places where TCK have lived are thus not only embedded in the self-identity but play a part in shaping one's goals in life.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed the literature related to Third Culture Kids (TCK) and the concepts of place and place interaction during the identity construction process of TCK from a social constructionist perspective (my worldview). With relatively privileged lifestyles from a very young age (i.e., opportunities for travel, having first-hand experience of new and different locations, and establishing relationships with children and adults from many different cultural backgrounds), TCK experience a unique way to interact with the places where they have lived. The TCK learn that where they live is temporary, place is transient, and they constantly

experience the complexity of relocation and moving to new countries (i.e., change living environment, change of lifestyle, change of nanny, change to new school, etc.). Life disruptions resulting from relocation may be inconvenient but they are usually manageable and relatively short term.

Nonetheless, TCK often face frequent relocations that have a long-term impact on the formative stage of their development. TCK grow up with constant change, not only do they move to a new place, but the whole fragment of their life changes as well. From a very young age TCK are exposed to the different ways of adjusting to diverse places, facing grief, experiencing loss of personal belongings, revising social roles, learning new languages, attending new school and meeting new friends. What is left for the TCK, are the memories of place-bound life events and third culture lifestyles that provide a sense of continuity of their life stories.

Research on the phenomenon of identity construction of TCK is relatively recent and limited, providing little insight into their experiences at each milestone of their life trajectory and the potential long-term impact of such a childhood (i.e., Cameron, 2006; Downie, Mageau, Koestner, & Liodden, 2006; Fail, Thompson, Walker, 2004; Mclachlan, 2005). The existing literature on TCK is also limited to westerners, particularly adult TCK who are American citizens, and mostly dedicated to the benefits or challenges of this lifestyle. There have been limited efforts (see Wurgaft, 2006) to integrate these research findings with the broader theoretical discourse on related issues such as identity development.

The research gaps I identified in the literature review have three important shortcomings. Firstly, the research lacks depth and misses out on gaining a deeper understanding of TCK experiences from a range of countries. While research has been done mainly on the experiences of repatriated TCK from the United States

(Storti, 2001) and Japanese TCK (*kikokushijo*, Fry, 2007; Yoshida, et al., 2009), more research needs to be done on TCK from other parts of the world to see how much of their experiences concur with existing findings. Secondly, previous research has overlooked the life experiences of younger children—the TCK for whom the high mobility lifestyle has just begun—and thus the aetiology of identity formation and their ability to be multi-culturally sensitive has not been explored. Thirdly, while the literature covers the benefits and challenges of TCK experiences, scant attention has been paid to a theoretical understanding of the TCK struggle with issues of identity and rootlessness. Despite treating TCK as unique, the research on TCK needs to start from the root of the life disruption, the geographical displacement that affects the concept of home, and integrate place (i.e., home and a sense of belonging or place attachment) into the broader discourse of identity construction.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how TCK construct meaning of their high mobility lifestyle, and how their sense of place influenced their process of identity construction. I designed a cross-sectional study using qualitative methodologies to explore the central question: How do high mobility individuals make sense of the world and what meanings they attribute to a place called home? My objective was to gain an understanding of how the TCK made sense of their high mobility lifestyle with particular reference to the influences of geographical displacement and the places where they have lived. In order to capture the voices of TCK in different stages of their lifespan (i.e., childhood, pre-adolescence, adolescence, young adulthood and adulthood), the overall research was divided into Study 1 which used semi-structured interviews with TCK youth aged 7 to 17 years; and Study 2 which used online focus groups with adult TCK aged 18 and above. In this chapter, I discuss the social constructionist framing of the project and explicate the methodologies and analytic strategies for the two studies.

3.1 Social Constructionist Framing and a Qualitative Approach

I adopted a social constructionist perspective in framing the research design for this project. Social constructionism (Burr 1995) claimed that in social interaction, people construct and negotiate their social identities as well as their social group memberships. My social constructionist worldview (see Chapter 2) alerted me to see human beings as dynamic and to comprehend their subjective meanings from their socio-historical interactions with others in the places they live and have lived (Burr, 2003; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Gergen, 2009). I therefore explored the meanings TCK constructed of their high mobility lifestyle

and their sense of place, acknowledging the multiple, pluralistic and subjective truths in the stories they could tell about the past, the present and an anticipated future. I wanted to remain open to the themes and modes of thought and behaviour that would enable me to get a broad and in-depth description of the many meanings TCK ascribed to their everyday lives and their sense of place. Using a social constructionist framework, I could explore the subjective truths emerging from how TCK made sense of the self and constructed their identity despite their unpredictable and continuously shifting lifestyles.

I employed a discovery-oriented qualitative research design for both Study 1 and Study 2 in order to explore the patterns emerging from the concrete experiences of TCK and to acknowledge that the outcome of each participant's experiences will necessarily be unique and relative. In exploring the narratives of TCK, I used ethnography as a platform for participants to collaborate in the production of their own accounts and narratives (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003). Ethnography also allowed me to immerse myself and to gain first-hand knowledge of the current life experiences of TCK. I could learn the participants' points of view from the inside through fieldwork, in-depth interviewing, focus group, and document analysis (Creswell, 2009).

Narrative inquiry provided the methodology for studying the multi-voiced behaviour of TCK in their identity construction process, as well as to gain perspective and take the opportunity to re-evaluate and propose alternative interpretations and a course of action (McAdams, Josselson, & Lieblich, 2006; McLean & Pasupathi, 2012). The Collage Life-story Elicitation Technique (CLET; Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013) was used to elicit both non-verbal and verbal narratives from younger TCK (Study 1), based on the view that individuals, as social actors,

made sense of their lives by conceptualizing their identity as a story of self. The participants used various print media (i.e., magazines, newspapers, photos, other printed materials) in making their collages of a place called home. The use of images from the print media provided for creating non-verbal narratives that representative of the socially constructed discourses of daily life. By narrating their life stories both non-verbally and verbally, individuals created a consistent thread that allowed them to make sense of what they had experienced in the past, create a bridge to the present, and to verbalise how they would be dealing with an anticipated and uncertain future. In other words, the self could be seen as the sum of socially constructed life experiences and the story telling is the forum in which identity is explicated and negotiated. Examining the narrative identities of young TCK was considered applicable in exploring the meaning that the TCK derive from the places they lived at certain stages of their lives (i.e., middle childhood, pre-adolescence, adolescence) (Eakin, 2008; McLean & Pasupathi, 2012). For example, in the narratives I could explore how loss of belongingness and displacement affected identity construction and maintenance of different cohorts of TCK (Taylor, 2010).

Furthermore, by engaging with participants as collaborators in the production and analysis of their own accounts and narratives, my research became an active process of socially co-constructing realities representing the lived experiences of TCK across different life stages. Based on my research on the global whereabouts of TCK, I found respectable and reputable groups of TCK in various social media who were able and willing to share and openly discuss their life challenges. Accepting that participants were not merely considered as “vessels-of-answers” (Gubrium & Holstein 2003, p. 30), I developed an online focus group method for involving the adult TCK (Study 2) in the storytelling as well as the data analysis. I wanted to

capture with more depth, nuance and variety the opinions of the adult TCK as authentic experts of the third culture.

Since this is the first study focusing on place identity construction of TCK, the qualitative methodologies allowed for inductive analysis of the data. Maintaining the exploratory framework of searching for meanings, I adopted a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) for data analysis. Rather than postulating and testing hypotheses, assumptions were confined to reflections on what was found or experienced, and I focused on a particular phenomenon rather than postulating generalizations and universalities. This methodology also empowered TCK to give voice to their challenges and, at the same time, served as validation of their experiences and identity construction as high mobility individuals.

Third Culture Kids are by definition not tied to a single geographical location. Being an expatriate and a parent raising two TCK, I had the privilege of being surrounded by other families raising TCK and could therefore exercise being both an emic and etic observer of the phenomenon under investigation. Using an ethnographic approach, I was able to gain access to participants and conduct fieldwork directly in the TCK communities (i.e., natural observation, collecting contextual material and participating in TCK activities) (Griffin & Bengry-Howell, 2008; Saville-Troike, 2003). I learned about and joined various expatriate groups worldwide (i.e., parent associations in international schools, expatriate associations, online TCK communities in various social media, online blogs, news, dialogue and a forum dedicated to TCK). Thus, I was able to recruit participants for interviews and focus group discussions in a wide range of settings.

In order to conduct field observations, I chose the settings of Macau, Hong Kong and a few cities in Indonesia (namely, Jakarta and Bali) for several reasons.

Firstly, I live in Macau and there are a growing number of expatriates in Macau due to the boom of the gaming and hospitality industry. These families mostly congregate around the international schools in Macau where my children were also being educated. Secondly, I am only a one-hour ferry ride from Hong Kong, which is an international financial hub and the location of many international schools. I am also quite familiar with the expatriate community living in the city. Thirdly, I am Indonesian who grew up in Jakarta, who married a foreigner and who used to work and live in Bali where many expatriates have relocated in support of the island's development as a worldwide tourist destination. In light of the geographical and financial constraints I faced conducting the study with TCK, these three settings offered ease and viability to gain access to both younger and older participants. Staying true to the chosen methodologies for this project, I include an epilogue to this dissertation that represents my personal experiences embarking on a high mobility lifestyle and being part of the TCK community as a form of reflexivity (Watt, 2007).

3.2 Participants

The criteria for participants in both Study 1 and Study 2 were framed in terms of TCK aged 7 years and above and who have lived in at least three different countries during their first 18 years of life following their parents' careers. The rationale for this framing of participants was that I intended to explore how the TCK constructed meaning of a place called home during their early developmental years. Proficiency in English was also necessary as I chose this language for conducting the interviews and online focus groups. In Study 1, I wanted to elicit the voices of TCK in early stages of development (i.e., middle childhood, pre-adolescence and adolescence) as they attempted to make sense of the high mobility lifestyle, and in

particular their construction of a place called home. In Study 2, I aimed to explore how the adult TCK (i.e., aged 18 years and above) constructed meaning of their high mobility lifestyle and in particular their social interaction with places they have lived before (as children and youth) and in the recent times. Whereas having lived in one or two countries prior to repatriation might have given similar findings, I might not have been able to capture the complex nuances of a high mobility lifestyle as well as with participants who have moved more often. English, as the international language of business in most developed (and developing) countries was considered suitable for collecting the narrative data in this study.

I adopted a non-probability purposive sampling strategy (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007) to identify participants who fit the criteria of the study. TCK are, for the most part, a hidden community in society, even in international schools and among the expatriate communities. Some people might not know that they are TCK. Therefore, I used a snowball technique to recruit participants for both Study 1 and Study 2 (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Noy, 2008; Penrod, Preston, Cain, & Starks, 2003; Sadler, Lee, Lim, & Fullerton, 2010). Snowballing was considered a viable approach to reach out to and recruit only those who suited the requirements of my study and to ensure homogeneity.

3.2.1 Recruitment of participants for Study 1

In Study 1, I recruited youths aged 7-17 years who fit the criteria discussed above. I contacted the parents of TCK through online expatriate groups in various countries including Macau, Hong Kong and Indonesia, and sent an invitation letter and informed consent form via email to parents of TCK age 17 years and below. Parents of TCK in Singapore and Malaysia also responded to my online invitation and also received the invitation and informed consent. Upon receiving parental

consent, the venue and time for an interview were scheduled accordingly. In total I recruited 27 participants whose parents gave consent and agreed that their children could voluntarily participate in the project. These participants also assented to being interviewed. Participants did not receive any compensation and no coercion was used to solicit participation. No participants had a clinical diagnosis of any kind at the time of the interviews, at least not that I knew of or that was revealed by the parents or the TCK participants at any point during the recruitment or data collection processes.

I decided to group the participants into three cohorts: middle childhood (aged 7-9 years), pre-adolescent (aged 10-12 years), and adolescent (aged 13-17 years). The cohort aged 7-9 years allowed me to recruit TCK who were of school-going age and to explore the narratives of children in lower primary school. With the cohort aged 10-12 years, I wanted to collect the stories of those in upper primary school grade or pre-adolescents and equivalent to secondary school in some European countries. The cohort aged 13 to 17 years allowed me to work with and explore the stories of TCK who had already experienced puberty and were in the active phase of identity construction.

In total, I recruited three cohorts of children under the age of 17: cohort 1 ($N_{age\ 7-9} = 7$), cohort 2 ($N_{age\ 10-12} = 13$), and cohort 3 ($N_{age\ 13-17} = 7$). Among the participants, four were single children, four were twin brothers (9M12 and 10M12; 7M11 and 8M11), and the rest had at least one older or younger sibling. Two of the younger participants had relocated only twice, while 12 participants had relocated three times, another 12 had relocated four times, and one participant had relocated five times by the age of 8. In line with the number of relocations, participants had changed schools (i.e., between 2 and 6 times) and spoke two to four languages.

The parents of the participants included five mono-culture, thirteen bicultural and nine multi-culture families. Whereas monoculture parents were of the same ethnic origins, bicultural parents had different ethnic origins. In this study, multiracial parents referred to parents where either one or both of the parents had more than one ethnic origin, such as the father being Chinese-American and the mother being Indian-British. All cases where the parents had dual citizenship or multi-ethnicity are noted in Table 3.1. As per their education levels, the majority of the fathers had earned a university degree, with only two fathers having higher education training diplomas. The mother's education level varied from high school diploma to university degree. Fathers were the main source of income pursuing careers outside their home country in order to gain better earnings, higher management positions, or greater business opportunities. The range of professions of the fathers varied greatly, including those who gained overseas assignments due to their high-skilled expertise, those who were pursuing self-initiated overseas jobs (i.e., lecturers, pilots, photographers, fashion designers) and those who simply wanted a new challenge in their careers (e.g., hoteliers, construction engineers). Both parents of 9F11 and 13M13 (they are siblings) moved to another country to continue postdoctoral study, while the father of participant 12F15 was self-employed. Participant 13F16 had returned to her passport country with her mother to attend preparatory school prior to going to university. The families of two other siblings, 5F10 and 11M13, were recently repatriated by the sponsoring organization. The full demographic data of the participants of Study 1 is presented in Table 3.1 below.

3.2.2 Recruitment of participants for Study 2

The adult TCK for Study 2 were invited to participate in the study via an online snowball-sampling method (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Penrod, Preston, Cain, &

Starks, 2003) and by requesting participation from TCK on tckworld.com, tckacademy.com, tck.com, and denizenmag.com, as well as approaching several TCK groups on Facebook (Figure 3.1). Recruited participants were asked to join the specially created online Facebook focus group in order to participate in the study (see 3.6.2 below for discussion of procedures).

Anastasia Lijadi

November 28, 2013 · Macau

Dear TCK, I need a big favour from you, for my PhD research. If you are aged 18 and above, have lived at least in 3 different countries during your formative years (0-18 years), and have parents from the business, education or NGO sectors, I would like to invite you to join a focus group chat in a secret group in Facebook on the issue of high mobility lifestyle and place identity. The date and time for our chat will be advised once I have enough participants. I believe that this type of study will allow me to reach TCK all over the world and without any time zone difficulties. Please let me know if you are willing to participate. I will send detail in a private message. Looking forward to hear from you.

Figure 3.1 The post of my research project information on Facebook.

In total, 33 adult TCK responded to the invitation for the online focus groups. I cautiously grouped the participants in three cohorts: aged 19-30 years, aged 31-39 years, and aged 40 years and above so I could capture the voices of the young adults, the adults with family and young children, and the adults who were launching their children to college as I believed their stories would reveal different meanings of the high mobility lifestyles they lead during their early developmental years.

Cohort 1 ($N_{age\ 18-30} = 13$; eight female and five male, $M = 23$ years) included participants whom Arnett (2000) would call emerging adults. Participants in this cohort were all in the process of further education or early career development.

Cohort 2 ($N_{age\ 31-40} = 10$; seven female and three male, $M = 38.6$ years) consisted of adults who were raising children while pursuing a high mobility lifestyle. The age of

first marriage worldwide has changed greatly over the decades. For example, in 2013 American women and men entered marriage at age 27 and 29 respectively, compared to the 1960s when the age of first marriage was 20 for women and 22.8 for men (www.census.gov). Therefore, I was confident grouping these participants in the adult phase of life. The adult TCK who were already in the launching phase of the family life cycle (i.e., those aged 40 and above) were assigned to Cohort 3 ($N_{age\ 40\ and\ above} = 10$; six females and four male, $M = 49.2$ years). All participants in Study 2 complied with the criteria set for this study (see above) and were the offspring of parents who worked in three different sponsoring organizations ($N_{business} = 25$, $N_{diplomat} = 6$, and $N_{missionary} = 2$) with an average, 4.5 relocations during their developmental years (i.e., before age 18 years). They all have graduated from high school and spoke on average three different languages.

3.3 Ethical Consideration

In both Study 1 and Study 2, I have addressed the ethical considerations ensuring the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of all participants. The recruitment of participants aged 17 years and below was conducted through the parent and with parental consent, which meant that parents were notified and had to agree that their minor children could legally participate in the research. The child participants were also asked to give assent prior to proceeding with the interview. The parents and the participant were informed that they could withdraw permission to participate at any time and without any consequence.

Table 3.1

Demographic data of participants of Study 1

No.	Participant	Age	Siblings	Sponsoring organization	Father	Mother	Father education	Mother education	No. of relocation	No. of schools	Language fluency	Family current status
1	1F7	7	1	Accountant	Multiracial	Monoculture	Diploma	Diploma	4	2	2	On the move
2	2F7	7.5	1	Aviation	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	High School	3	2	1	On the move
3	2M8	8	1	Construction	Monoculture	Monoculture	Diploma	University	3	3	2	On the move
4	1M8	8	1	Hotel Industry	Monoculture	Bicultural	University	University	3	3	3	On the move
5	3F8	8	Single	Hotel Industry	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	Diploma	5	1	2	On the move
6	4M9	9	1	Aviation	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	High School	3	3	2	On the move
7	3M9	9	1	Construction	Monoculture	Monoculture	Diploma	University	3	3	2	On the move
8	5M10	10	1	Accountant	Multiracial	Monoculture	University	University	4	3	2	On the move
9	5F10	10	1	Accountant	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	University	4	4	2	Repatriate
10	4F10	10	2	Education	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	University	3	3	2	On the move
11	6F10	10	1	Hospitality Industry	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	University	3	2	3	On the move
12	6M11	11	1	Construction	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	Diploma	4	3	3	On the move
13	7F11	11	1	Accountant	Monoculture	Bicultural	University	University	2	3	3	On the move
14	9F11	11	1	Education	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	University	3	5	3	On the move
15	7M11	11	Twin	Hotel Industry	Bicultural	Monoculture	University	University	4	5	3	On the move
16	8M11	11	Twin	Hotel Industry	Multicultural	Monoculture	University	University	4	5	3	On the move
17	8F11	11	1	Hotel Industry	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	High School	3	2	2	On the move
18	9M12	12	Twin	Construction	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	High School	3	2	2	On the move
19	10M12	12	Twin	Construction	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	High School	3	2	2	On the move
20	10F12	12	1	Hotel Industry	Bicultural	Monoculture	University	University	4	5	3	On the move
21	11M13	13	Single	Accountant	Bicultural	Bicultural	University	University	4	4	2	Repatriate
22	12M13	13	1	Accountant	Monoculture	Bicultural	University	University	3	4	4	On the move
23	13M13	13	1	Education	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	University	3	6	3	On the move
24	11F14	14	1	Hotel Industry	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	University	2	4	3	On the move
25	14M15	15	1	Hotel Industry	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	University	4	4	3	On the move
26	12F15	15	Single	Self Employed	Monoculture	Monoculture	University	High School	3	3	3	On the move
27	13F16	16	Single	Hotel Industry	Bicultural	Bicultural	University	University	4	4	4	Repatriate

All of the adult TCK who participated in Study 2 gave authorized consent for their written comments to be used for research purposes in my project. I also asked participants to keep all discussions within the group and not to share these with anyone (Zimmer, 2010). I discouraged the participants from exposing any personal identification such as address, email address or other contact information to other participants during the online focus group discussions. Due to the nature of the Facebook focus groups (see also 3.5.2 below) I, as the administrator or moderator of the focus group, needed to befriend participants in order to invite them to the group. Thus, as the moderator, I might have needed access to the personal page of the participants. I purposefully informed the participants of this situation during the recruitment process and fully respected the privacy and confidentiality of participants by removing any information that might identify the participants.

In analysing and reporting the outcomes of Study 1 as well as of Study 2, pseudonyms or codes were used and all relevant information such as the name of sponsoring organizations, names of countries and names of school were removed. Photos or other significant identifications were changed or deleted.

3.4 Data Collection

As indicated above, I adopted qualitative methodologies for this project. In Study 1, I used the Collage Life-story Elicitation Technique (CLET, Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013) to engage the young participants and gather narratives of their perceptions as TCK of a place called home. In Study 2, I used online focus groups to collect data from adult TCK regarding their memories of a place called home and the meanings they assigned to the places they had lived and where they were currently residing. In the following paragraphs I describe the procedures for each study in more detail.

3.4.1 Procedures for Data Collection in Study 1

The Collage Life-story Elicitation Technique (CLET) is a semi-structured interview technique aimed at scaffolding autobiographic remembering through collage making and story telling (Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013). The CLET was considered viable to shape the direction, depth and richness of the stories of the young participants and gather narratives of TCK. The CLET has proved to be an effective tool, assisting children across cultures to narrate their stories related to a particular phenomenon (Van Schalkwyk & Lijadi, in press). The CLET consists of five steps designed to elicit both verbal and non-verbal narrative representations during a semi-structured interview lasting approximately 60 to 90 minutes. As proposed, the five steps unfolded sequentially allowing participants to remember and reflect upon earlier experiences of a place called home.

- (i) Step 1: Collage making. The participants were asked to make a collage on A3 size paper using images from print media sources, websites or photos and guided by the question: “How does this picture/image/drawing represent the place(s) you call home?” Participants were encouraged to gather at least 10 images as representations of their memories. They could cut and paste the images in any way they preferred in order to create a non-verbal narrative related to the topic.
- (ii) Step 2: Storytelling or micro-narrative construction. Participants were asked to tell a story related to each of the images on the collage and in any order they preferred. I guided their story telling with three questions: (a) How does the image/picture represent a place called home to you? (b) Why did you choose this image/picture to represent a place called home? (c) Why is this image/picture important to you?

- (iii) Step 3: Positioning of the self and eliciting silent voices. After telling the story of each image, participants were asked (a) where they would want to paste their own photo on the collage, and (b) if there was any image that they could not find but wished to add to the collage.
- (iv) Step 4: Juxtaposition. In trying to explicate the dynamic conflict that might underlie their high mobility lifestyle, I guided the young TCK in identifying differences and similarities between images on the collage and in their narratives. I asked them to choose two images in the collage that had the same meaning and one image that had a different meaning, and then to compare the images explaining why they chose these images and what the differences and similarities were.
- (v) Step 5: Reflection. Finally, the TCK were asked about their overall thoughts and emotions after completion of the CLET, and I provided some debriefing if necessary and to avoid distress because of recalling early memories.

With the CLET, the young TCK could disclose their memories of experiences living in many places—their past and present experiences—in a narrative form that made sense to them. For example, younger TCK might have difficulty recalling details of their earliest memories of going to an international school, only remembering more recent experiences. In capturing their early experiences using pictures (non-verbal narratives in collage making), the TCK could remember their feelings and significant memories by telling stories (verbal narratives) of their social interactions in prior schools. The international school is for many TCK a primal landscape where they interacted with others like themselves. Remembering significant events related to changing schools that the TCK considered worth telling could express what they considered a place called home.

Twenty TCK participants were interviewed face-to-face in Macau and Hong Kong, whereas interviews with seven other participants who resided outside of Macau and Hong Kong were conducted using a written format that was followed up by email or Skype. For the written format, participating TCK were provided with a booklet explicating the five steps and after completion, the collage and written narratives were returned to me via email. I also followed up with a Skype interview to ensure the richness of the data. Completion of the CLET in the face-to-face interviews took about 60 to 90 minutes per participant and interviews were conducted either at the university, the public library or at the residence of the participant. In summary data generated from the 27 participants in Study 1 were non-verbal and verbal narratives, in the form of collages, audio files or written text resulting from the CLET semi-structured interviews with child TCK. All interviews were conducted in English and audio files were transcribed to create the textual data for analysis.

3.4.2 Procedures for Data Collection in Study 2

In Study 2, I used focus groups to collect data from adult TCK regarding their memories and perceptions of a place called home during their formative years. Given the geographic distance of participants to my current location, I chose online focus groups as opposed to face-to-face focus groups (Graffigna & Bosio, 2006). The online focus group enabled me to employ virtual communication (real time audio, text or face-to-face) in a moderated, pre-designed, online discussion in order to explore the topic of my research (Schneider, Kerwin, Frechtling, & Vivari, 2002; Stancanelli, 2010; Williams, Clausen, Robertson, Peacock, & McPherson, 2012). Online focus groups could be conducted synchronously (real time audio or text) or asynchronously (mostly text-based). Synchronous focus groups occurred in real-

time and required participants and researchers to join at the same pre-arranged time. Asynchronous focus groups allowed greater time flexibility and typically used online discussion boards or forums allowing participants to read the questions and have more time to recall their life experiences, reflect, think, and search for extra information before contributing to the discussion. Thus, I decided to conduct asynchronous online focus groups, as it would have been very difficult to ask participating TCK from all over the world to be online at the same time and to conduct real time discussions.

Scholars have been reporting on the pros and cons of using online focus groups, compared with the traditional face-to-face focus group (see Brügger & Willems, 2009; Kerr & Murthy, 2004; Murgado-Armenteros, Torres-Ruiz & Vega-Zamora, 2012; Qiu & McDougall, 2013; Underhill & Olmsted, 2003). Some of the advantages for my study were that online focus groups could help reduce costs and remove the time and geographical constraints involved in fieldwork as participants could log in anytime anywhere when it was convenient for them. Furthermore, the physical absence of the participants (White & Thomson, 1995) and psychological distance of the Internet could stimulate group participation and boost self-disclosure, especially for individuals who might otherwise have hesitated to participate in a face-to-face focus group (Reid & Reid, 2005). The anonymity of the Internet posed a threat of possibly recruiting fraudulent participants (Greenbaum, 1998, 2003; Reid & Reid, 2005), which meant that I had to devise strategies ensuring the respondent really was who he or she claimed to be. Concerns over the participant's confidentiality was overcome with them taking on or being assigned pseudonyms.

Furthermore, there is a rapidly growing literature dedicated to the study of the impact of Facebook on social life, and the utility of Facebook as a novel tool for

researchers to observe behaviour in a naturalistic setting, test hypotheses and recruit participants (see review of 412 academic journals studying Facebook phenomenon by Wilson, Gosling, & Graham, 2012). Facebook also allows for the formation of groups as a means for users to interact closely and according to a certain social agenda. The initiator of such a group acts as a moderator, who invites other Facebook users to join the group, or who might get requests from other Facebook users to join the group.

The core of the Facebook group experience is that it focuses on the user's ability to (a) post and share relevant information that might be beneficial for the group members, (b) raise awareness on certain issues related to the group description and purposes, (c) raise questions on certain issues, (d) get consensus or gain understanding on the member's perspective on certain issues, and (e) "meet" new people who shared similar interests. Two features of Facebook that promote communication within a group is the *newsfeed* by the administrator or moderator and/or the members, and a *message* system that allows for private communication between members.

I chose to use Facebook as a platform for setting up and conducting asynchronous online focus groups for Study 2. This was deemed viable, as there are over 1,500 individuals who claimed to be TCK and who had already formed their own groups. Facebook also connected global and local people who were geographically apart while at the same time allowing for meaningful interactions in communities of like-minded locals (Backstrom, 2011). Furthermore, Facebook recently added a secret group formation capability with strict confidentiality, and a privacy setting that allows only the administrator or moderator to control the membership. Interactions within the group are only available to members—no users

outside the group can find or see the group's existence and activities (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, in press). In total, I conducted and moderated seven Facebook focus group sessions during the period from December 2013 until March 2014. The discussions were already in written format, and I collated them according to the three cohorts. I also removed all identifiable information of participants, using pseudonyms to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participant TCK in Study 2.

3.5 Data Management and Analysis

Study 1 and Study 2 both provided rich narratives as textual data for analysis. Prior to proceeding with the analysis, I needed to organise the collected data systematically and according to prescriptions for creating field texts for the CLET and focus groups. The audio files of face-to-face CLET interviews were transcribed and all identifiable information, in all the data sets, was removed to protect the privacy of participants when collaborators assisted with the analysis. In the following sections, I describe the data analysis for the two studies and in the next two chapters present the findings.

3.5.1 Data Management and Analysis of Study 1

The CLET data in Study 1 was used to create a protocol or story grid for each participant including (i) biographic information, (ii) the collage transcript (non-verbal narratives), and (iii) the story map consisting of 10-12 micro-narratives (depending on the number of images on the collage) as well as stories regarding the I-positioning, silent voice, and juxtaposition. The story grids provided the final texts for conducting further analysis concerning the memories and meanings that were constructed by the participants. All protocols were archived electronically and

according to ethical instructions for psychological research. Names, countries and other identifiable affiliations were changed, and pseudonyms were used to protect their identities. The pseudonyms I assigned to each participant comprised a code involving a number, gender and age—that is, for example, 1F8 represented TCK participant number 1 who was female and 8 years old while 1M8 referred to participant number 1 who was male and 8 years old.



Figure 3.2 Collage of participant 2F7 and denotation inventory

I developed a Microsoft Excel spread sheet to record the biographical information of all the participants and to group them according to cohort. In order to analyse the collages, I created a collage transcript (in PowerPoint) for each participant and duplicated the collage by covering the images with a text box containing a denotation for that image (Figure 3.2). The images were numbered according to the sequence of the micro-narratives and the self-positioning was marked with a red-coloured X (see Figure 3.2). The 27 collages were examined to

ensure no violation of privacy and confidentiality of the participants and their family (e.g., in photos of parents and siblings, eyes were covered to conceal identity).

For the analysis of the micro narratives, I collated the stories for each participant in a table (Figure 3.3) with the image number, denotation inventory, and the story as told by the participant—that is, in her or his own words and without correcting the grammar or language. This allowed me to maintain the authenticity of each participant’s voice in a particular time, place and setting. The micro narratives were transcribed, read thoroughly and repetitively, and pseudonyms assigned where necessary.

Image No.	Denotation	Summary	Participant’s self-defining memories (verbatim without editing)
1.	Camera	Camera leads our life.	My father is a photographer, our life is surrounded by camera. Wherever the camera takes which is his job, we have to go with it. So the camera is really a big thing in our family. I was born in America. The camera took us to Taiwan, Shanghai and Macau.
2.	A girl	I learn to like art from my father. My father introduces my family to the new places	This girl is captured very artistically. Personally, I am very into art. And my father, he is constantly capturing art. When he does capture that art, he brings us to it. So when he sees like a cool destination in Macau, like somewhere in old Macau, he would take us there have lunch or something. He would show us around and we would look around and things like that.
3.	Three fashion girls	Different place different culture, including people, fashion, food, lifestyle, etc.	Everywhere we move, there were different fashions. Sometimes they can be super wacky and sometimes they are super bland. But each place even they are all in China, they are very different. People is also different. Like Taiwan people, they are super nice.

Figure 3.3 Part of Story grid of participant 12F15

I analysed of collage construction and micro narratives as guided in the CLET protocol developed by Van Schalkwyk (2010; 2013) to explore how the participants recalled their memories of a place called home (Table 3.2).

Congruence of the data was analysed to determine whether the collage was and the narratives was relevant to the topic, namely a place called home. With

regard to the I-positioning, I assumed that the participants would become aware of emerging possibilities to position themselves in their own stories. Thus, I examined the collages and micro narratives to see whether the participants would claim ownership of the story by positioning themselves in the middle of the collage, or whether they would rather move away from the story by positioning themselves in the periphery of the collage.

Table 3.2

Categories for Analysing the CLET Protocol

Category	Description	Analytic action and coding
Congruence	Indicates the use of images to scaffold the narrative process.	Overall 1 = related to the topic, and 2 = unrelated to the topic
Positioning of self	The underlying positioning of self-in-the-world as authentic author of the memories (dimension A) and in self-to-others relationship (dimension B)	The representation of self on two dimensions: A – player-spectator B – distance-closeness to others (people)
Silent Voice	The recognition and nature of the silent voice	Analysing the voice(s) that was absent from the collage and narratives.
Juxtaposition	The conflict or problematic relevant to the topic and below the level of awareness	Emerging themes of potential concerns that could serve as hypotheses for intervention planning

The I-positioning could also distinguish which of the non-verbal and verbal narratives were most significant to them with regard to the place they called home—that is, when they positioned themselves in one particular image or space on the collage I interpreted this as their representation of place they would like to call home. In analysing the silent voice, I observed whether the participants were able to present stories that just popped up in their mind or whether they could recall other memories that had not been narrated before and that had relevance to the topic. The function of the silent voice was also to add the missing story or figure to complete the whole

narrative. Analysis of juxtaposition was conducted to explore which narratives had the same or different meanings, and whether these meanings could be relevant to the challenges they faced as TCK living a high mobility lifestyle.

All the units retrieved from the narratives of TCK were thus analysed to gain a deeper understanding of how each cohort of TCK made sense of a place called home and dealt with the high mobility lifestyle at their developmental stage. There were three phases of analysis for Study 1: (i) the collage analysis and (ii) the micro narrative analysis following the analytic categories, and (iii) the story grid analysis combining all analyses for each participant before continuing to conduct within cohort and across cohorts analyses.

- Phase 1: Collage analysis

All the collage transcripts were analysed by counting the number of images and categorising them according to the denotation inventory. A spreadsheet was created to calculate the images per category. The congruence of the collage and micro narratives was analysed whether the chosen images and the stories were representing the topic under investigation. The collage analysis also allowed for generating initial interpretations about the meanings that the participant attached to places where he or she has resided in the past or where he or she is residing now.

- Phase 2: Micro Narrative analysis

Subsequent to the collage analysis, the micro narratives for each participant were analysed congruence and to determine whether initial interpretations could be supported by the actual stories the participant told. Keywords were added to the spreadsheet and data saturation was achieved when the images and the micro stories told by the participant did not generate new themes pertaining to the

proposed topic. In this phase I also analysed the I-positioning, silent voice, and juxtaposition for further insights into how TCK made sense of their high mobility lifestyle.

- Phase 3: Story Grid analysis

The story grids were analysed using a thematic analysis to capture the themes related to how the young TCK constructed meaning of a place called home and created a sense of coherence despite their high mobility lifestyle. A further explication of the CLET protocol analysis is presented in Chapter 4.

All CLET data were analysed separately and independently by two collaborators and myself. Both collaborators were familiar with the CLET, namely my research supervisor who developed the technique and another doctoral candidate at the university who was also using this technique for her doctoral study. The collaborators and I employed thematic analysis approach to focus on particular rather than universal themes and patterns within the cases. The initial analysis comprised checking the CLET protocol for completeness, followed by iterative and interpretive stance for analysing the collage and the micro narratives for each participant, and completed by cross-case synthesis of the identified themes within the cohorts (Weber, 2008; Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013; Van Schalkwyk & Lijadi; in press).

I was particularly interested in how the young TCK defined a place called home, the significant others who were involved in a place called home, the experiences of leaving a place and moving into a new place, the social interaction taking place while adjusting and settling into new places, and the efforts of establishing a place called home. Therefore, the collaborators and I conducted a within-cohort analysis—first individually and then as a team—to gain a deeper sense of how each cohort experienced and made sense of their high mobility lifestyle. The

analysis involved bracketing prior understanding and identifying key phrases or meaning units that denoted themes of a place called home.

The findings from our respective analyses were discussed at weekly team meetings over two and half months during which we agreed on several common themes and patterns we believed represented a place called home for the TCK participants. Through active discussion at our weekly team meetings, the collaborators and I immersed ourselves into the data and continued our analysis looking for patterns of relocation, social interactions within the family and with peers and community, and the thoughts and feelings regarding places the TCK have lived. Discussions were concluded when we reached consensus on what we believed to be the emerging meaning units and themes representing a place called home, along with the place identity construction process for young TCK in each cohort. Conducting further discussions with my supervisor and incorporating the field notes, as well as reviewing existing literature on TCK assisted me in refining the meaning units and themes. In the next chapter, I will discuss the themes and patterns for each cohort and the young TCK adding excerpts from the original texts to support the interpretations.

3.5.2 Data Management and Analysis for Study 2

Study 2 generated rich texts or narratives from each online focus group. The textual data for Study 2 amounted to seven transcripts averaging 6,800 words each and included all the contributions and responses from the focus group members regarding the TCK-related topics discussed in the secret Facebook group. The data included non-verbal symbols and speech acts used in online communication, photos and links to other websites. The non-verbal communication symbols were read and interpreted along with the text. For example, a text/narrative ending with many

exclamation marks (e.g., !!!!!) was considered a strong comment with which the participant was trying to convince other focus group participants while a text/narrative ending with many period markings (e.g.,) was considered as an intention not to make any claims and to give room for interpretation or an invitation to other participants to add further comments. The emoticons were easy to recognize and were copied into text to retain originality. Photos were kept on file but were not analysed. Some participants also introduced links to TCK blogs or short stories and these were treated as e-field observation (see discussion of this feature in Chapter 5).

The textual data for Study 2 were analysed individually and then collaboratively with my research supervisor using thematic analysis. We started with the analysis for each focus group separately before conducting a cross-case analysis within the cohorts. The analysis aimed to identify particular meaning units as themes and patterns emerging from the adult TCK memories of early and more recent experiences living a high mobility lifestyle.

In the first stage of analysing the narratives elicited from each cohort, we conducted a thorough reading and re-reading of the narratives and coding for significant words or utterances. Subsequently, we collated the codes looking for emerging meaning units and patterns. These patterns were added to a spreadsheet as themes involving recurring patterns of meaning (i.e., thoughts and feelings) throughout the text. The themes thus enabled us to identify what *mattered* to the participants and also suggested the *meanings* for the participants. In the second stage, the themes were clustered together under much broader categories of interrelated themes. In the final stage, excerpts and quotes from the original texts were added to support the emerging categories. The process was iterative and analysis and discussion continued until my supervisor and I reached consensus that no more

categories were emerging from the narratives presented by the adult TCK. The objective in Study 2 was to obtain a detailed and broad description of how TCK made sense of their international mobility and constructed and reconstructed their place identity during their formative years and later in life. The findings from Study 2 are discussed in Chapter 5.

3.6 Trustworthiness and Credibility

In both Study 1 and Study 2 trustworthiness and credibility were established by transparency in all stages of the research, through triangulation, collaboration with experts, and by managing subjectivities. Each of the participating TCK had experienced different relocations and various lengths of stay in any one place. Therefore, there was a lot of variance in the demographic profiles as well as the remembered experiences of the TCK who participated in both studies. The reader is advised to consult the appendices for more detailed content of the data and transcripts collected for this research project.

Triangulation was achieved when I carefully reviewed and integrated existing literature on TCK, critically analysing and interpreting all materials, and utilising third party analyses to confirm my interpretations and representations of the data (Haverkamp, 2005; Morrow, 2005). For example, I invited collaborators to assist in data analysis and interpretation. In Study 1, two collaborators were invited—that is, my supervisor and the originator of the CLET, and a graduate student who had been trained to utilize the CLET method. In Study 2, my supervisor who is experienced with thematic analysis was the collaborator. In both studies, the collaborators and I conducted individual analyses. We then discussed our interpretations and clarified differences in regular team meetings before reaching consensus on the final interpretations that I presented in the rest of my dissertation.

Throughout the analysis and interpretation, I aimed to maximise the voices of the participating TCK, as I wanted this to be their stories, not mine. In the next chapters I present the findings staying as close as possible to the original data and representing the meanings as narrated by the participants. I also minimised potential biases of my own insider-outsider perspective (Hosking & Pluut, 2010) because of my immersion in the TCK community raising two TCK by regularly discussing my interpretations with my supervisor who was able to identify my biases and steer me in the right direction.

Subjectivity in qualitative research is unavoidable (Drapeau, 2002). However, as a reflexive researcher I am aware that it is impossible to remove myself from the process of data generation and data analysis. I therefore incorporated reflexivity (Hosking & Pluut, 2010; Watt, 2007) throughout the research design and execution, and kept a journal from the early stages of my research. My reflective journal included my thoughts and feelings when I decided to choose the topic of TCK for my doctoral study, my experiences when I contacted friends I knew from places I lived before, my challenges in conducting the CLET—in particular the written CLET—and my many sleepless nights during the Facebook focus group discussions which gave me valuable knowhow on conducting the online focus group. I include some of the entries in the journal in my reflexivity report in the epilogue to this dissertation. Being close to the topic gave me great motivation to complete the research and this dissertation, and avoid what Watt (2007) warned against fading-out interest to the topic as the research progressed. Being a mother of TCK, I also had a very good reason to understand this phenomenon.

3.7 Concluding Remarks regarding the Methodology

In many ways this study and my dissertation regarding the place identity of

TCK is a first and thus an important contribution to the knowledge base for this unique group of global citizens. It is the first study exploring the voices of young TCK aged 7 years and above. It is also the first study using asynchronous online Facebook focus groups with adult TCK. It is the first study to coherently and empirically investigate the TCK phenomenon using qualitative methodologies and focusing on the impact of a high mobility lifestyle on the place identity construction process across the lifespan. Thus, this dissertation added not only to the literature on TCK, but also to the utilization of two novel methods in qualitative research.

The CLET in Study 1 and the Facebook focus group in Study 2 were relatively novel methods for collecting data. My supervisor initiated the CLET as a qualitative method for narrative data collection (Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013), and employing the CLET in Study 1 allowed me to assist with refining the method both in terms of the procedures for data collection and the analysis. Despite some challenges conducting the CLET in written format, the CLET proved to be inexpensive and easy to administer to participants as young as seven years. The materials needed for collage making were easily obtained and available (i.e., various printed materials, including locally or culturally relevant magazines). I simply used various types of magazines available at my home (i.e., design/architecture, flying, cooking, dancing, parenting, psychology) and life-style magazines (i.e., travel, sport, fashion, housekeeping, well-being, cooking, car, children, business, music, home and gardening) in several languages. While conducting the CLET, I witnessed that TCK from multi-cultural families were more open and flexible in their selection of magazines for the collage making, compared with mono-culture TCK. Through this project I was also able to extend the utilization of the CLET to multicultural participants such as TCK, thus adding further evidence of the method's usefulness

for research purposes.

I initiated the online asynchronous focus group via Facebook method by myself and as far as my knowledge goes, this method has not been used in any research before (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, in press). Adult TCK are hard-to-reach participants because they live all over the world, and accessing participants for a discovery-oriented qualitative research using focus groups difficult and costly. Conducting online focus groups using the secret Facebook setting made it easier to access eligible respondents globally and elicit rich narratives from these participants. A limitation of the Facebook focus groups was that participants were limited to only TCK who lived in countries with access to the Internet and who were Facebook users. There were also challenges monitoring and keeping track of discussions that evolved within each group, particularly given that I conducted several focus groups at the same time. Nonetheless, I successfully utilised Facebook focus groups in Study 2, including both recruitment and data collection processes (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, in press). As adult TCK are hidden within the societies where they live and scattered around the world, the availability and accessibility of the Facebook online focus groups proved to be effective for reaching out and inviting these TCK to participate in my study and contribute their valuable stories.

Chapter 4. Findings for Study 1

*We all know that art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize the truth,
at least the truth that is given to us to understand.
-- Pablo Picasso, Painter*

In Study 1, I explored the voices of 27 young TCK aged 7 to 17 years on how they made sense of their high mobility lifestyle, using an ethnographic approach (Griffin & Bengry-Howell, 2008) combined with narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). A child friendly semi-structured interview technique, the Collage Life-story Elicitation Technique (CLET; Van Schalkwyk, 2010, 2013) was used to engage the participants in shaping the direction, depth and extent of their narratives about their perception of *a place called home*. I used thematic analysis to analyse the narratives. The interpretation of narratives was idiographic—that is, based on particularization rather than universality—and inductive, using themes to generate abstract categorization and discussion of the meaning units (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000; Smith & Osborn, 2003). The study's focus was progressively narrowed and questions were concentrated on emergent themes. Employing various methods such as prolonged engagement, triangulation of data sources and member checking assisted me in attaining a high level of trustworthiness in the interpretations and findings.

In this chapter, I present the findings from a rigorous analysis for all the protocols of Study 1, including the original collages and excerpts from the narratives in support of the interpretations. In Chapter 6, the findings will be discussed within a coherent framework leading to development of a coherent theory of place identity construction for TCK.

4.1 CLET Protocol Analysis

The CLET protocols were analysed according to cohort categorization. Cohort 1 included TCK in middle childhood (aged 7-9 years), Cohort 2 the TCK in pre-adolescence (aged 10-12 years), and Cohort 3 the adolescent TCK (aged 13-18 years old). The analysis of the CLET protocols was first conducted for each individual collage (non-verbal narrative), then for the micro-narratives (verbal narrative), and lastly for the whole story grid including both verbal and non-verbal narratives (see Figure 4.1 for an example of the analysis).

The analysis of the collage and the micro narratives involved categorization of the images (images were grouped into human related and non human related images such as artefacts, nature, objects in the house and transportation), and congruence (Van Schalkwyk, 2010; 2013; the relevance of the story to the topic of the study). The analysis of the story grids also included I-positioning (the underlying positioning of self-in-the-world as authentic author of the memories and in self-to-others relationship), silent voice (the voice(s) that were absent from the collage and narratives), and juxtaposition (the emerging themes of potential concerns that could serve as hypotheses for intervention planning). Two collaborators, my thesis supervisor (who was also the developer of the CLET) and a graduate student who had been trained in the use of the CLET each conducted the same CLET protocol analyses. Any discrepancy was clarified and re-analysed until the collaborators reached full agreement of the coding for all the protocols.

The CLET protocol for a representative participant in Study is presented in Figure 4.1 below. As expected, the collage includes 10 images and on average the collages for all participants complied with this expectation (see Appendix VI.) Each row represents a separate unit of the analysis for the collage and for the micro

narratives in terms of: the nature of the images, congruence, I-positioning, silent voice and juxtaposition. In order to make a congruent analysis, the images in the collage were numbered from 1 to 10 corresponding to the order in which the participant told the stories (micro narratives) (row 2 of the collage column). The micro narratives were represented by replacing the images with key words from the stories told by the TCK told (row 2 in the micro narrative column). In the third and subsequent rows I present the scores calculated for the different categories for the collage and micro-narratives, and discuss this in more detail below.

The CLET protocol for participant 2F7 (Figure 4.1) is used as an illustration of the CLET analysis. The identifying code (2F7) indicates that this is the CLET protocol for participant number 2, who is female, and who is 7 years of age. Row 3 of the protocol indicates that 2F7 included two human related images, seven artefacts and one object, a total 10 images on the collage. The participant 2F7 told her stories starting with the top right-hand image (image number 1), then moved to the top left-hand image (image number 2), and then jumped to the bottom right-hand image (image number 3) and so forth. Therefore, the collaborators and myself agreed that the collage was created based on random remembering of the topic under investigation. In the micro narratives, participant 2F7 described her perception of a place called home as the country where she was born, a country with a famous waterfall and many lotus flowers. We could confirm from her biographic data that the participant had left her country of origin at the very young age of two, but regularly visited the country for summer holidays. Furthermore, participant 2F7 also continued to tell stories of her memories of things she had done in her birth country—which happened during summer holidays—such as getting her first bicycle which her father taught her to ride, picnicking with her godparents, watching TV,

camping in her grandmother's backyard, and participating in her first triathlon. She never mentioned other places where she has lived since leaving her home country, not even the current place where the family resides almost as though these (new) places were not significant to her. Instead, she told a story of familiar activities and more recent memories that were meaningful to her such as her father making pancakes every Sunday and her favourite food (lasagne) cooked by her mother. The collaborators and I agreed that in her stories, 2F7 was the main character even though events were not chronologically remembered.

Continuing to the CLET protocol of participant 2F7, row 4 represents the analysis for congruence—that is, whether the collage and micro narratives were related to the topic under investigation. The collaborators and I agreed that congruence of both the collage and micro-narratives was achieved as both revealed stories of a place called home, and we assigned a score of 1 indicating high relation to the topic. For I-positioning (row 5), 2F7 positioned herself on the periphery of the collage and on the image of a waterfall that reminded her of home in her story telling. This I-positioning was interpreted as that 2F7 saw herself on the periphery of her story as the spectator but with a sense of what she considered to be home (i.e., her passport country). Row 6 on the CLET protocol represents the silent voice category. Participant 2F7 did not want to add any further images or stories (score of nil) and she was seemingly content with her description of a place called home (“my home is in [Country name]”).

In the last row (row 7), the participant's responses to juxtaposition (Step 4 in the CLET) were recorded. She chose images of food she usually ate and compared them with the image of the waterfall. We interpreted this as participant 2F7 being aware of an underlying conflict regarding where home could be. She could get the

same food anywhere (such as pancakes or lasagne) but she could not always be at the place she perceived to be home (the waterfall). During the final reflection of her participation in the CLET, 2F7 also mentioned that her family planned on returning home in five years time, which gave her hope for the future in re-establishing her place attachment to the place she considered to be home.

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives											
<p>2F7 Relocation: 3 times, at age 2, 6 and 7</p> <p>Current status: on the move</p>		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lotus Flowers in [country]</td> <td>My mother likes massage (7)</td> <td>I am from Canada (1) X</td> <td rowspan="2">My first bike in [country], my dad taught me</td> </tr> <tr> <td>We did a lot of picnic in [country]</td> <td>We watched TV (4)</td> <td>We did camping in our backyard (6)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I like lasagna (8)</td> <td>My first triathlon (10)</td> <td colspan="2">My father made pancake on Sunday (9)</td> </tr> </table>	Lotus Flowers in [country]	My mother likes massage (7)	I am from Canada (1) X	My first bike in [country], my dad taught me	We did a lot of picnic in [country]	We watched TV (4)	We did camping in our backyard (6)	I like lasagna (8)	My first triathlon (10)	My father made pancake on Sunday (9)	
Lotus Flowers in [country]	My mother likes massage (7)	I am from Canada (1) X	My first bike in [country], my dad taught me										
We did a lot of picnic in [country]	We watched TV (4)	We did camping in our backyard (6)											
I like lasagna (8)	My first triathlon (10)	My father made pancake on Sunday (9)											
<p>Images Analysis: 10 images</p>	<p>Human related: 2 (Image 3 & 10) Artefacts: 7 (Image 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) Nature: 1 (Image 1) Objects in residence: 0 Transportation: 0</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 7 (Story 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10) No social interaction: 3 (Story 1, 2, 8)</p>											
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)											
I positioning	Spectator – at Nature	My home is in [my passport country]											
Silent Voice	Nil												
Juxtaposition	Food I ate vs. Lotus flower in my passport country												

Figure 4.1 CLET Protocol analysis for participant 2F7

The foregoing exposition of CLET protocol analysis for participant TCK 2F7 was presented to provide the reader with an understanding of the rigour with which all CLET protocols were analysed. The collaborators and I continued in this manner through all the CLET protocols, and regularly discussed our interpretations at weekly meetings until consensus was reached. We were also able to confirm that the 27 CLET protocols prepared and presented by the participating TCK provided data

saturation and that the emergent themes discussed below were a coherent representation of the lived experiences of the young TCK who participated in this project, their perceptions of a place called home, and the psychosocial tasks they faced in the process of identity construction.

4.1.1 Findings from the Collages

As representations of the self and their experiences, the images in the TCK’s collages confirmed the suggestion by Van Schalkwyk (2010) that the collages comprised “attachments to significant people, settings and actions, specific life events and experiences, moves, losses and acquisitions, successes or failures, future aspirations, or anything else that contributed to the participant’s development in one way or another” (p. 681). The collages of the young TCK revealed snapshots of life events in the places they called home. Their memories were portrayed in a variety of images in five categories (Table 4.1). The collages of the adolescent TCK in the cohort aged 13-17 years contained progressively more human-related images.

Table 4.1

Types of images in the collages of TCK participants

Type of Images	Cohort aged 7-9	Cohort aged 10-12	Cohort aged 13-17
Artefacts	31%	46%	41%
Object in the house	30%	27%	14%
Nature	26%	11%	4%
Human related images	12%	13%	39%
Transportation	1%	3%	4%

Note:

- i. Artefact images included: text, food, architecture, buildings, schools and arts
- ii. Objects in the residence included: rooms, furniture, electronic goods, phone, clothing, jewellery and toys
- iii. Nature images included: mountain, greenery, sea, beach, desert, rocky mountain, waterfall and forests
- iv. Human related images included: single person, dyad, group of people and super hero
- v. Transportation images included: car, bicycle, double decker bus, train and airplane.

The images of artefacts represent manifestations of the cultures that TCK were exposed to in the various places they had lived (i.e., architecture, landmarks of a country, food and art). The images of personal objects in the residence (i.e., type of rooms, personal belongings, electronic and communication devices, clothing, jewellery, toys and pets) are representations of how study participants perceived home at any given point in time. The human-related images represent social relationships (i.e., in the form of a single, a dyad, or a group of people). The images of nature (i.e., sea, mountain, forest, plants, garden, flowers) and means of transportation (i.e., car, speed train, double decker bus, bicycle, airplane) represent the physical landscapes of the places they called home.

From the ecological systems theory perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1986), the collages of a place called home for the TCK participants represented their non-verbal narratives in relation to each of the four ecological systems. As represented in Figure 4.2, the collage of participant 8F11 is an example of how all the participants' collages included images or non-verbal stories in each of the ecological systems. In the macro system, most of the non-verbal narratives revolved around cultural artefacts, symbols, landscapes and natural phenomena (e.g., a waterfall or a serene beach), architecture (e.g., historical buildings) and food, all of which were evident in the many places where the participants had lived and/or visited. Within the macro system context, TCK considered home to be all the places they have lived or visited, as these places had been experienced and had become the backdrop of events in their lives. Interestingly, some participants pasted landscapes of more than three countries.

In the exosystem the TCK pasted images related to their school and school-related activities, places their parents worked (e.g., hotel or restaurant) and the unique features of specific places where they interacted with their extended families,

such as cousins, grandparents and godparents. In the mesosystem the participating TCK told non-verbal narratives related to their understanding of how people in the country of residence lived their daily lives by including images of shops, food, clothing, buildings, sports, electronic goods and furniture as well as how people interacted during celebrations, gatherings, sports events and transportation. As expected, in the microsystem, the non-verbal narratives represented the kind of life the participating TCK co-constructed in the places they called home and in interaction with the family (e.g., favourite foods, toys or sport).

As discussed in Chapter 2, home is a complex phenomenon comprised not only of physical spaces but, and maybe more importantly, social-emotional content as well. In this regard, the three cohorts of young TCK expressed the place called home on a continuum with home reflecting more physical spaces or as having more social-emotional content. In the collages of Cohort 1 (aged 7-9 years) and Cohort 2 (aged 10-12 years) we find fewer human-related images (12% and 13% respectively) compared to Cohort (aged 13-17) and the collages are rather dominated by artefacts and objects in the house (i.e., physical space called home) (Table 4.1). The collages of Cohort 3 (aged 13-17 years), on the other hand, had 39% human-related images (i.e., social-emotional content), which indicated that for them peers and social interactions—also interactions at school (exosystem)—became more dominant in their day-to-day interaction. Home for the adolescent TCK was represented in the social-emotional content rather than in physical spaces.

Participant 8F11 Collage	Micro Narratives												
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Macao (11)</td> <td>My father drinks coffee (6)</td> <td>Underwater in Australia (8)</td> <td>My mother with laptop(9)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>My father works in hotel (7)</td> <td>Macao (10)</td> <td>My father is chef (5)</td> <td>My family favorite food (4)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I was born in Bali (1)</td> <td>Art work at home in Bali(2)</td> <td colspan="2">Current home in Macau (3)</td> </tr> </table>	Macao (11)	My father drinks coffee (6)	Underwater in Australia (8)	My mother with laptop(9)	My father works in hotel (7)	Macao (10)	My father is chef (5)	My family favorite food (4)	I was born in Bali (1)	Art work at home in Bali(2)	Current home in Macau (3)	
	Macao (11)	My father drinks coffee (6)	Underwater in Australia (8)	My mother with laptop(9)									
My father works in hotel (7)	Macao (10)	My father is chef (5)	My family favorite food (4)										
I was born in Bali (1)	Art work at home in Bali(2)	Current home in Macau (3)											
Human related: 1 (image 9) Artefacts: 7 (Image 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11) Nature: 3 (Image 1, 8, 10)	Social Interaction: 8 (Story 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10) No social interaction: 3 (Story 8, 9, 11)												

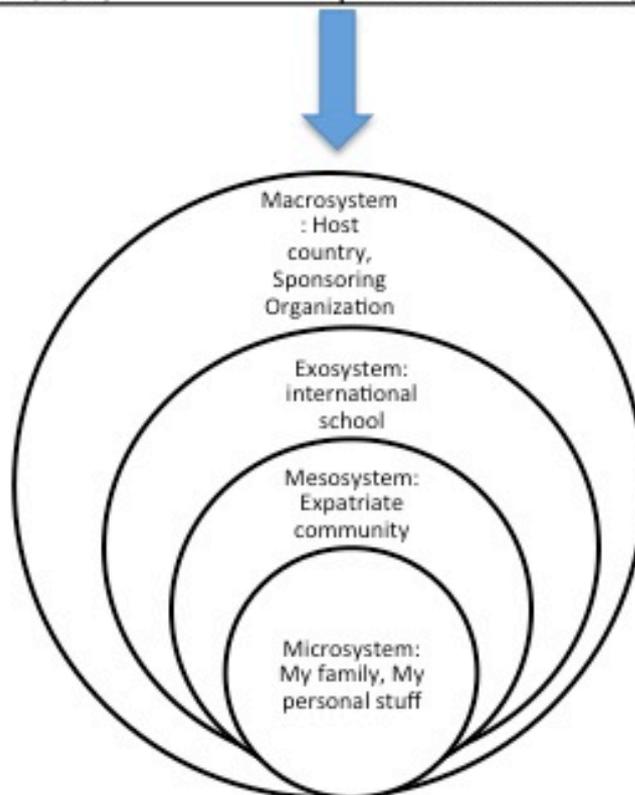


Figure 4.2 Ecological system for participant 8F11

4.1.2 Findings from the collage and micro narratives

The collages and micro narratives elicited with the CLET revealed how the participating TCK socially constructed their memories of a place called home using print media and engaging with me as the researcher. When I asked participants to tell their stories for each image on their collage, they had the option of where to start

and how to move from one image to the next in telling their stories. Some participants (i.e., 1M8, 3F8, 4F10, 6M11, and 7M11) chose the images to tell a story randomly even though the micro narratives could be presented in more chronological order (Van Schalkwyk, 2013). In other cases, the collages consisted of images pasted in sequential order from left to right and row-by-row (i.e., 9F11, 11M13, 11F14, and 14M15), or anti clockwise from the centre to the periphery (i.e., 5F10 and 9M12). Despite having some sort of order in the images, the stories of TCK participants in this study were rarely presented in chronological order. For example, one participant was telling the story of the second place where he had lived, then jumped to the current place where he lived, and then back to the place where he was born.

Brockmeier and Harre (1997) stated that the minimum requirement for a story is “characters and a plot that evolve over time” (p. 265), with a “sequential and action oriented structure” (p. 270). Across all the three cohorts, with the scaffolding effort from collage making, the participants showed that they could retrieve their memories of their life experiences in chronological order. The participants were telling about their experiences moving from one place to another, as well as highlighting places for which they might have some kind of nostalgia, in a chronological manner. While the collages were created in a mostly random order, participants told their stories in chronological order in their micro narratives. Congruence in the CLET protocols was achieved when the images and the micro narratives were related to the topic and were complementing each other. The collaborators and I agreed that the collage and the micro narratives of all cohorts showed congruence. All cohorts were able to represent non-verbal and verbal narratives of a place called home.

The memories of the young TCK about a place called home varied greatly both within and across cohort. In the cohort aged 7-9 years, several participants (2F7, 3M9 and 4M9) began their narrative with stories about the current places where they lived. Their memories were very vivid and congruent. Further stories were then told about previous places where they had lived in earlier years. Participants 2F7 and 3M9 began their stories claiming a place called home was the country where their grandparents lived, and where they visited for the summer holidays, before continuing with more stories about this particular place (i.e., the landscape, the landmark, the food, the way people commute, activities they did). In the cohort aged 10-12, some participants (i.e., 5M10, 4F10 and 6F10) started their narratives by talking about the place where they were born or where their parents originally came from. In this group, participants continued their narratives with places where they had lived and their experiences related to these places, and they then ended their stories with expressing their wishes of what they considered to be a place called home (the ideal home).

Similar findings were evident in the narratives of the cohort aged 13-17 years. However, their narratives also included the struggle and the hardship of moving between places and their perceptions of what the future will bring. Most participants in this cohort ended their story with anxiety about not knowing what the future will be (i.e., the image of a boat that will lead to an unknown future for participant 11F14 and the image of an airport from participant 13M13 showing anticipation of his next move sometime later).

4.1.3 I-positioning

Van Schalkwyk (2010) claimed that in Step 3 of the CLET, the I-positioning engaged the participant actively within his or her inner dialogue about the past and

the present and related to the topic being studied. The results of this internal dialogue regarding a place called home were evident in how participants positioned themselves in the collage and explained their decisions in the narrative. In the following section, I discuss the emerging themes from the I-positioning of the three cohorts (see Table 4.2).

a) I wish I could be somewhere else

The majority of TCK participants in the middle childhood cohort (aged 7-9) positioned themselves at the periphery of their collages (84%), almost as though expressing a wish to be somewhere else or as spectators to the unfolding story of someone else. None of the TCK in middle childhood positioned themselves at the place where they are currently living, but rather selected somewhere else (Figure 4.3). For this cohort, home was either the country where their parents came from or a place where they had a pleasant experience in their earlier childhood.

Some TCK participants in this cohort had strong place identification with the parents' passport country (i.e., 1F7, 2F7, 3M9, and 4M9). There was an indication that TCK from mono-cultural parents were more regularly exposed to the culture and country of their parents, as compared to the TCK from multi-cultural parents (i.e., 2F7 and 3M9). For example, one TCK participant in this cohort (1F7) pasted an image of a major architectural structure and heritage site in the centre of her collage and also positioned herself there (in the centre). Her story revealed that she has never lived in country A, which is the country of her parents' origin, yet she claimed: "I am proud of being [nationality]."

Other participants in this cohort positioned themselves on the periphery of their collages on images of a dream house (3F8), the place of birth (4M9), the

passport country (2F7), the grandparents’ house (3M9), and a ferry as vehicle for leaving the country (2M8, see examples in Figure 4.5). Participant 2F7 said: “My home is [country C], I was born there as were my parents and my grandparents. My mom said that we will go back to [Country C] after my dad’s five year assignment” [2F7]. Another TCK participant in this cohort (2M8), who has never lived in his passport country, said: “I want to live in [country name], it is very beautiful and green, very clean, no pollution”, referring to a place the family visited during holidays and which he considered to be idyllic.

Table 4.2

I Positioning of CLET data of TCK participants

I-Position	Cohort aged 7-9	Cohort aged 10-12	Cohort aged 13-17
The middle of collage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16% • At ethnic origin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45% • This is my life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% • This is my home
The periphery of the collage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 84% • My dream place • Place I was born • My passport country • My grandparent’s house • Leaving the country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55% • My siblings • I love this food • My dream home • Proud of myself • My pet • My first time experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29% • Different places, different food, different fashion, different way of life • Let the wind lead my life

The I-positioning of middle childhood TCK regarding a place called home represented the places for which they had fond memories and recollections from earlier years. By positioning themselves in these places, the participants remembered the activities they did with their family at home, a meaningful first time experience at home, and their wish to be somewhere else except where they currently lived. The remarks from TCK on their I-positioning might lead others to see them as arrogant, or big-headed, as though they had a sense of entitlement and could be living in any place they wished. However, with having lived in

more than three countries and travelling to many places at such a young age this has made the TCK in middle childhood think that the world was their oyster and is easily accessible to anyone. They have been exposed to many countries, languages, lifestyles and cultures and thus these TCK have been stimulated beyond what could be expected of non-TCK who have lived in only one place during their early childhood years.



Figure 4.3 Examples of I-positioning of TCK in Study 1

Furthermore, for the TCK, the CLET encouraged retrieval of memories and the making of collages stimulated recall of past actions (trial and error efforts) that might have helped in adjusting to a new place. Overwhelmed with what different places could offer, TCK in middle childhood were seemingly occupied with their own imagination of possibilities and different scenarios of what home could be.

They were not easily satisfied, and felt entitled to experience more in the next country. They formed a belief within themselves that their home could be anywhere, and they were imagining the perfect home always to be somewhere else.

b) This is my life; I am proud of myself

Almost half of the participants (45%) in the pre-adolescent cohort (TCK aged 10-12 years) positioned themselves in the middle of their collages, indicating their self-positioning as the main character in their life stories (see example 8F11 in Figure 4.5). They confirmed their ownership of their stories, commenting:

“I am in the middle [of the collage], this is my life” [4F10, 8F11 and 6M11]

“I put myself here in the blue sky, because I am flying and I can see the world. I can see my house and if someone is in my house” [8M11]

The other half of the TCK participants (55%) in this cohort positioned themselves close to the family and siblings. Family members became their constant companions while moving across borders, and represented how the socio-emotional relationships were starting to replace the physical space as representation of a place called home. Participant 10F12 positioned herself on the waffle [food] and told a story about all her family members liking to eat waffles for breakfast, while participant 7M11 put himself in the middle of three high stools representing his three siblings because he always played and shared meals with his sister and brother. From the I-positioning of pre-adolescent TCK, there was also evidence of the importance of feeling a sense of mastery and meeting social expectations, as in the self-positioning of 5F10:

“I put myself in [country name], as I was having the moment in my life there. I won many medals during sport competitions [while living there].”

c) I want to know my destiny

The I-positioning of adolescent TCK (aged 13-17 years) reflected their understanding of the many manifestations of a high mobility lifestyle. Most participants in this cohort (71%) positioned themselves in the middle of their collages, representing their position as the central character in their narratives and in their search for a coherent sense of self. Participant 12F15 positioned herself next to food, and she claimed that her parents always introduced her to the new countries by savouring their food as a way of adjusting to the high mobility lifestyle. To her, knowing how the food in the new country was cooked and how it should be enjoyed was a way of understanding the culture of the host country. On the other hand, participant 11F14 displayed her sense of bleakness, positioning herself next to a boat on the periphery of the collage and saying: “I would like to know my next destiny, my next fate.” She also recognised the need for family support, peer relationships and friendships, and education in her collage and narratives, but did not know where life would take them next—the uncertainty and challenge of being TCK.

The I-positioning of each cohort in the study (middle childhood, pre-adolescence, and adolescence) contributed to the emerging themes for TCK in making sense of their high mobility lifestyle and constructing a place identity. In their reasons for the positioning of the self, the three cohorts presented different inner dialogues and thought processes looking at their past and the present. Middle childhood TCK were using their basic senses, perceptions and concrete thinking about a place called home, which for them involved more of an ideal physical space as representation of home and the primal landscape or country where their family

came from. The other cohorts showed the development of social self—the social-emotional content of a place called home—and their acceptance of their lifestyle. As expected, the adolescents were also concerned about the future and where home would be next.

4.1.4 Silent Voice

In Step 3 of the CLET, I asked the participating TCK to identify and describe an image that they would have liked to paste on the collage but could not find in the print media available for collage making. Table 4.3 presents a summary of the descriptions of the silent voice (the missing image) that each cohort would have liked to add but could not find. As with other steps in the CLET, each cohort represented a different perception of the missing image related to a place called home.

Table 4.3

Silent Voice of CLET data of TCK participants

Cohort aged 7-9	Cohort aged 10-12	Cohort aged 13-17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • My own room • My friend's home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My mother did not do as before • Country I used to live • I want to have a dog • Friends and siblings • Mobile Phone • Toys I used to have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My father • Memorabilia • Healthy food • Happy me

The TCK cohort aged 7-9 years described the missing image in terms of safety, space, and somewhere else:

- Safety: “I would add a super hero, someone who can safe me [1M8]; and I want to add a castle, as the castle have guards so we are safe” [2M8].
- Space for the whole family: Participant 3F8 mentioned that home must have rooms for everyone, including a study room for her.

- Somewhere else or different: Participant 4M9 wished for his home to be “my friend’s house in [country name].”

The pre-adolescent TCK described the missing images as representing the losses for which they were grieving as young TCK living a high mobility lifestyle and frequently moving to a new home. For example, 4F10 spoke about the loss of the place where she used live before: “My mother used to bake, but she was no longer able to do it anymore because we do not have a good kitchen here.” Other participants grieved the loss of objects or pets. For example, participant 7F11 was missing a toy (dollhouse) she used to have, participant 8M11 wanted a phone so he could contact his friends (whom he missed/lost), and participant 8F11 wanted a house and a black dog, a pet she could have had before when living in the countryside but was no longer possible because of the small apartment in which they were now living.

Older (adolescent) TCK in the cohort aged 13-17 years again moved away from the physical to the socio-emotional content of a place called home, describing the missing image as a person or a psychological state. One participant wished to add a father figure as a reminder that due to their father’s career they were relocated in many countries. In the case of participant 12M13, he wanted to add a picture of his father whom he only met once a week due to his father working in a different city. Another participant in the adolescent cohort (13F16) described the missing image in terms of her wish to be happy in a place called home while at the same time adjusting to various places (e.g., pictures of different celebrations around the world, people, and different food).

4.1.5 Juxtaposition

In Step 4 of the CLET, participating TCK engaged in juxtaposing the

different narrative voices and inter-subjectivities about a place called home. By juxtaposing different voices, TCK were given the opportunity “to extend the self-reflective process [engaging] in dynamic dialogue with relationships and functionalities embedded in the different images on her or his collage” (Van Schalkwyk, 2010, p. 680). Some TCK participants gave credence to Van Schalkwyk’s notion, as they juxtaposed the relationships and functionality of the different images and the micro narratives of the chosen images. That is, for example, they compared indoor and outdoor activities—which they could do with their siblings—food that they ate, and different types of objects in the house, as well as comparing the difference between places where they had lived. Other participants dialogued about the causes of certain events that affected their life—that is, living in different places allowed them to learn the differences in the food, fashion, lifestyle and so forth.

The TCK in Study 1 narrated juxtapositions about their high mobility that, even though it disrupted their childhood in some way, gave them an opportunity to experience different lifestyles and environments in each country. For example, participant 7F11 juxtaposed nature (beach, rice field) vs. city. She then explained that she enjoyed the previous places she had lived as they were closer to nature (i.e., beach and rice field) and she could have relaxing life, whereas when she lived in the city, she experienced a busy lifestyle and that people were always on the move or doing something.

“Both places were natural and both were my home, but they were in different countries. One was a beach and you could lie down and be very relaxing; the other one was a big city and always busy.”

Other participants juxtaposed that they could not do many outdoors activities

as they lived in the place where there was hardly any park to play nearby (4M9 and 4F10, and 10F12). In some places, the participants could only do indoor activities such as playing board games or watching television, as there was no space to play outdoors (8M11, 8F11, and 9F12). The TCK in middle childhood juxtaposed their sensations and feelings in learning and experiencing various cultures (5M10, 7M11, and 12M13). For example, in some countries eating in public with one's hands is allowed to experience the sensation of slimy, sticky, steamy of different type of texture of the food and ingredients on your fingertips while simultaneously demonstrating the intimacy, informality and delectable ways to enjoy the food after a long working day. For the TCK (8F11, 9F11, and 5F10) such a cultural experience of eating was humbling and without pretention.

The adolescent cohort (aged 13-17 years) were reflecting more on how the positive experiences gained from a high mobility lifestyle were not bringing such a positive outcome to their current life as expected in their juxtaposition. The adolescent TCK were exhausted knowing that despite all the adventures awaiting them when moving to new places, they would need to adjust (again) and learn a new culture and language. The positive aspects were also countered by the distress of having to maintain the friendships they had built before and knowing how difficult this could be. Participant 11M13 juxtaposed places where he had lived during his father's career as accountant in different countries, and narrated his distress with having to leave behind his friends:

“My parents did not inform us about the move, they only said that we had to move. And later we found out that we are going to move to [country name]. I was quite sad, because I liked the school, and I made many good friends. I did not know much about [country name]. When I was about to leave, I tried to gather all the

contact details of my friends. I tried to keep in touch with them, by email or chat. But it was not easy. I went to a different school ... I needed to make new friends; I needed to learn a new language.”

4.2 Emerging Themes from Study 1

Whereas the collages provided initial codes, analysis of the micro-narratives, the self-positioning, the silent voices and the dynamic conflict provided a deeper understanding of the emergent themes. Throughout the analysis of the CLET protocols, the participants’ voices could be heard as they remembered their experiences and reflected upon what they considered to be a place called home. Further analysis of the CLET protocols and maintaining an awareness of the co-constructed nature of the research allowed me to identify the emerging themes in the autobiographical memories represented by the TCK who participated in Study 1. Discussions with my collaborators, minimising biases, and investigator triangulation (Creswell & Clark, 2007; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007) further assisted me in determining the grounded nature of these themes and in gaining a contextualized picture of how the young TCK made sense of their high mobility lifestyle, perceived a place called home, and attempted to construct place identity. We were also aware of the possible influences of the family background, as we had participants who came from monoculture, bicultural and multicultural background. For the purpose of this study, however, we focused on the significance of high mobility lifestyles and how the TCK constructed their place identity living in different places during their developmental years. Interpretations of the influence of culture were considered outside the scope of the present study but a possible topic for further investigation.

In the following sections, I present the six themes derived from the interpretative phenomenological analysis of all the non-verbal and verbal narratives

on the CLET protocols of participating TCK in middle childhood, pre-adolescence and adolescence. Figure 4.4 presents a summary of these themes, and serves as a reminder to the reader that the themes emerging within the younger cohorts continue in the older cohorts, while further themes are added to represent a rich and potentially valid interpretation of the meanings TCK attributed to their high mobility lifestyle.

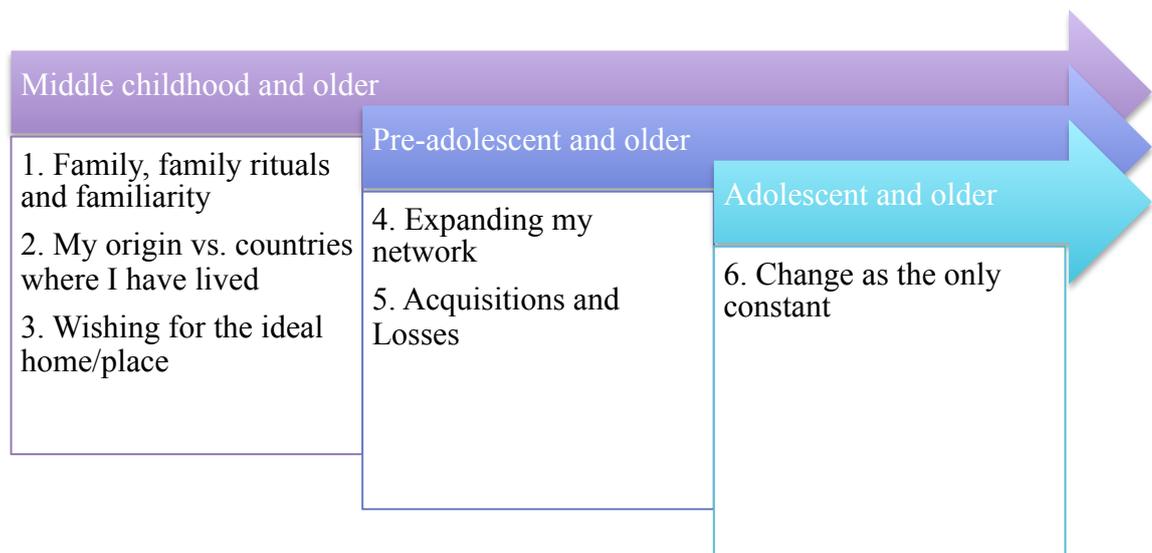


Figure 4.4 Emerging themes of Place Called Home from Study 1

4.2.1 Family, family rituals and familiarity

During middle childhood, the family, family rituals, familiarity with the habits of each family member, as well as interactions with the extended family such as grandparents, cousins, and godfather or godmother were at the centre of a place called home for TCK. The participating TCK recalled their most vivid life events experienced by their family members as seen in the following excerpts:

“What I consider home is family and friends. Family is very important for me, especially as I am the only child, only me and my parents (sic). My parents become my friends, as I needed company when I moved” [13F16];

“[We] found [a] fossil while playing at the beach with my father and my

brother” [3M9]

“”My godfather brought me to rock climbing” [4M9]

“I was a flower girl on my cousin Lisa’s wedding” [4F10]

Participant 4M9 pasted an image of Starbucks representing his mother’s familiarity with the brand and ritual of visiting the establishment in places where they had been: “Wherever we go, if we see Starbucks, my mother will want a coffee.” Participant 1M8 claimed that in a place called home, he could witness his father’s daily routines: “My father runs regularly.”

Food was also represented as an important ritual and as a time for most family members to be together. For the TCK, the act of eating was less important than the reasons (event, experience) for being together as a family (i.e., eating). Rituals (“My sibling and I got ice cream if we do good in school” [1M8] and “I always celebrate my birthday at home, my mom will bake the cake and invite all my friend” [4F10]), and routine activities (“Every Sunday my father makes pancakes” [2F7] and “Waffle and pancake is our family favourite breakfast”,[10F12]) or special events (“My mom bakes our birthday cakes” [4F10 and similarly 10F12]) emerged around food and how the family spent their time at home.

Familiarity was established in the representations of the objects around them and the routine activities that provided the middle childhood and pre-adolescent TCK with a sense of continuity. Several TCK participants pasted images of objects representing the countries where they had lived, such as a ferry and a double decker bus, while others represented a place called home with coffee and the smell of coffee (see collages of TCK 4M9, 7F11, 8F11 in the appendices VI). Participants 1M8 and 8F11 narrated: “We took ferry every time we leave or come back to [country],” and

participant 8M11 commented: “In [country] you will see double decker bus”.

Adolescent TCK (aged 13-17 years) extended familiarity to, for example, the mother’s habits and ritual behaviour. One participant (14M15) narrated a story about his mother’s habit of having flowers at home.

“There are always flowers in my home. Always! My mother chose and decorates it and places it in the middle of the living room. I remember it even when I was very small in [country]. Always different flowers, depends on what is available in the country. Everyone enjoys having flowers at home”
[14M15]

The familiarity with the routines and the permanence of objects in the environment or in the house represented what the TCK considered a place called home. For example, parents would collect memorabilia that were taken along when the family moved, and these became permanent features for TCK representing the places where they had lived. The memorabilia could be personal objects. Participant 1F7 pasted her security blanket in her collage, something she took with her wherever she went. Participant 1M8 mentioned that at his home, one could always find “a rubber ducky and jelly beans, as these were his father’s favourites, and participant 4M9 mentioned that after the summer holidays his parents would always bring home some of his “grandmother’s homemade fig jam.”

4.2.2 My origin vs. countries where I have lived

The middle childhood TCK included their passport country, the country where their parents came from and the countries where they had lived as places they called home. This was quite understandable, as this was the most identifiable information about the person when they were asked, “Where do you come from?”

The world still recognizes a person mainly in terms of his or her passport and for most countries people obtain their passport from the country they were born or the country where their parents came from. The TCK who participated in my project accepted the idea of having their passport country identified as being a place called home. Some might have lived in their passport country in the early part of their lives, while others may not have lived in their passport country but might have spent summer holidays visiting their grandparents and other family members in the country where their parents came from.

As a result of different immigration and legal systems, some TCK may have more than one passport. Those TCK participants having bi-cultural or multi-cultural parents narrated a place called home as being any or all of the countries for which they held a passport. For example, 1M8, who had three passports, considered home to be in these three countries: “My mother has [country A] passport, my father is [country B], I have 3 passports ... all are home!” The passport country had become one of the sources for identification with their origin and what could be viewed as home.

Two participants in this study, 9F11 and 13M13 (siblings of bi-cultural parents) have moved since kindergarten with their parents who were pursuing further education. They were raised in English language-based schools, as their parents were preparing them to study in English-speaking countries in the future. Consequently, both participants only spoke and understood basic conversational speech in their parents’ respective languages, but could not read or write these languages. They considered all places where they had lived as home, as they had great memories of these places, as well as thinking of their parents’ respective countries as their home or origin, saying: “I am half [country A] and half [country

B].”

Apart from the so-called passport country, the TCK participants in this study also identified any or all of the countries where they had lived as the places they called home. In their stories, we found special memories or a reminiscence bump of the places where they had lived and that lingered in their mind and gave them a sense of place attachment.

“The one thing I miss and remember from [the country] is snow” [1F7];

“[City], it snowed for the first time when we lived there”, [5F10];

“I chose [country] because I lived there for 2 years. It is counted as my home because it made me know about foods that are very delicious ...”
[9F11].

The current host country where the TCK were residing was also narrated as being home, as noted in this excerpt from 5M10:

“[Country] where we live right now and where we call home. Although we do not consider ourselves [natives] but we like this country and are proud to tell people we now live here.”

The inclusion of a country or city as a place called home was very much dependent on how well the TCK adjusted to their new country and on the experiences that they had living in that country. Two participants specifically narrated their positive adjustment in terms of what they could do (“I can see the horses from my bedroom window. I would like to learn to ride a horse one day” [3F8]) or what the city offered (“[City] has a lot—really a lot of restaurants” [7F11]). On the other hand, some TCK participants who did not experience a positive adjustment simply omitted mention of the place where they currently reside in their

collage (e.g., the collages of 2F7, 2M8, 3M9 and 4M9) and in their narratives only briefly mentioned in a negative tone how they felt about the place they currently had to call home: “It is dirty and polluted” [2M8], “My mother said this is temporary, we would go back after daddy finished his assignment” [2F7], and “I don't like it here, I miss [previous country]” [4M9].

4.2.3 Wishing for the ideal home/place

The third emerging theme reflected the TCK participants' wish for an ideal home, a place where they wanted to be, to settle in, and what a home should be. A younger participant (2M8) mentioned in his silent voice narrative that he wished to live in a castle and have a super hero to protect him. Participant 3F8 pasted a view of a mountain, an outdoor patio, a nice living room and rooms for each family member and narrated stories of her ideal home. Although the ideal home was more evident in the narratives of middle childhood TCK, all cohorts, to some extent, expressed the desire to be able to call the places they had visited during holidays and where they had many good memories as home (“I pasted camera here, as my parents always bring camera wherever we go, and we have many good moments there” [7F11, and similarly by 8M11, 10F12, and 11F14]). Visiting another place during the holidays created for the TCK participating in this study a sense of how nice a place (and living there) could be without some kind of adjustment needed. People could simply relax and enjoy what was offered to them.

Torkington (2012) found that shopping malls, theme parks and chain stores served as homogeneity symbols of urban areas, whereas indigenous, authentic, green and natural landscapes served as idyllic places. For the young TCK participants, their memories of a place where they visited for the holidays might serve as a reference point for the ideal place to call home. This could, of course, give rise to

perceptions that living in those nice places would be what could be expected when they moved to that country. However, their perceptions might not always turn to reality. For example, 3M9 narrated that when they moved to a new country—which seemed to be such a nice place during an earlier holiday—he was devastated. Even though the family were fluent in the dominant languages of the new country, this participant became aware of the challenges adjusting to the city and to the new school, which was very competitive and demanding. His new living arrangements were also quite different and he was challenged to adjust to a much smaller apartment compared to the accommodations he had had in previous countries in which he lived and which he considered to be home.

4.2.4 Expanding my network

The TCK participants in the pre-adolescent (aged 10-12 years) and adolescent (aged 13-17 years) cohorts added another dimension to what they considered to be a place called home. These two cohorts expanded on the concept of home to include friendships as well as places where their parent(s) worked. The middle childhood TCK (aged 7-9 years) did not mention their peers or the nature of their friendships in their narratives. However, for the two older cohorts, the narratives included the social-emotional content of a place called home. Friends and relationships became part of the overall concept of what they considered to be home. For example, participant 5M10 narrated: “Before we moved to [country B], we used to live in [country A]. We were there for 3 years and we had many friends and memories from that experience.” Participant 13F16 also narrated:

“What I consider home is family and friends ... Moving has been hard for me, as we moved, we need to make new friends, we left behind good friends, so what I consider home is a lot of friends and family.”

As children develop into their adolescence, friends and friendships become important because they provide a social reference point and emotional stability for identity construction (Buhrmester, 1990; Clarke & Barry, 2010; Hawley, Little, & Pasupathi, 2002; Ledbetter, Griffin, & Sparks, 2007). Friends provide a sense of belongingness and friendships a medium for the development of social and interpersonal skills. Ledbetter, Griffin and Sparks (2007) added that it was rare in today's changing environments to have long-term friendships through which one could construct a sense of shared history and a sense of community and belongingness. The high mobility lifestyle of TCK has reduced the geographic and personal distance between people of different cultures yet, at the same time, has spread people around the globe making long-term friendships more difficult. For those who lacked quality long-term relationships (friendships) or those who did not make an attempt to connect and maintain connection with others across time and space, there could be some harmful effects such as feeling isolated and lonely, and perhaps even depression (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014).

The participant TCK in the pre-adolescent and adolescent cohorts also mentioned difficulties relating to local peers in the host country. The TCK participants faced adjustment difficulties in new schools, in learning new languages, and in trying to enter already established cliques or groups of peers to form new friendships. Language could be a particular deterrent to making new friends among the local peers in the host country, as narrated by 5F10: "The local [country] students hang out with other local students and speak [the country language]. I hang out with English speaking foreigners like myself." Once the TCK managed to make new friends in the host country, their adjustment often became easier. However, they also learned the hardships of losing friendships as narrated by 11M13:

“When I knew we had to move again, I was very sad, as I am going to miss my friends again. Even in a short period [we were in country], I had quite a number of friends from school. I [would] also miss my tennis coach.”

The loss of friendships was a particular grief that young TCK had to deal with when the parents decided to move to another country. Based on the narratives, it appears that many parents made the decision to move on their own, no longer depending on a sponsoring organisation and without consulting with or recognising the losses experienced by their TCK children. Parents applied for overseas jobs for better remuneration and only informed their children of the impending move once everything was settled. For example, participant 8F11 narrated: “My father is a chef, we move when he is transferred to another country”, and participant 12F15: “My father is a photographer...wherever the camera takes him is his job, we have to go with it.” In contrast, other parents made sacrifices and lived apart from their family for better pay or saving opportunities. These parents might only see their spouses and children two or three times a year.

For these TCK, home was wherever the parent’s next job was going to be and their own needs and wishes (as human beings) were not really considered. Participant 12M13 mentioned that what made a home for him was friends, wealth, health, career, love, family, and wisdom. However, most of the time, words like career and wealth were assigned by his parents when the family had to relocate to another place because of supposedly better opportunities and as a TCK, one had to choose or to lose, as added by 12M13: “But, I guess not one of them [friends, wealth, career, love, family and wisdom words] can miss the home.” Furthermore, some families sent their children to boarding school for secondary school in another country supposedly for a chance at better education or preparation for college. While

in some countries sending children to boarding school is a common practise, further research is needed to understand the impact of adjustment and the (place) identity construction process of TCK who attended boarding school.

4.2.5 Acquisitions and Losses

The narratives of acquisitions evolved mostly around learning about new cultures and new languages. Many international schools offer their students the opportunity to learn the local language as part of community blending. Being multilingual could help TCK become familiar with their surroundings and improve their day-to-day interactions with local people. Sometimes, when already familiar with the local language and the language spoken in the family, the TCK might opt to learn the language spoken in the passport country in order to fit in when repatriating. Participant 13F16 narrated that even though her parents were from Country A, she was born in Country B and never formally learned the language of Country A (her passport country) until they moved to that country for a two-years assignment. She felt saddened that her cousins (in Country A) considered her to be a snob and made fun of her meagre abilities to speak the language of that country. Thus, when returning to the country of her birth (Country B), she decided to learn more about her parents' country of origin and its culture, and continued learning the country's language, dance and songs in preparation for the next time she would be meeting with the cousins. For participant 13F16, as well as for other TCK, language was considered a key element of a place called home. Living in several countries also allowed the participant TCK to benefit from and acquire knowledge about the culture and values of new places, as narrated by 11F14: "Different place has different fashion style. Different cultures prefer different colours. For example, in [Country A], white is good; but in [Country B], black is rich. However, in [Country A] black

means poor.”

Moving to a new country, “does not only shake people’s basic beliefs about continuity, security and meaning, it also places unusual demands on their ability to cope with the unknown, ambiguity, and change” (Vercruysse, 2002, p. 149).

Families of TCK face many losses as they leave behind their previous residence, career, friends, other family members and familiar neighbourhoods when they move into the unknown of a new place to live and work. The previous place called home is lost, and the TCK need to acquire new languages and new friends. Despite their acknowledgement of the benefits gained by having a high mobility lifestyle, in this study, participant TCK in the pre-adolescent and adolescent cohorts narrated stories of the significant losses they experienced when the family moved to a new country, including loss of friends, loss of pets, loss of social roles, and loss of familiar ways of behaving confirming earlier findings by Gilbert (2008), Pollock and Van Reken (2009) and Vercruysse (2002).

Most TCK participants in my study also narrated stories of their need to deal with losses. Their loss was also exacerbated when a sibling needed to leave the home to go to college just as soon as they managed to somehow adjust to a new place. For example, participant 11F14 narrated how she dealt with social relationships when moving to a new country:

“I have friends, but I am not really outgoing. So on weekend, I don’t want to go with friends. I prefer doing some reading or some video games. I prefer alone. It’s easier. Because with friends, you have to watch certain way you act...Sometimes they don’t understand me.”

There was also the loss of not having one’s expectations being met. Participant TCK narrated experiences about not getting in a new country what they were used to

having in the previous country where they had lived. For example, participant 13M13 was leading his peers in his school's competition to conserve energy, and a similar activity was not available in the new school. He mourned the disappointment and loss of his role and the efforts he put in in the previous school, as these were not needed in the new school.

Such losses were not only experienced when leaving for a new country, but also when returning to a country where the family had lived before. Some participant TCK relocating to a former country of residence had high expectations of reliving earlier experiences in familiar places. However, if the former country has changed significantly (i.e., the infrastructure, people who used to live there, buildings, etc.), relocating is not without its disappointments. These TCK remembered previous friends, schools, places they used to hang out and familiar behaviour that no longer existed or had changed. Even though some places seemed never to change, for example, the birth country, the TCK themselves change as they grow up. Thus, when the TCK went back to the birth country, some participants narrated their disappointment in finding out that people did not treat them as before. Participant TCK 8F11 narrated:

“We always stayed with our cousins when we visit my birth country. My cousins changed a lot...became taller, they changed the way they dress...and they did not want to play as before...they became strangers.”

Repatriation was as much an acquisition (of new place to call home) as a loss (of what one was used to in the host country). For example, participant TCK 13F16 narrated being isolated and misunderstood by local people and peers in her passport country:

“When I join in 10th grade, the clicks are already formed, so very hard to make friends. They don’t let you enter the clicks, it is very hard to adjust. They are just different. Since I moved around, I have different view; they just stay here. Sometimes they are just being stubborn, they don’t want to let people in, they just want to stay with themselves, they do not welcome new people, they just want to be with their old click.” [13F16]

She also narrated her struggle with language learning because of different academic requirements in the school:

“English is my first language, but still I struggle a lot. When I went back to Country B after [Country A], I struggled a lot, as the book they used in [Country A] was way lower than in [Country B]. I understand that, because it is international school [in country A], most students don’t speak English, and so the entire class has to lower the standard. So when I moved back to Country B, I need to work even harder in English, even though it is my first language.”

4.2.6 Change as the only constant

The final theme emerging from Study 1 related to the adolescent TCK participants adding yet another dimension to what they called home, which was their ever-changing life situations. We could observe in their collages the changing scenery from one city to another country, from a rural to a metropolitan city, from summer to winter, from sun and beach to cold and high-rise buildings, and from flowers to bricks. The adolescent TCK also narrated stories about excitement and disappointment, the highs and lows of their social relationships, and their on-going battle for education. For them, life was never boring—it was always changing.

Two issues were pertinent to change as the only constant in the lives of adolescent TCK and their perceptions of a place called home. On one hand, the participant TCK narrated a cut-off, marking the end of one journey and the beginning of a new one. For example, participant 13M13 used the image of an airport in his collage to represent the beginning and the end, and positioned himself on top of the collage as he would like to be able to close one chapter of his life and move on to the next chapter (country). On the other hand, the participants generally narrated their need for closure, the time when they might need to drop everything and say goodbye to their friends, and when they know they would never be able to have that which was lost back. The participants narrated that, in order to have closure and to embrace the new journey, they needed a validation of their loss and grief. For example, participant 14M15 narrated:

“I learned [guitar] by myself. I come up with songs, great song when I am alone. I was thinking of being musician, to tell people about my life, but I am not sure...I don't know.”

4.3 Reflections on the findings for Study 1

In concluding this chapter on the findings for Study 1, I reflected upon my field notes and noted the immensely positive responses I received from the TCK communities with which I was most familiar, namely Macau, Hong Kong and Jakarta, as well as the communities in Singapore and Malaysia. This greatly assisted me with the snowball sampling method, and I was able to recruit 27 young TCK from 7-17 years of age to participate in my study. The participants all showed great enthusiasm when partaking in the CLET, both in for the face-to-face interviews and for the written format. The parents of participants were very supportive and

cooperative in ensuring the biographic information was accurate.

A few other points in my Study 1 field notes are worth mentioning. Firstly, each step of the CLET provided a platform to elicit the individual TCK's own and authentic memories, and to co-construct the many meanings of his or her diverse experiences of a high mobility lifestyle. As a field observation, during the administration of the CLET, there was abundance of emotional overflow when the young TCK were telling their stories about the topic of a place called home. Younger TCK seemed to be more cheerful and interactive during the interview, compared to the adolescent TCK who seemed remote or emotional while telling their stories. Many of the adolescent TCK were emotional, teary eyed or flushed during the interview. Two participants, 11F14 and 12F15, indicated that their hearts were beating faster towards the end of interview, as they came to realise that they had been describing their life story in a way they never did before. I recommend to novice researchers who intend on using the CLET to be aware of this possibility and to document the emotional outburst in Step 5 of the CLET and in support of the narrative tone in the CLET protocols.

Secondly, while recalling their life experiences and telling their life story, the participant TCK were recounting their experiences verbally, simultaneously interpreting and telling their understanding of the meanings in their own life experiences (McAdams, 2006). In the written format of the CLET, participant TCK did have more time to reflect upon their memories although they only provided short stories or explanations and I needed to follow-up with emails or Skype interviews immediately after receiving their transcripts to gather more stories and representations. For some writing their stories might have been too laborious a task or they might have been unfamiliar with the reflective writing required for narrating

their experiences on the CLET. Thus, such immediate follow up is recommended as the participants might have been reluctant to engage again or forgot about what they wanted to convey earlier in their narratives.

Thirdly, some interviews were conducted at the residence of the participant TCK. This allowed me, as the interviewer, to get a first impression of the current place called home situation of the TCK. In some cases I could sense temporariness, the home (and host country) being a non-permanent dwelling—a feeling of transience, briefness and impermanence. Most TCK families rented their residence in the host country, only intending to stay for one or two years. Apartments had minimum interior decorations, only the minimum furniture, and some were even without any personal touch at all (i.e., bare walls, empty spaces here and there, strange and unmatched curtains, etc.). I felt that the current home for these young TCK was somewhat bare and impersonal, not a place to which one could become attached. There were, of course, very pragmatic reasons for such minimalist living. On the one hand, the families knew that they would have to move in due course, that their stay would only be temporary, and thus they preferred to rent a furnished apartment, limit the things that needed packing for the next destination, and keep their personal belongings to the minimum. On the other hand, families might have a permanent residence in their country of origin—a place they called home—and they did not want to be burdened with extra stuff when they repatriated some time in the future.

Finally, throughout the study, I often reminded myself to be aware of my dual position, being a researcher as well as being part of the TCK community that I was studying. As a researcher, I needed to be aware of my subjectivity in every aspect of the research. Being part of the TCK community allowed me to shape the questions I

raised when conducting the CLET for data collection, and to remain sensitive when encountering difficult issues such as loss and grief. Regular meetings with my two collaborators (see Chapter 3) ensured that I would not lose sight of my dual position. We met every week to discuss our individual analyses and interpretations, sort out differences in coding of the non-verbal and verbal narratives of the CLET protocols and explore the themes. These meetings greatly assisted me in checking and crosschecking my interpretations to ensure the TCK's voices were authentically represented in this dissertation. I also maintained vigilance regarding potential biases by continuously following the latest publications of studies related to the TCK phenomenon.

In the next chapter I present the findings of Study 2 before moving on to a discussion of my thesis in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5. Study 2

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

-- Margaret Mead, Anthropologist

In Study 2, I explored how adult TCK made sense of their high mobility lifestyle and constructed a sense of place identity. I aimed to gather the perspectives of older TCK concerning the role of place in the way they constructed identity in their early developmental years. I believe that by combining the findings of Study 1 and Study 2, this will allow me to explore place identity for TCK and describe/explain the added challenges this group of people face in the process of constructing and reconstructing identity (see Chapter 6). Although the TCK phenomenon has been studied since the 1960 (e.g., Useem & Downey, 1976; Useem, Useem, & Donoghue, 1963; Useem & Useem, 1967), and a significant number of studies have investigated identity and belongingness (Bowman, 2001; Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Kidder, 1992; Melles, & Frey, 2014; Moore & Barker, 2011), there has not been a study focusing on place identity and the impact of a high mobility lifestyle on the developmental trajectories of TCK.

I developed a Facebook focus group method in order to elicit a multiplicity of opinions and responses within a group context on attitudes, feelings, beliefs, and subjective experiences of adult TCK (Greenbaum, 1998, 2003; Morgan & Krueger, 1993; Rakow, 2011). This method was deemed useful, as it would not have been feasible using other methods, such as observation, one-to-one interviewing, or questionnaire surveys (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Peek & Fothergill, 2009). The social media approach also allowed me to recruit participants worldwide despite

geographical constraints and also allowed me to maintain, at least to some extent, a TCK group's identity, as would be the case with face-to-face focus groups.

5.1 Pilot Study

Scholars in the social sciences (e.g., developmental psychology and cultural psychology) have been sceptical about the use of Facebook as a source of reliable data collection, claiming that the "Facebook profile page amounts to a blank canvas on which each user has free reign to construct a public or semi-public image of him- or herself" (Wilson, Gosling, & Graham, 2012, p. 213). I was thus initially cautious recruiting and conducting research using social media, as there was the possibility that participant TCK could construct different public identities compared to those that would be evident in a face-to-face focus group discussion. On the other hand, studying the process by which the public image is created on Facebook could provide a valuable new perspective on identity co-construction, and studying the actions and interactions of Facebook users offered a unique opportunity to study a wide variety of social phenomenon in a cyber-world setting (Back, Stopfer, Vazire, Gaddis, Schmukle, Egloff, & Gosling, 2010). My interest in studying a global phenomenon such as the place identity of TCK thus lured me into exploring how this social phenomenon could be studied making use of a cyber world setting.

To familiarize myself with the TCK group dynamic on Facebook, prior to conducting my main research, I did *virtual observation* for three months (April to June 2013), following two existing Facebook open group discussions where members claimed to be TCK, namely *Third Culture Kids Everywhere* and *You know you are Third culture kids when....* I discovered that there were many TCK groups on Facebook and I took notes pertaining the topics related to the third culture phenomena that were being discussed. I specifically focussed my observations on

postings that generated more than 10 comments and I paid attention to the interaction that unfolded within the groups I was following. I found that most of the TCK who joined the open groups about third culture kids were from all over the world.

Depending on where they currently lived, smaller groups emerged including, for example, TCK in Hong Kong, TCK in France and TCK in Finland. There were also other smaller groups such as *Diplobrats*—TCK whose parents used to be in the diplomatic corps, *Military Brats*—TCK whose parents used to be in the military (mostly from the USA), and *Global Nomads*—a non-profit organization aimed at reaching out and creating awareness of global nomads worldwide.

Subsequently, I conducted a pilot study with my own Facebook focus group discussion, posting one question about what parents of young TCK could do to prepare and anticipate the next move in order to ensure the wellbeing of their children. Within less than a week, I received 50 comments on my post, boosting my self-assurance of the potential for fruitful data collection through this approach. Among the commentators on my post were TCK from various age groups, genders, nationalities, professions and all walks of life.

Based on my initial observations and the pilot study, I proceeded to develop a Facebook platform as a setting for conducting asynchronous online focus groups with the adult TCK in Study 2 (see Chapter 3.5.2 for a full explication of the online, asynchronous Facebook focus group method). I conducted seven Facebook focus groups, recruiting adult TCK participants who had met the criteria for inclusion—relocation - relocation at least three times in the first 18 years of their life and the ability to speak/write English when participating in various TCK groups on Facebook and other, as well as relevant TCK websites. The discussion topics for the main study were also derived from my earlier virtual observations and the pilot study

participations in the open group Facebook forums, resulting in the following interview agenda:

- 1) Memories: What do you remember of your high mobility lifestyle in your childhood; specifically about places you have lived?
- 2) Experiences: How did you experience repatriation to your passport country?
- 3) Connectivity/Community: How are your social interactions with the communities in the current place that you live?
- 4) Friendships/Relationships: How do you make commitments and maintain friendships in the current place that you live now?
- 5) Directedness/Future as a high mobility parent: How do you plan on raising your offspring, and will you continue the same lifestyle?
- 6) A place called home: Where is home?

5.2 e-Field Observation

Before presenting the Study 2 findings, I would like to reflect upon my e-field observations (i.e., similar to field notes in a traditional focus group study), which I to provide as a background for the interpretation and understanding of the representations of adult TCK in this project. I had noted a pattern of increasing interest on Facebook to study the wellbeing of children who grew up travelling with their parents—the Third Culture Kids phenomenon I wanted to study. There was also the presence of other researchers who were recruiting participants from the same TCK-related Facebook groups for online surveys (not focus groups) that I had accessed when recruiting participants for my study. There were also many posts on adult TCK blogs that which related to their life experiences, by asking questions and, seeking validation for their status as TCK, commenting on other TCK's posts, or simply wanting to find friends on Facebook. The members of the TCK Facebook

group I had access to of TCK also posted comments to the effect that they felt a sense of belongingness to this virtual group. Furthermore, after having cautiously assigned the recruited adult TCK to three cohorts (see Chapter 3), I noted some interesting (and quite relevant) differences amongst the cohorts. Participants the cohort aged 40 years and above declared that they only learned about the term *third culture* in their adult years, and that this has inspired them to look for articles and research related to the phenomenon. The realization that there was a phenomenon such as *third culture kids* gave them validation for their experiences and existence as perpetual expats. In their childhood, which began forty or more years ago, overseas telephone calls and travelling by airplane were expensive and rarely used. Personal computers were still quite a novelty, and the Internet did not exist when they were travelling with their parents as children.

The TCK participants in the cohort aged 30-39 years lived their high mobility lifestyle in the early 1980s, when mass globalization started and they witnessed great changes in the social, economic and political arenas worldwide (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; O'Hagan & Ashworth, 2002). The 1980s were marked by famine in Ethiopia, the discovery of AIDS, the movement against communism worldwide, the Tiananmen Square protest, the Warsaw Pact in Central and Eastern Europe, and the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was also the beginning of television viewing in the developing countries of the world. Many multinational companies moved their manufacturing plants to Thailand, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan and China because of low-cost labour, and skilled experts from developed countries were assigned abroad to manage the overseas offices and production operations (Brett, Stroh, & Reilly, 1993). In line with the mobility of expat families, there was also increasing demand for international schools, supporting industries such as aviation, hospitality

and other service industries.

The TCK in cohort aged 19-29 years were young or emerging adults who were either university students or just starting their careers (Arnett, 2000, 2012). Participants in this cohort grew up just a few years short of having personal phones, emails and desktop computers. The participants got used to seeing how the computer and Internet gradually became an essential part of everyone's life and they witnessed the transition from face-to-face social interaction to social media interaction. The 1990s, the time when this cohort was born, was claimed to be the era of globalization (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; O'Hagan & Ashworth, 2002). The development of technology brought a wide range of sophisticated new electronic products, such as innovations in telecommunications and computer networking, that initiated a huge computer hardware and software industry and revolutionized the way many industries operated. The economy worldwide showed an increasingly healthy performance and rapid mobility of its work forces.

Given the background of my e-field observation presented above, I now proceed with presenting the findings of Study 2. These findings are based on the transcripts collected from the seven Facebook focus groups, which generated seven transcripts of about 6,800 words each and included responses from focus group members regarding the questions I put to them from a pre-designed interview agenda (see above).

5.3 Findings of Study 2

The transcripts collected for Study 2 revealed rich descriptions of the adult TCK's experiences and perceptions of living in many places during their childhood years as well as in their current place of residence outside of their passport country. Employing thematic analysis, I identified several meaning units that were categorised

as:

- *Remembering the Past capturing their childhood experiences of a high mobility lifestyle (see 5.3.1);*
- *Confirmation of being TCK reflecting their repatriation experiences (see 5.3.2);*
- *Commitment Uncertainty representing their social relationships and efforts in establishing a sense of community (see 5.3.3); and*
- *World as my oyster representing the TCK' future life goal of defining a place called home (see 5.3.4).*

In the first three categories, differences were noted between the cohorts regarding their memories of the past, experiences of repatriation, and social interactions. However, in category four, all three cohorts reported similar struggles in defining a place called home. I interpreted that this latter category four was due, in part, to the TCK not having been able to resolve some of the psychosocial crises of their earlier developmental years and in particular, their not having constructed a coherent and stable place identity.

The findings presented below for each of the categories provide an understanding of the experiences and perceptions of adult TCK. Participants views are quoted verbatim—without any corrections to spelling, grammar or other errors—in order to maintain authenticity, originality and uniqueness of the Facebook focus group data. Moreover, use of verbatim quotations was intended to represent extracts from the original data as an indication of and support for the clarity of links between data, interpretation and conclusion (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006; Halcomb & Davidson, 2005).

5.3.1 Remembering the Past

The first theme that emerged from the Facebook focus groups is related to the participants' memories of the past and their experiences as young TCK. There was much overlap in terms of how they experienced the high mobility lifestyle and the places where they had lived during their respective childhood years (Figure 5.1). Overlapping memories about their high mobility childhood included not knowing where they would be going, the feeling of having no control over their lives, culture shock, loneliness and the challenges they faced trying to establish a sense of belonging wherever they went. All cohorts claimed that relocation during the adolescent years was the hardest, and some participants were still having a hard time dealing with the perceived effects. In an attempt to raise awareness of their needs and share the challenges that they faced as a result of their high mobility lifestyles, the adult TCK (across all cohorts) had initiated and were involved with an increasing number of blogs, magazines, books and social media groups.

The differences across the cohorts were the availability of information and the preparation process prior to relocation. Participants from the oldest cohort of TCK (aged ≥ 40 years) mentioned the lack of information that was available about the new place when they relocated, and the length of time they had needed to sail to the new places. The younger adult TCK in the cohorts aged 30-39 years and the cohort aged 19-29 years mentioned that there was much more information available for them to learn about the places where they would move and they received assistance for the relocation. Furthermore, the cohort aged 19-29 years revealed that they were given a lot of information prior to the relocation, sometimes even visiting the new place and its schools with their parents before moving. The participants in this cohort also commented that they were the children of a prior generation of TCK—

that is, their parents were also TCK in their developmental years and wanted to give their offspring the same high mobility lifestyle they had experienced as children.

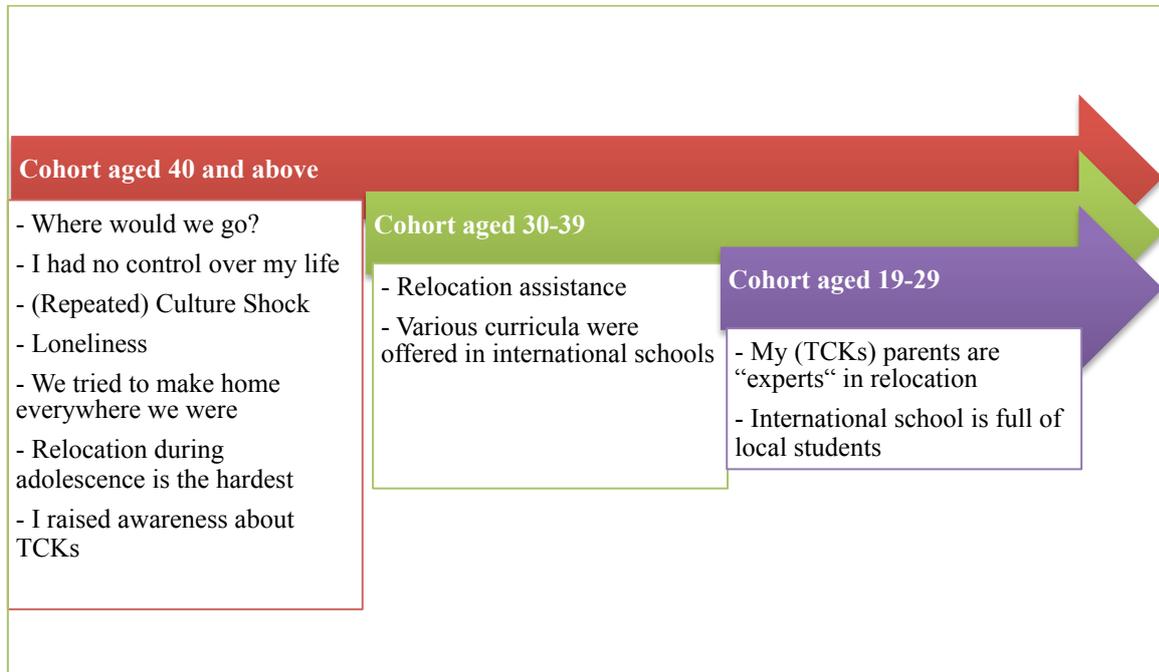


Figure 5.1 Remembering the Past: Meanings of a High Mobility Lifestyle for Adult TCK

Where would we go? The excitement of moving to a new place comes with qualms about what the place can offer. The cohort aged ≥ 40 years mentioned that new places seemed to be so foreign and unknown, and they had lacked the information that would later become freely available to younger cohorts of TCK. Most information came from travel brochures that only illustrated the tourist sites or from photos and stories shared by previous expatriate families. Nonetheless, as young children at the time, they remembered being quite excited and considered the move as a new adventure.

3F40A: “My father had brought for us loads of travel brochures from the local travel agency and we all sat down and made collages of the different

photos we could find and what appealed to us. I wish I kept it now!!”

For the parents of this cohort taking an overseas job in the 1960s were definitely a very big decision to make, and further was a risk to move the whole family to a new place. Participant 1F40A, whose parents were missionaries, reported that the preparation back then could take up to two years from the time of getting the sponsors until final approval to conduct their missionary call overseas. In the 1960s, when she was a child, it was a long and exhausting time waiting to find out where the family would go, and then having to take a long sea journey for months before arriving at their destination.

1F40A: “My dad asked for an overseas assignment and was offered Vienna, Sydney or Yokohama. He chose Japan because it was so different. I am so glad he did, especially since it was 1961 and the war was still fresh in people's minds. My dad got to fly, but my mom and me (newly born) had to endure a 5 star 6-week cruise full of expats moving around the world.”

The adult TCK cohort aged 30 to 39 years mentioned that their families had the opportunity to visit a place prior to making a decision to move there. The participants were able to have a glimpse of what their new home would be like, and it gave them mental preparation for the move there.

7F30B: ” I knew my father had been looking for work overseas. It was never kept from family discussions. The process for him to secure a job and get a visa took about 4 months. During that time, my mother got several books from the library about Saudi culture, Islam and the Middle East in general and we read them together, so I was quite excited to go Saudi Arabia from what I had been reading about. My brother lived in Iran at the time (before

the revolution) and my mother and I had travelled there the year prior to our move to Saudi (when I was 7), and so it didn't seem unfamiliar to me.”

They also added that, with each of the relocations they experienced, they observed the growth of technology in places they had lived. In the 1980s the world witnessed the development of the computer, and in the 1990s the introduction of the Internet.

The expatriate parents of adult TCK in the cohort aged 30-39 years, as well as in cohort aged 19-29 years, were among the first to initiate various social groups to make friends and to offer assistance for new expatriate families. In the expatriate community, the parents met families from various countries and observed how other families adjusted to life in the new places. Advice, insights and information were exchanged between families, and were passed on to newcomers. They made new friendships, shared numerous moments in their lives such as birthdays, births, school graduation, sport victories, job promotions, and they found contentment in each other's companionship—the expatriate friends became their extended families overseas. The expatriate communities became closer and developed a support community for the members, and the members developed a sense of belongingness that gradually extended to the development of familiarity and more interaction with the local communities in the host country (Black, 1990; Johnson, Kristof-brown, Van vianen, De pater, & Klein, 2003; Wang & Kanungo, 2004). The friendships might be short-lived or even forgotten as the family moved on, but certainly not the feeling and memories of the place. The parents—who were themselves TCK when they were children—had gained accumulated life experiences that assisted them in making decisions for the next move.

The availability and accessibility of information and more affordable travel expenses had a great impact on the preparation for relocation of adult TCK in the

cohort aged 19-29 years. Most participants in this cohort reported that their parents visited the new countries prior to making a decision about accepting an overseas assignment. Two participants also mentioned that their family went for a two-week exit program subsidized by the sponsoring organization that assisted them with making a cultural switch. Studies showed that the spouse's adjustment and satisfaction were among the major factors of the success of overseas assignments of corporate employees (Black & Stephens, 1989; Black & Gregersen, 1991; Hawes & Kealey, 1981; Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Pratt (2004) reported that according to a 2003 benefit survey from the Society for Human Resource Management in the USA, about 21% of the 574 responding companies in the USA provided spousal relocation assistance, with a direct impact on the happiness and success of the relocating employee. There were also increasing opportunities for the trailing spouse to find a job or to do voluntary work in the host country, and with the advent of the Internet, information about expatriate groups, suitable residential areas, the cost of living, medical facilities, the daily necessities, the school availability, and so forth became more freely available. Parents could retrieve much of this information prior to moving.

My (TCK) parents are experts in relocation. More than half of the participants in the cohort aged 19-29 declared that their parents were also TCK, which made the participants in my study the second generation TCK. Their parents provided particular guidance and attention in adjusting to new places, as well as how to maintain contact with the relatives and friends in the passport country in preparation for repatriation. They were very much involved in helping their children cope with the high mobility lifestyle they adopted, including learning the language and participating in an exit program.

7F30B: “We talked about it a LOT at home. We researched the country and even tried to learn the language. We had moved a lot previously, though in the same country, so we were somewhat accustomed to moving. We also did a two-week exit program at a training center in Colorado that helped prepare us for a cultural switch.”

Being TCK themselves, parents were also more aware that the decision to relocate could cause stress for their children, in particular losing their friends and the familiar environment (Adams & Kirova, 2007). They therefore prepared their children not only for the first move, but also for subsequent moves. This confirmed what Pollock and Van Reken (2001) proposed as being important for families of TCK, namely to deal well with the entire relocation process, as this process could affect the child’s ability to cope and to make friends.

7F19C: “My first move was when I was 3 from Indonesia to California. I don't really remember the move, but I do remember the last day in my kindergarten where I took pictures with everyone in my class. I guess I don't really remember how I felt but I remembered my kindergarten teacher hugged and kissed me with teary eyed and my mom telling me you know you might not see any of them anymore, right?”

Her parents did not create false expectations or make misleading promises, because they themselves knew it was hard to keep in touch at such a young age. Parents who are the second generation were TCK themselves are allowed their TCK children to spend as much time as possible with their close friends prior to the move. One participant in the cohort aged ≥ 40 years, who become a parent of TCK himself, stated that:

1M40A: “Although I did have more transition issues to deal with when I was older, changing countries and changing cultures was already a way of life for our family and just a part of what we expected in life. Most problems I experienced when I went [repatriated] to college in the US. Growing out of that, I made sure to help our kids when moving back to the US.”

I had no control over my life. From all cohorts, participants claimed that they felt a lack of control over their lives as children travelling with their parents to new destinations. Some started their high mobility lifestyle at a very young age—as young as being a six-week old infant—and some were born overseas. Families of these participants also moved frequently, mostly every three to four years.

5F40B: I don't remember my first move, because I was six weeks old. I have been moving around every 3-4 years ever since.

1M40A: “My parents (mother was USA citizen, father was Welsh Canadian) got married in Mainland China, and that's where I was born. My parents were of the “old school” of missionaries who stayed on the field for 4-6 years at a time, then would take a full year's furlough (sic)... When I was just 4 months old, we moved from China to South Africa. My first visit to the US and Canada was when I was five years old. I don't remember the trip to North America that we were just visiting and would be going back to South Africa eventually [at age 7].”

2M40B: “I lived in six countries (four countries before I was 18). I moved out from Ethiopia at the age of 8. I had no clue of what was going on, where I was going...”

One participant mentioned that he had to trust his parents' decision for the family's future because he was too young at the time to have any say.

1M40A: “I don't remember any sense of being displaced, sad, resentful, or anything like that with those early moves. It may have been because I was so young – at an age when kids generally trust their parents' decisions. I think a part of it may be because as kids I and my siblings (sic) were all aware that our parents were missionaries and that this was what missionary life was like (at least in our mission and at that time period).”

6F40B: “My parents were "Depression Era" children (a whole other category of fascinating childhoods) and were savers from the beginning. It was important to them to establish security and to not spend unwisely. They worked extremely hard to be able to maintain the lifestyle we ended up with, and as kids, we understood that moving around the world was part of their effort to achieve that goal, even as very young kids. We went where the opportunity was. Choice was made by my parents having been given an opportunity to move. It would have been in their best interest to take the offer each time, but it was not required. More of a career advancement thing.”

Among the comments from the adult TCK, there were also two cases of TCK families having had to move unexpectedly due to political instability and for the safety of their families. One participant reported that the family had to leave Jakarta (Indonesia) during the ethnic Chinese-Indonesian massacre in 1998. Another participant's family had to leave Guayaquil (Ecuador) during the impeachment of the Ecuadorian president in 1997. These unexpected moves did not, however, prevent the families of these TCK from continuing their high mobility lifestyle but the experience left a scar on how the participants felt about being unwanted in those places.

In their study, Brett, Stroh and Reilly (1993) found that among a

demographically diverse random sample of 827 employees from 20 *Fortune* 500 corporations, those most willing to relocate were adults in their 30s, with lower incomes and higher career ambitions, and (the highest predictor) who had spouses who were willing to relocate. The willingness to take on a new adventure in a new place helped alleviate human resource needs in was due to the fact that some places where were lacking expertise was lacking in human resources, and skilled or expert people were needed to fill the gap in order and to enable less developed countries to become more developed. Most of the gaps were in business and non-government organizations, and available jobs included language instructors, educators, medical practitioners, and construction experts, as well as jobs in the hospitality industry managers, pilots and aircraft technicians and aviation industries. The mobility and frequency of moving to other destinations also varied greatly, and was dependant on the employment contract and on successful adjustment in the foreign country.

(Repeated) Culture Shock. The adult TCK who participated in Study 2 recalled being shocked when they first arrived at a new place during their childhood years. They were surprised to witness how the local people reacted to their presence, especially in places where they were physically different. They also experienced culture shock in the subsequent places where they moved, as each place was different—that is, the culture, the way people lived and behaved in the new place, the landscape, the environment and the climate were often very different from what they were used to.

1M19A: “People in [Country A] weren't that friendly; and straight like robots everyday; too workaholic; the higher your job titles the longer you 'll be in the office. The rules were also more strictly in [Country A], I was known as a brat in [Country A] just cause I didn't adapt really well to [Country A]'s

culture. What'll be ok in [Country B] will matter much in [Country A], like being unorganized or if you don't put back the books you've read to its shelf. In [Country B] I went to the Buddhist temple every Sunday, but I never did in [Country A]. Never ever I felt so alone, if you were smart in [Country A], you deserve friends, otherwise you will be so lonely.”

3F40A: “It all began back when I was 12 years old, and my parents moved us from the [Country A] to [Country B]. I remember when my dad came home from work to let us know we were moving, at that time, no one knew where [Country B] was, let alone, that it even existed...it still is very small on the world map! When we moved, it was certainly a culture shock; we arrived in [Country B] and lived in a hotel for the first few weeks. Although the novelty was there, I do distinctly remember the freezing air conditioning of the hotel and every time I stepped out of the lobby my glasses would steam up with the humidity of the [Country B] air. I also remember a lot of the locals staring at me very much, I had long blonde hair and at that time, there were very few people like myself living in the country, many people would always come up and touch my hair and want to take photos.”

TCK Education. Three issues became apparent regarding the education of TCK. As children, the now adult TCK had varying experiences in schools as they travelled to different countries with their parents. On one hand, there was the inequality and availability of schools for expatriate children of high mobility parents. On the other hand, the options for schooling children have changed over time. Compared to the older cohort, the parents of TCK in the younger cohorts had more education options to choose from for their TCK children.

The adult TCK in the cohort aged 30-39 years commented on how different

the curricula were at the schools their parents chose in one place or another.

Consequently, as they moved, the TCK experienced confusion adjusting to a new school's culture, calendar and curriculum. One participant in this cohort reported that she went to 14 different international schools—including three different schools when she was in the sixth grade—all with different curricula, and consequently there were some subjects that she never learned while at school. She managed to get her high school diploma eventually, but she admitted that all the moving she did had messed up her basic education.

7F30B: "I went from a standard [Country A] curriculum to the [Country B] O Level curriculum in my move from [Country C] to [Country D]. When I returned to [Country A] in 10th grade, they didn't know what to do with me since the O Level curriculum is totally different, so I had to test to determine my competence. Due to the in-depth nature of the O levels, I was actually more advanced than 10th grade [Country A] standards, but because I was already young for my grade level, my parents did not want me to advance to 11th grade at age 15. As it was, I completed [Country A] 10th grade in one school and 11th grade (with AP subjects) in another (due to yet another move) and I would have done 12th grade in yet another school (due to another move) but already had enough credits to graduate, so took my High School Equivalency and went directly to university at age 17. So, trying to keep me at the same age as my peers came to naught anyway.

Furthermore, when attending a local school, the adult TCK participants claimed that they felt different and were considered as foreigners. In an international school, which accommodated many nationalities, the TCK met with others in the same lifestyle, thus it was easier to adjust.

5F40B: “I affectionately call all the countries I lived in my homelands. It's exciting when I find other TCK [in the international school], because there is an instantaneous connection. Like a "aha! You too and you understand me!”

Attending an international school instead of the local school also gave the TCK a sense of being ordinary, as most of the students were in a similar situation and had travelled to and lived in many countries before.

1M40A: “I went to two different primary schools in [Country A]. In [Country B], my “exotic” background made me somewhat of a “teacher's pet”, and teachers would often want me to tell the rest of the class what my life was like in [Country A]. I sort of expected something like this to continue in [Country C] when we came here, especially since I now had two other countries in my background. But the school I attended was the government English school, where many “expat” kids studied. (Today it is called an “International School”, but that term was not widely used at that time.) I soon found out that most of the other students had similar background stories, as exotic as my own, or more so, so hardly anyone was interested in my story. I think I was sometimes a little disappointed, so my life story was no longer “special.” At first I think I was a little disappointed at that, but after awhile I found it both freeing. At school, in the midst of fellow students from all over the world, I probably felt less “different” than I had for most of my life.”

Perhaps having learned from their own experiences as expatriates or TCK, the parents of some participants in the cohort aged 19-29 years chose international schools in the country where they lived, so that their children could follow the same curriculum and be taught in the same language as their passport country. The

international schools worldwide have increased significantly in recent years and cater specifically to expatriate children who come from the same a given passport country or from countries that speak the same a common language, and who want to learn in the language of their passport country. For example, today there are international schools for the TCK from passport countries such as Switzerland, Germany and Austria; Dutch international schools for the TCK from Luxemburg, Belgium and The Netherlands; and Japanese international schools for the TCK from Japan (Keeling, 2015). The international schools that offer the language of one's passport country provided many benefits to the TCK who were able to build friendships with peers from the same nationality and lifestyle, to learn the history and culture of their passport country, to obtain language fluency, and to transition with greater ease to university in their passport countries.

6F19C: "My primary schools were all NOB schools, which are Dutch education abroad schools. They all followed the same curriculum and were all very small so there was always time for the teachers to take out some extra time and help you catch up where necessary. I went to [Country A] to go to boarding school for secondary school to avoid the problem of having to change schools during this more important time during my education and for preparation for university. The boarding school is for expatriate children that offered a bilingual course so I did my VWO (equivalent to IB or A-levels) taught in English for the first 4 years and then in Dutch for the last 2 years, because the [high school] exams were in Dutch."

Despite the advantages of international schools for TCK, the cohort aged 19-29 years also reported some concerns. Different from the experiences of older cohorts, this cohort commented that nowadays many local students were attending

the international schools in the host countries where they went to school. According to the International School Consultancy Group (2000), these schools have become quite popular for locals, with local students accounting for on an average over 65% of the students being local students enrolled at in international schools worldwide. On one hand, this boosted the revenue and the development of better facilities and qualities of the international schools. On the other hand, many local students were enrolled in English-based international schools for the purpose of improving their English language proficiency in preparation to study overseas. However, the TCK participants in my study felt that the local students attending international schools might hold up the learning process in the schools, as they did not have the same level of English language proficiency as the non-local TCK students. Moreover, the TCK also complained that most of their local peers conversed in the local language at school and were very cliquish so that they felt left out and frustrated. Difficulty in making friends with the local peers might also have resulted in negative feelings and poor adjustment in the host country.

2M19A: “I found the international schools to not be very international at all, especially the one in [name of city] where over 70% of the students were local. For this reason I experienced a huge loss of English vocabulary in my classes; as non-native English speakers were not separated in classes and much of the lessons were spent trying to help students understand tasks. The school was also very small, students that had been together for many years had become very close and when someone like myself arrives half way through school life (7th grade), I became an outsider and find it difficult to get into friendship groups with existing students initially. Bullying was something I frequently experienced...”

Loneliness. The adult TCK in my Facebook focus groups study commented that loneliness was the hardest part to deal with in every place where they had lived. Weiss (1973) defined loneliness as “the experience of emotional and social isolation” (p. 236). For the adult TCK loneliness also included a sense of emptiness and having no friends during the first few months in a new place. It was a kind of inflicted loneliness, the feeling that no one understood them, and an uneasiness to discuss their feelings with their parents.

1F30A: “We [the TCK] know what loneliness is. Especially what I call 'inflicted loneliness' as in its not by choice it's inflicted on us. Moving to a new school and standing in the playground alone, wishing play time was over. Wanting to have a friend. Wishing it was 2 months down the line, when you know things will be different. Lonely because you are different and until 'they' accept and get used to you, you have to wait. You can always try and join in, but the knock backs can be hurtful. But as with TCK's they are gregarious, chatty and accepting of others and will keep trying to join in, until they are accepted.”

The TCK also reported that the feeling of inflicted loneliness was somehow expected and an unavoidable feeling due to their repeated experiences of anxiety when moving to a new place. The participants claimed that they anticipated the inflicted loneliness when they just arrived in a new place, spending the first two months not knowing what to expect, standing alone in the school playground, wishing the period was over soon and everything would become a bit familiar and not so foreign. Those uneasy feelings “*built up a hole in the heart and that they needed to carry forever.*”

5F40B: “I think we feel lonely when people don't understand, but we don't have a loyalty to one place, but many.”

Furthermore, the TCK focus group participants felt that they could not talk about their life experiences, such as the losses and longing for many things from places they had lived before, with non-TCK without causing envy. The only persons with whom TCK found instant connection with were other TCK who could understand what they had been through. Talking to their parents was not really an option as they often witnessed the struggle their parents experienced when moving, especially the trailing spouse (mostly their mothers). The adult TCK in my focus groups were aware of the hectic stress of relocation, the loneliness and frustration in adjusting to new life, the helplessness of not being able to get an equal opportunity in a career overseas, and the lack of adequate schooling and child facilities that their parents had experienced. In a few cases, the parents of TCK were left with uncertainty as to where the next move would be, which could cause the family agony once the job contract came to an end. Knowing how tense their parents were, the participants were hesitant to express their feelings to their parents and tended to repress their own feelings, as per the excerpt below.

6F30B: “My father's contract was complete and there was a lot of uncertainty as to where we would eventually land up. I felt very sad to leave my best friend and my dogs, but didn't really mind leaving the rest. I felt I shouldn't express that sadness to my parents as they had enough to worry about.”

Experiencing losses and the accompanying loneliness were not uncommon for the adult TCK I interviewed. However, one participant mentioned that she felt her family handled the move in a secure and loving way, which has helped her to place a higher value on love and togetherness with family, rather than on resenting

the losses.

1F30A: “We moved from [Country A] to [Country B] when I was 3 years old. I do not remember the move, the tears, anxiety or the apprehension that went with it. I have been told what my reaction was and I would say that even though too young to recall what was happening it must have had an effect on me. I was told I was very upset about leaving my nanny and moving away. As a child I must have been aware of my parents anxiousness, apprehension and sadness, but because of the deep loving nature of my family, the feelings that were real but handled in a secure and loving way. I feel that I have learnt a lot from my parents with regards moving, people and places, but ultimately knowing what is of most importance - family & love. Accepting that life is about change and placing a higher value on love than belongings.”

The parents who were involved and communicated openly with their children in the preparation for the transition (1F19A, 4M19B, 7F19C) contributed to their child’s smooth adjustment to a new place. Van Der Zee, Ali and Haaksma (2007) found positive correlation between highly cohesive families—that is, families who had good communication and emotional bonding—and a high level of intercultural adjustment for expatriate children. At the same time, the attitudes of expatriate children towards the host country depended on whether and how they perceived the frustrations or happiness of their parents in regards to their careers and the relocation.

Making a home everywhere. The participating TCK in the focus groups reported various ways of settling into new places during their childhood. They mentioned that their parents put a lot of effort in making a home everywhere they lived by adding personal touches and bringing along some tokens or memorabilia from previous places they had lived (2F19A, 63M19B, F19C). One participant TCK

mentioned her mother's effort to always make the family feel comfortable in the house.

5F30B: "In [Country A] we lived in 2 story terraced house, in [Country B] also 2 story detached house with 1000 m2 land. As said before I was always outside, I paid no attention to the interior of the house, yet my mum always had nice things in it and the house was always clean but I felt no attachment to the house."

Making a home in a foreign country depended greatly on where the family settled. In some places, especially big cities, there were facilities built for the convenience of expatriates who lived there, such as international schools, grocery stores selling imported goods, and so forth. In rural areas, however, there were hardly any establishments for the expatriates, and sometimes the expatriates gathered in a garage of someone's home to have a school for their expatriate children. Some expatriate families had the option of finding their own dwelling, whereas others were assigned a residence within a designated area chosen by the sponsoring organization.

2F40A: "I was only 5 when we moved to [Country A], so I only have fuzzy memories of the actual move. I do remember the hotel we stayed in (The Imperial, no longer there...the Frank Lloyd Wright masterpiece) and the apartment we lived in the first year. My sisters and I went to the [Country B] School in [Country A], and supposedly I was fluent in [Country A language]. We used to ride the bus for over an hour. I loved my life there ... so many smells and tastes take me back."

2F40A: "We lived in a predominantly local neighbourhood [in Country B]. My mom did NOT want to live in an enclave with other [Country A people];

she wanted to be immersed. I remember riding my sister's moped even though I wasn't old enough. I would wander through the woods, and to a local store.”

3M40B: “The first house I remember living in was off the base in [Country A]. I hadn't started school yet, so most of my friends were from the local community. Since my mom's [from Country A], my sister and I were taught [Country A language]. We somehow knew that our dad didn't speak [the language] and had to use English for him. My sister and I joined a youth organization in our community that mostly had activities for kids. We would be invited to parties by our local friends.”

5F40B: “We never lived on the embassy grounds but in the local community. My best friend in [Country A] was [local]. She lived two floors above me. She taught me [Country A language] and I taught her English and together we had adventures...”

Relocation during adolescence is the hardest. All adult participants admitted that relocation during adolescence was the most difficult transition to deal with, particularly when the transition was accompanied by losses and unresolved grief. Somehow, during adolescence, when one is supposed to deal with finding one's identity, the process of leaving one place and entering a new place was more challenging to resolve. One participant mentioned that her family moved in the middle of her senior year in high school, which for her was a very traumatic experience and she still felt angry about it even now 35 years later.

2F40A: “As a teenager you just want to belong. Being "new" is not belonging, and I felt awkward, ugly, outcast.”

Losing a pet was also an undervalued grief even though the experience could be traumatic for the TCK, especially when it happened during the adolescent years.

5F40B: “The move from Seychelles to Turkey I remember, I was 14. The only reason I remember is that we couldn't take our dog, Penny. I was very upset about that. It could be why I don't have pets till this day. Leaving the dog behind was a traumatic experience.”

Raising awareness about TCK. Most of the adult TCK participants in all the focus groups stated that society was still very much unaware of the TCK phenomenon, including their friends in the expatriate community. They commented on the need and ways to raise awareness, while at the same time validating their own experiences of a TCK childhood through writing an article for the school newsletter, writing a blog, and sharing their life story in online TCK magazines such as Denizen, tckid.com and tckworld.com. Some participants also recently initiated an open group in the social media to capture insights, stories, videos, painting, music and other media about third culture kids. For the adult TCK, those who experienced a high mobility lifestyle during their childhood years some 35 odd years ago, there was a continuing search for ways to have more people be able to understand them. They were constantly looking for validation of their life experiences and were keen to help social science researchers (like myself) gain a better understanding of the TCK phenomenon and its struggling yet beguiling lifestyle.

In summary, the adult TCK participants in my study commented extensively on their past experiences growing up as children of parents moving across borders. Remembering the past, they expressed views regarding the uncertainties of not knowing where they would be going and experiencing culture shock with every move to a new destination. Loneliness was a constant companion as they and their

parents tried to make a home wherever the job opportunities took them. Despite the increase in international schools globally, the adult TCK in my study commented on the numerous difficulties they encountered in these schools, and particularly when the relocation took place during their adolescent years. As expected, the younger cohort of adult TCK who were children of TCK parents, experienced fewer challenges due to their parents having had some experience and expertise in relocation. Overall, remembering the past emphasised the need to raise awareness about the unique experiences of TCK and to better understand the TCK phenomenon.

5.3.2 Confirmation of being TCK

The second theme that emerged from the Facebook focus group discussions with adult TCK in Study 2 provided a representation of the adult TCK's experiences of repatriation and their confirmation of being TCK. Repatriation is a critical part in a high mobility lifestyle and when the TCK moved back to their passport country, they completed the profile of Third Culture Kids (see definition by Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). The passport country is commonly used to identify where a person comes from (their home country). However, for the TCK I interviewed, their passport country was not home. Having mostly learned about their passport country during summer holiday visits, their citizenship in one particular country did not give the TCK a sense of belonging or a feeling of being at home in that country. Although not foreigners in their passport country, they were also no longer expatriates, and the life with which they were familiar before embarking on their high mobility lifestyle had changed. Repatriating as a child TCK, some of the TCK in my study them had to go to local schools where they were expected to be as fluent in the local language as their peers, and the local society expected them to know the local culture. However, they often did not know the language of the passport country

well and knew very little about the culture never really having lived in the passport country for any length of time.

For the vast majority of TCK in my focus groups, the repatriation experience was painful and agonizing. In the following paragraphs, I outlined present the theme on regarding the confirmation of being TCK and repatriation explicating . In addition I explicate some of the differences and similarities evident across the cohorts (Figure 5.2). In the cohort aged ≥ 40 years, participants had little choice but to follow their parents back to the passport country, while . While participants in the cohort aged 30-39 years felt that no one could really understand them. Participants in the younger cohort aged 18-29 years were more concerned with the possibility that repatriation would be the end of a lifestyle they had come to cherish and wanted to pursue. Similarities were also found across the cohorts in relation to repatriation with the TCK being different, a sense of not fitting in with the locals in the passport country, being bullied, and feeling that their parents did not really understand their struggles.

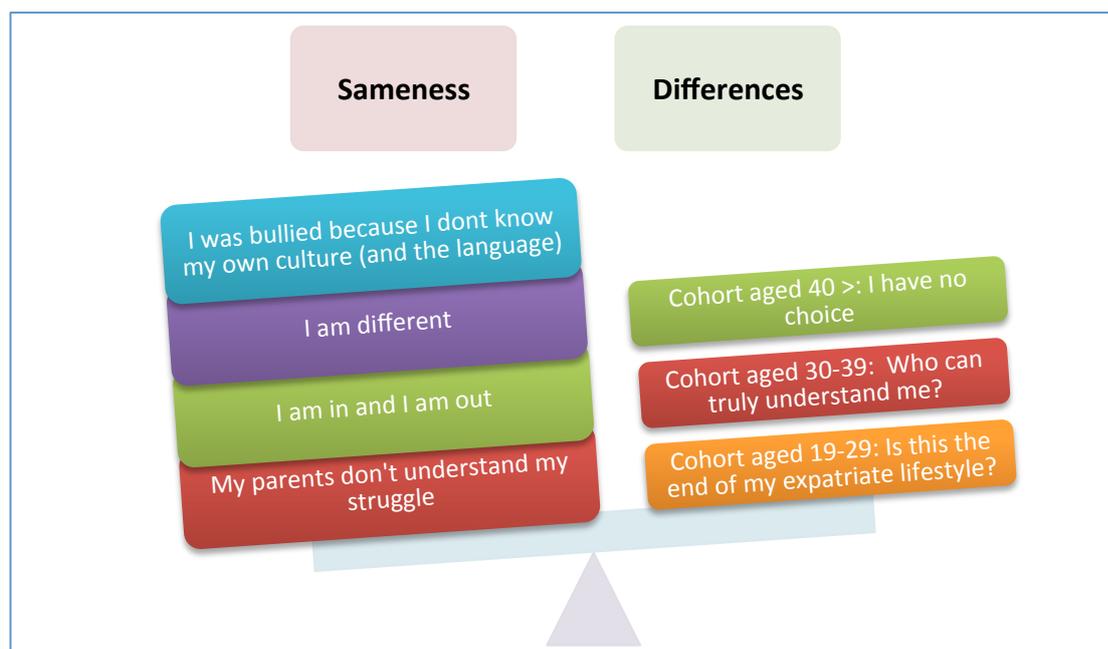


Figure 5.2 Confirming my TCK-ness: Repatriation experiences of TCK

Differences in repatriation experiences across cohorts of adult TCK.

Participants in the cohort aged ≥ 40 years reported that repatriation was expected when their parents completed their overseas employment, and that they **had no choice** but to follow. Repatriation could come at any time during the child's developmental years and it was only after repatriation that they (as children) became aware of the opportunities that they had before, and they could appreciate their upbringing overseas compared to their non-TCK peers.

3M40B: "I only visited the U.S.A., my "home" country during summers.

When I was sixteen, we repatriated to Hawai'i. I had to finish my last two years of high school there. I felt a bit strange because I was always the one welcoming the new kids and saying goodbye to my friends who left. This was the first time I was the new kid on the block. I knew I would persevere because my friends growing up had been through it, so there's no reason why I couldn't get through a move. It was also my first experience actually living in my home country. I look back on it now, and realize I had a great childhood. I experienced things most other kids never get to. I didn't appreciate my upbringing as much then as I do now."

The parents of TCK in the cohort aged 30-39 years also preferred to send their children back home to ensure university entrance in the passport country. However, the participants in this cohort commented that they felt that people in the passport country did not really understand them and their peers were not interested in knowing about their upbringing, often being prejudiced due to places the TCK had lived before (Melles & Schwartz, 2013). One participant claimed that people in the passport country were often particularly biased about the country where she grew up and that she was considered to be equally responsible for the conditions in that

country despite not being from there, which made her feel like an outsider.

6F30B: “Living in [Country name] during apartheid, made people assumed so many things about me when we travelled. They forgot to account for my passport culture and my brain! I avoid confrontation as a rule and would seldom bother to engage.”

The participants also admitted that they faced difficulties opening up to people and that it took time to establish the intimacies that came naturally for those who grew up in the same place throughout their childhood. They were fearful that their trust would be wasted on the locals in their passport countries, a reflection of the many losses or broken promises experienced during their childhood and as a result of their high mobility lifestyle. They had to learn how to choose friends more carefully and to learn how to maintain adult friendships rather than giving up on friendships as soon as there was conflict.

4F30A: “I am different for sure. People pick up on that pretty quickly. But most of the time, my personality is "magnetic" and I am well liked. I'm known for being positive, good energy, etc. It's that TCK chameleon thing. But, most people don't know what it was like, even though my closest friends have heard my "stories"..."

Participants in the cohort aged 19-29 years reported yet another kind of agony related to repatriation. TCK in this cohort were worried that they would not be able to enjoy the same lifestyle as before and that repatriation meant the end of the expatriate lifestyle that they had come to cherish. Participant 6F19C made a particular case explaining how difficult repatriation to the passport country could be for young TCK coupled with the fear of not being able to pursue a high mobility

lifestyle in the future. At the age of 12 years, her parents had sent her to the passport country to ensure that she would be eligible for public university back home. Thus, besides having to adjust to the school system in her passport country, she also had to leave her parents producing feelings of being quite alone. She was also anxious about the idea that she might no longer have the chance to see so much of the world and that she may get stuck in the normal life (i.e., the life most locals in her passport country were leading).

6F19C: “This was a very difficult move for me. It was difficult because I went through four big steps: I was leaving my parents (big step #1); I was starting high school (big step #2); It was time to start growing up quickly (big step #3); It was (I thought at that time) the end of my expatriate lifestyle. I thought I would do high school there, go to university there and start a career there (big step #4). I always plan ahead (even at 12), and I was worried that I wouldn't be able to get that in [Country name] if I stayed there. What I saw as a kid was amazing but I want to experience it as an adult too. And hopefully be able to provide the same life for my kids in the future.”

Similarities in repatriation experiences across adult TCK cohorts. Apart from the differences experienced across the adult TCK cohorts, similarities were also evident in their memories and narration of childhood repatriation. Going back to the passport country and attending a local school in that country was a traumatic experience for TCK. Some remembered being bullied because they did not know their “own” culture or were not proficient in the language spoken in the passport country. All cohorts in this study reported that they did know many things (i.e., the latest TV series, the local sport games, the local traditions, the dialect, etc.) and that , when they first arrived in the passport country, they became easy targets for the local

children to bully. On one hand they did not know the things local children were familiar with, while on the other hand they did know because of knowing all kinds of (other) things the local children were not familiar with. The adult TCK I interviewed also commented that when they moved to the passport country as children, they found that most of the time the local people were narrow minded and misunderstood where they (the TCK) came from, especially in rural areas.

4F40B: “When I moved back to [Country name], I went to a local school in rural [Country]. It was the opposite of the big city I lived before. I was bullied during years in school because I was different, I wrote a few letters different, and I couldn’t speak the local accent. The people there were very countrified and narrow minded. I didn’t like it there and I will never move back to this area of my country. I also experienced difficulties to act and behave as locals.”

7F19C: “My parents put me in the local high school so I can adapt to the culture faster. I could easily make friends before but here I did not have friends at all. It was so bad that I had a clinical depression and finally my parents let me transfer to an international school, where I could finally feel at home because everyone shared a similar background. I love my [passport] country. That place has so much to offer. I just didn't like the locals I went to school with. I feel like they are so competitive.”

There was also the adult TCK in my study who reported on being taken care of by relatives in the passport country while their parents were pursuing further education elsewhere. Another participant’s parents met while being overseas for their respective doctoral studies. In this case, the children were born overseas and when the parents decided to pursue their careers in the passport country, the children

had to adapt to the passport country for the first time. As an adult TCK now, the participant in the latter case reported great difficulties adjusting, even though the peers were of the same nationality and spoke the same language. Irrespective of their age at the time of repatriation, the participants reported feelings of being outcasts and of being bullied by their local peers in the passport country, particularly at school and experiences that left a big scar on their lives.

Visiting the passport country during holidays was not the same as moving back there. Once back in the passport country, the adult TCK participants in my study claimed that their expectations of the passport country were much different from the reality they experienced there in everyday living. They claimed that they knew the culture of the passport country from previous experiences such as having lived there when they were younger or from frequent visits during holidays. However, the place (country) had changed, as did the people who lived there. Local peers had their own groups of friends and it was particularly difficult for the TCK to be accepted into the group upon repatriating to the passport country during their adolescent years.

3M40B: “I think if you move to a community where everyone knows each other and grew up together, it can be traumatic if you're not accepted.”

2F40A: “First day of college [in my passport country], I knew something was up. I couldn't drive, didn't know any of the latest groups, and couldn't be part of the "home town" groups that came to college together.”

Language was a particular issue that separated TCK from non-TCK in the passport country. Most of the participant TCK in the focus groups attended international schools. At these schools, English was the main language of instruction and it was also the language that helped the TCK make friends with other TCK

during their childhood years (in primary school). However, it was not necessarily the language of the passport country or the language of the next place where the family settled. Some TCK in the cohort aged 30-39 years commented that they had become fluent in other languages while living in the host country but less so in their own mother tongue.

3F30A: “I attended International School in [Country A], with medium of instruction was 100% English and at the time, my command of the language was nowhere near fluent. So hence I struggled academically at first. My parents' response was to switch from speaking entirely in [Country B language] to (almost) entirely in English while at home and made me reply to them only in English. They then proceeded to buy and made me read a whole cartload of books, every time. So after the first year, as my command of English improved, so did my academic performance. I found it easier to make friends, internationally as well as children of [Country A] diplomats.”

1F30A: “When we lived in [Country A] I spoke more Chichewa than English. Then we moved to [Country B] and I lost it all. I speak Arabic, but I have lost a lot as I was 12 when I left. Now, mostly only English.”

Participants in the cohort aged ≥ 40 years stated that they had to learn the language of the passport country as a foreigner, and they spoke with an accent because they were born and educated overseas and only learned the language of their parents at home.

5F40B: “At aged 19 I spent a horrendous year in my "home" country. I could barely understand let alone speak, read nor write the home language - couldn't

understand the culture at all despite having travelled there regularly as a child, because English is our family language.”

1F40A: “I had to learn Swedish as a foreigner. Can you imagine the look on the other pupils faces who were from Turkey, Pakistan, Palestine, Germany, USA, Somalia, Brazil.... and me? Everyone got a good laugh at my expense!”

Other participants commented that even though they knew the language of the passport country, there were many dialects within the same country that greatly affected their experiences in the school system.

5M19C: “Schools were a catastrophe for me. I was born in North Africa, and I was home-schooled. Then we moved to [Country A] at age 7 and I was placed two classes above my age because I was too advanced in comparison to the rest of the kids. When we moved to [Country B] (my passport country) for middle school, I wasn’t allowed to join the international school, so my parents enrolled me local school. I did not know the (Country B) language, so they put me a class below. Then we moved to [another part of Country B] where another dialect was spoken, they put me one class below. So the two years I’d gained in London were now lost. Ironically, I am a teacher now. I think it comes from a deep-rooted need to relive my school days, in a way.”

Being bi/multi-lingual, the TCK were aware and understood that there were words that could not be translated without losing some meaning (2F40A: “There are some words in language that either are just so much better or just get lost in translation. Knowing several languages had allowed me to know all these words.”) They would often think in their first language while speaking other languages and tended to mix words and accents as they spoke (1F40A: “I confess to speaking

Swedish with an English accent...”). The participant TCK also reported that most languages or dialects from host countries were learned when they were in the primary schools but forgotten when they moved across borders. However, TCK were able to recall some words and conversed in simple daily tête-à-tête encounters.

In their passport country, the TCK participants in my study also became aware of being different. The adult TCK commented on always being a foreigner—a foreigner in the countries where they had lived before and a foreigner in their passport country. Somehow, being a foreigner was the only identity with which they could feel comfortable (3M40B: “I am a foreigner wherever I am”). Another common experience that the adult TCK remembered related to a sense of being in and being out—of being physically similar, speaking the same language and understanding others were speaking, while at the same time being a foreigner in their own country (the passport country).

3F40A: “I actually went back to the [passport country] for 3 years after I got married and found that to be worse...I was like everyone else and although it was nice, it wasn't what I was used to. It was very strange to all of a sudden be able to understand everyone who walked past me. In the past where I would switch off hearing what people said when I sat on a bus or train or in the shops, because I couldn't understand them, all of a sudden I could understand everyone and it made it very hard, as it was like everyone was talking to me and I felt I had to concentrate on what people were saying, I wasn't used to hearing so much English!”

The TCK participants in all cohorts also claimed that their parents did not understand their struggle during repatriation. Not having had any best friends until much later in life (for some only after 20 years of age), this added to the challenges

and constraints of living a high mobility lifestyle and repatriating to one's passport country after a period of overseas living. Parents did not understand these struggles of their children, as many parents were not themselves TCK who had repatriated.

6F40B: "It was a way of life for us and since we are an expat family we didn't think it was strange. My "homecoming" was horrendous but what is more that my parents didn't understand us and my mom freely admits this. Now that more is known about TCK, it is better for the younger generation but still the transition home is hard."

4F30A: "My parents had no clue how to help me with all the moves. They assumed, that: "kids are flexible, she'll be fine"... However that was not the case. I did not have a "Best friend" until my late 20's... and it was weird/difficult then, I had a lot of hurdles to overcome. I am the only child, and all of my family has passed, so I only have my friends now. I have my inner circle of friends who are my adopted family, but it is still not the same..."

Weiss (1973) noted that the passport country was often the place where TCK felt mistreated and misunderstood and experienced distinct feelings of emotional and social isolation. The TCK in my study confirmed this. They felt awkward and isolated as they were grieving about the loss of and longing for many things from places where they had lived before, and they could not talk about their life experiences to others without causing envy. The participants asserted that people in general do not understand the way TCK think and behave, their view of the world, and their naivetés of what was happening in their own country. Their TCK-ness has not yet been fully validated.

5.3.3 Commitment Uncertainty

Commitment uncertainty emerged as the third theme from the focus group data collected for Study 2. Owens, Rhoades, Shuck and colleagues (2014) described commitment uncertainty as “likely to foster a host of negative emotional reactions and thoughts about the future of [a] relationship” (p. 207). A person with commitment uncertainty would likely also express a degree of pessimism and ambivalence about relational efficacy and lack the willingness to invest in relationships, friendships, community, work (or career) and place. The adult TCK that I interviewed and who had been and were still living a high mobility lifestyle exhibited varying degrees of commitment uncertainty. For the most part, participants in all cohorts were struggling with commitment, fitting in, being multicultural and in general with their social interactions and relationships (friendships) within the communities where they lived (Figure 5.3).

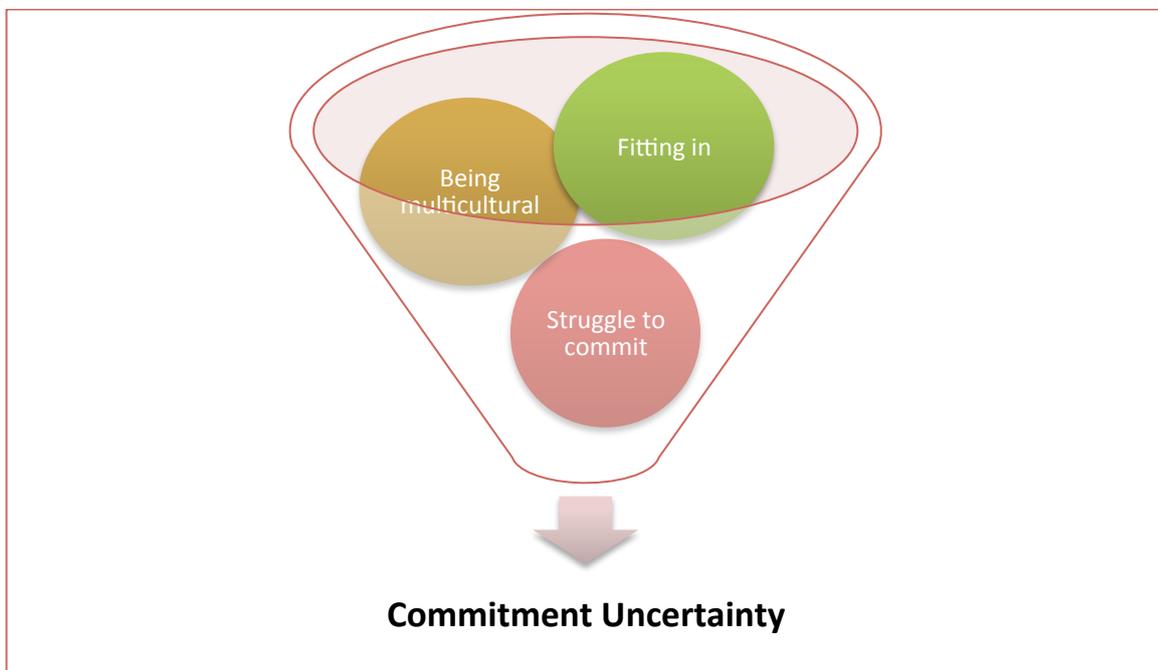


Figure 5.3 Commitment uncertainty: Social Relationships and Sense of Community of TCK

Fitting in. The adult TCK in this study reported that they continued their

high mobility lifestyle in their adult years. Most of the participants in this study were not living in their passport country—that is, 85% of participants in the cohorts aged ≥ 40 years and aged 30-39 years and 100% of the participants in cohort aged 19-29 years were not living in their passport country. The key task when moving to a new community was finding a way of **fitting in** and engendering a sense of commitment. Lacking a place attachment and probably also place identity made it difficult for them to come forward and introduce themselves to community members in the new location.

7F19C: “When people asked me where I was from I did not know what to tell them because we moved around so much. Well, it still happens even until now. If I tell them I'm from [Country A], they would follow up with "why is your English so good?" I do not know how to answer to that question, and I don't feel like telling them my life story. I remember telling them I'm from [Country B] since I am also a [Country B citizen] through my dad but I have never even set foot in [Country B] or know nothing about that country. I also feel very foreign in [Country A], even though I spent most of my time there. I guess the identity crisis is due to the permanent feeling of foreignness, if that makes any sense.”

1F19A: “I am seen as different whenever I am outside of [Country A] because they see me as a [Country A] person and I am [from Country A] and I have lived there so I accept that. Then when I am in [Country A] I don't feel so [from Country A] anymore because I realise I don't know much about anything about the current situation or its past. To strangers that ask I just give them a brief description: 'Yes I'm [from Country A] but I've only lived here 6 years so I don't know that much'. Only my good friends know the long

story because it is long and most people find it either boring or bragging.

Therefore I always try to find the short way out.”

The participant TCK in my focus groups reported that they felt lonely when they first arrived in new places. In order to fit in, they reported various efforts including learning the local languages, joining interest groups in the community or actively participating in parent-school associations.

7F30B: “In my opinion, loneliness is somewhat a state of mind and can be changed. In a new location, I always try to connect with new people whether joining an interest club, going to church, going to language class, connecting with expats (in a foreign country), etc. It is what you make of it.”

The TCK participants in cohorts aged ≥ 40 years and aged 30-39 years also claimed that having children helped them make friends with other families.

1F30A: “Even as a adult moving is lonely. The playground is now, years later, the coffee shop. Having young children is the icebreaker!! Yay kids play with other kids and mothers start talking. Being different can be lonely but taking up a class helps, you meet like minded people. Now if I'm lonely, it's by choice, my choice, it's not inflicted, lol.”

Another way of trying to fit in and adjust was for some families of TCK to live within local communities and to encourage their children to play with local children.

6F40B: “My family motto for most of the time was the classic, "When in Rome, do as the Romans..." I'm a chameleon, without feeling as though I lose my own sense of identity. I'm a cultural gourmand, I love soaking it all in, wherever I go. And, it quickly happens that I feel "at home" wherever I go in a very short time. I feel different no matter where I am, even when

some would say I'm "home," but that's just me. It's a state of mind."

However, the uncertainty about length of stay and ambivalence about where home was discouraged other TKC from having deeper levels of friendships.

1M19A: "I only know and want to know people from their outside, never have I an intention to dig deeper in a way to know them. I don't feel home everywhere. I just think that, I might relocate to somewhere again very soon. So I don't need to get too attached with people or somewhere I belong to.

4F19B: It's hard for me to form lasting friendships and feel that I fit in."

Another participant mentioned that instead of trying to fit in with the local community, it is better to find positive people who would accept you as you are.

4F30A: "The most comforting people I have been around are my friends who have travelled... even if they have travelled as adults... at least they understand and see that there is no "right way", that all of life is relative, and there are many ways of doing things, all is not black/white/right/wrong. I am very good at playing devil's advocate with my friends...haha"

1F30A: "In fact I find women who have moved around a lot more are more accepting of themselves as individuals and others and therefore are not so shallow there is more to life than looks. You wouldn't think that of [Country name] but it's true from what I have experienced. I always wanted to 'fit in' but it's taken years to say its 'they' who have the problem not me... I'm not going to change to please them as I have friends (true friends) who love me for being who and what I am."

2F19A: “Being a TCK is a big part of who I am, but I don't let it define me. I find other ways to relate to people in my life - pursuing common interests, collaborating on the projects and passions we have in common, etc. That said, most of my closest friends happen to be TCK, including my boyfriend. I wouldn't say it's a coincidence, since many of my closest friends are people with whom I attended international schools. I also found myself just naturally drawn to other people who are TCK in my adult life, though I certainly don't limit my interactions to just TCK.”

Home is being multicultural. The adult TCK participants have acquired multiculturalism as identity from having learned about different cultures in the places where they have lived and claim that they embraced all the cultures and empathised with the situation of the local people in various places worldwide. Being multicultural gave them a sense of being at home anywhere and everywhere. The focus group participants in this study thought it was beneficial to adopt a multicultural identity in order to respect local culture and be sensitive to their surroundings wherever they lived. They claimed that while living in a country, they became part of the country or place, and these places have left an indelible mark on their memories and influenced the persons they had become—their identities. Moving into various countries during their childhood had contributed to the development of their sense of being.

5F40B: “I tend to take pieces of threads from each place and weave it into my own fabric. My fabric is [Country A], [Country B], [Country C], because I lived there, slept there, eat there, went to school, celebrated the holidays, wore the clothes and opened my arms to it all. You cannot get that from a two weeks vacation.”

The participants claimed that adapting to the local customs and culture and interacting with other expatriates had taught them to be tolerant of ambiguity and to be open-minded and adventurous.

3M40B: “The [country name] also helped me look at things from a different cultural perspective. I'm very conscious as to how different cultures can interpret things, interact, and behave in situations. Having seen extreme poverty in the [country name], I'm appreciative of what I have.”

On the other hand, the adult TCK I interviewed stated how important it was to be cautious when expressing their opinions. According to the participants, people around them—the non-TCK and people in their passport countries—were very grounded and rooted in their social and cultural beliefs and could easily be offended by perspectives different from their own. It was very rare for the TCK to have a conversation with someone who actually identified with the cultural baggage they had to cope with. Some locals (non-TCK) also tried, unsuccessfully though, to categorise the TCK as one ethnic group, a special and separate group of people who had to be tolerated rather than understood.

2F19A: “When I was living in the [Country A], I got a wide range of reactions - anywhere from bewilderment because I was an international student who spoke with an [place] accent; to a relief, because I seemingly "get" [place] culture. When I was living in the [Country B], where there are few people of Asian descent to begin with, I got harassed by a lot because people thought I was [Country B]. It definitely boils down to the tensions between expectation and reality.”

Struggle to commit. Commitment uncertainty often leads to being unable to

commit to a relationship, career or place. The participant TCK in this study claimed that they have witnessed many TCK struggle with the desire to keep moving, as it was a deeply ingrained pattern of their lives representing how they grew up being high mobility individuals. Even as adult TCK they were still indecisive and ambivalent about where they wanted to go or be 5 years or 10 years later. They found that staying in one place was similar to living in a bubble, a place where you felt insulated from the outside world. It gave you the relative comfort and stability, yet there was always the curiosity about what lay beyond the horizon.

6F30B: “I also feel like 5 years is a long time to have any idea. I think I am ready to go back to work but want to change direction in my field, however, if my husband's work wants him to move, I will be more than happy to accommodate that. I would like to expose the kids to a global lifestyle. It is very easy to live in a bubble where we are - easy, safe lives.”

7F30B: “When I was younger, I tried many times to make long-term plans. I really wanted to go to pharmacy school but even though I attended university, had a well-organized plan; circumstances beyond my control derailed it every time. I've attended 4 universities, lost credits due to transfer every time and finally gave up on that dream. Now, I am content to simply take one day at a time.”

Participant 7F30B (excerpt above) was an interesting case in the TCK cohort aged 30-39 years and represented something of the commitment struggle experienced by many adult TCK. She had moved five times before entering college. When at university, she got married, moved to four different countries following her spouse, and consequently was unable to finish her degree. She also kept changing her job

every year, got divorced, remarried, and divorced again and was currently in her third marriage at the age of 30 years. Having never being able to attach securely to some place identified as home, she had difficulty building trust, was uncomfortable with long-term commitment, and expressed a sense of avoiding attachment, particularly attachment to a place called home. She was currently living in her tenth country, learning a new language, had a part time job, and had a passion for travelling and exploring new places. Her avoidance of place attachment made it very difficult for her to commit to long-term goals.

Lack of place attachment and commitment uncertainty were particularly evident in the college life experiences of TCK in the cohort of 19-29 years of age. More than half of the participants in this cohort reported that they have changed their major programme at least twice as they could not decide what to study, although they were reluctant to accept that their indecisiveness was due to their high mobility lifestyle and upbringing.

4F19B: “I’ve changed my major 4 times and have gone to 3 colleges full-time. So there has definitely been some difficulty with commitment in that respect. However I’ve never had issues committing in relationships. “Well I just couldn't decide on what to study. I’m interested in many topics. Also I was torn between studying what I loved and what would get me a job.”

7F30B: “I have also changed my university many times but it's hard to pinpoint whether it is a commitment issues.”

It seemed that the TCK whom I interviewed were struggling with commitment uncertainty as they were overwhelmed by uncertainty of the future (Owens et al., 2014) and were constantly monitoring alternatives and exploring

possibilities in reconstructing identity. In order to escape possible dissonances of earlier (childhood) unfinished tasks or unresolved psychosocial crises, the TCK were in constant pursuit of new beginnings and rarely able to finish what they started. Purportedly, the high mobility lifestyle experienced as children left them with an avoidance of seriously engaging in physical or emotional intimacy, and with a notion that one could simply change one's mind and walk away or switch to something else or a new interest. Their commitment uncertainty also seemingly generated negative behaviour that further made commitment to a place, a person or a career difficult.

4M19B: "In college I changed my major a few times, from bio science to psychology to communication to journalism then to law. I don't know if these can be attributed to my status as TCK. As for relationships, well, the longest relationship I have had lasted for about 3 months (I am 27 now).

Growing up as TCK, studying at an international school, having friends from all over the world, it became a normal ritual to say goodbye to friends who had to leave and go back to their home countries. Having to experience the pain of separation so often at such early stages of life left me unable to understand the concept of commitment. I've become so accustomed to only experiencing temporary bonds that I tend to get freaked out at the prospect of a longer and deeper relationship. At the back of my head, I'll always know that I can end up alone at anytime."

4F30A: "I lived in 7 different countries, with curriculums varying from US, to UK to Dutch. Imagine learning math on abacus one place and going to learning French another. Weird...I have always had this weird habit of growing frustrated quickly and wanting to "walk away" easily. I think it might be attributable to bouncing around so much. Even in my adult life I

find myself doing this, and I have to make myself focus in again and follow through things. Its subtle, but I feel it in my mind.”

Establishing long-term friendships or even romantic relationships was difficult for TCK. Several participants in the focus groups asserted that they feared developing trust in friendships and would rather avoid allowing others to get too close to them—they did not want to risk being hurt. Maintaining friendships was as difficult as making friends. The TCK I interviewed commented that they had to prioritize where they would invest their time, either with long distance friends or new friends who were in the same geographical location. Although geographical barriers could now be overcome with the Internet, the biggest difficulty was the effort and commitment that needed to come from both parties to maintain a long-distance friendship.

6F30B: “I think the average friendship for a TCK is somewhat shallow (and that is preferable because there is less emotional loss when you leave) but that there are a few those will transcend the walls we put up. I recognize that I can be fearful in those. I am fearful that my trust will be wasted (because of risk of moving as a child). It also takes a very patient person to wait for me to allow intimacy (of friendship) in the relationship. I will push people away at times to avoid developing the friendships.”

6F30B: “It's interesting that as an adult settled in one place, I have had to learn how to choose friends more carefully (before, it didn't really matter, because we would be moving on soon, anyway). And, I have also had to learn how to maintain adult friendships rather than giving up on friendships as soon as there is conflict.”

5F40B: “It was apart of the TCK life. You made friends and you miss them when you moved or they moved. You did your best to keep in touch, but you started a new life in a new place. The ones that stayed with me are my college friends.”

4M40B: “I’ve been happily married for 20+ years now but want to work more on developing friendships.”

3M19B: “I think friendships fade if they are not fueled by something constantly. So even with social media the distance will take it's toll and friendships will fade.”

Nonetheless, the TCK in my focus groups who managed to establish friendships during their childhood years and overcome the avoidance of commitment agreed that modern technology was a great way of maintaining contacts. By reconnecting with former peers from their childhood, the TCK came to realize that there was great comfort and trust with their former friends, usually other TCK, as they were fully understood and could also empathize with what the other person was going through.

3F19B: “95 percent of the friends I made until age 22 were TCK, so I think we all know that out of sight is NOT out of mind. Facebook is amazing, we've been more connected and involved with each others lives than almost ever before.”

4F30A: “When we [TCK] get together, its like a comfortable pair of shoes... you just fall into step as though no time away had elapsed. It’s a blessing to have found these people in my life.”

Commitment to family was more prevalent than to friendships. The participants mentioned spending most of their time with their immediate family and becoming closer to their siblings, especially in the first few months after relocation. Siblings became best friends and gave each other emotional support when entering new places, as their parents were tense and swamped with relocation issues, such as a new job, immigration registration, learning know-how of the new place, finding a place to stay, a school, and so forth (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014).

6F40B: “My own family is generally all I routinely socialize with, outside a couple notable exceptions. In the end, I have, and always have had, few real friends. I'm fine with that, I'm the cat who walks alone.”

6F40B: “I remember each time the pure excitement and wonder about making the move. My brother and I became quite close as a result. We managed our emotional turmoil surrounding being uprooted by becoming each other's best friend right before through right after a move, and then would branch out as we made new friends. When we learned of another upcoming move, the same thing would start again. To this day, we understand each other without having to talk much.”

In summary, commitment uncertainty and an apparent inability to settle down were evident amongst all the cohorts that I interviewed for Study 2. Adopting a multicultural identity seemed the best way to handle the multiple adjustments TCK underwent throughout their developmental years. Instead of trying to fit in, the participants I interviewed accepted that they were different and would rather reconnect with old friends who understood them and their high mobility lifestyle. Social relationships and careers continued to generate feelings of pessimism and

ambivalence and an unwillingness to invest in long-term friendships or any kind of place attachment.

5.3.4 The World is my Oyster

5F30B: “You using the word "home", is it attached to a place or as a house? Is sort of "confusing" for me.... As a TCK, it is a life long battle to understand what it is and where it is. For me home is more about the people, not space or place.”

1F19A: “It might sound cliché, but to me home is where the heart is, which is with family and close friends.”

2F19A: “I agree that home is where the heart is. But my heart has been split up into pieces all over the world, where my memories and loved ones are, so home isn't just one place. I feel like a big part of being a TCK is never feeling complete in any one place, because you're always missing someone somewhere else.”

1F19A: “I agree, there is always a piece missing. So you're never really 'home', but I think at some point you adjust to the missing pieces being gone and find a place/person close enough to the 'home' feeling.”

The fourth theme that emerged from the focus group discussions across the three cohorts of adult TCK addressed the focus of my dissertation, namely how the TCK perceived a place called home and the future direction of their lives. This turned out to be quite a controversial topic of discussion, and the question about a place called home was somewhat sensitive given that all TCK participants in Study 2 were not living in their country of origin but somewhere else. Could they have found

a place called home somewhere? What were the characteristics of the place they now called home? Did they develop a sense of belongingness in the adopted country?

Overall, for the TCK I interviewed, home was not a space or place and the idea of a home being attached to a single place was quite confusing for many. It seemed that for TCK, understanding what and where home is was a life-long battle with no clear answers. The participants admitted that there is a lingering feeling of sadness and empty holes in their life regardless of all their efforts to find home and not having something or somewhere to hold on to. Figure 5.4 shows the two main dilemmas that the TCK in all the cohorts in the seven focus groups faced: On one side was the wish to settle in or where one would like to settle, and on the other side, the urgency to continue their high mobility lifestyle.



Figure 5.4 The world is my Oyster: TCK's perceptions of a place called home

Settling in a place that could be home. As illustrated in Figure 5.4 (left side), some TCK participants shared the desire to settle down and discontinue their

high mobility lifestyle, mostly for the benefit of their own children. Whereas participants in the older cohort (aged ≥ 40 years) still had some nostalgia for the places they had lived as children, the participants in the younger cohorts had more definite ideas about where they would like to settle. For the most part, though, the participants agreed that they would rather settle in a foreign country (not the passport country) as an adopted place called home.

Amongst the TCK in the older cohort, nostalgic feelings and memories of the places they had lived lured some of the participants to want to make a home there.

1M40A: “I hated many aspects of life in [Country A]. I was anxious for the day to come when I could leave [for college back in home country], and did not expect to go back. During my time in college in the [home country], though, I realized that [Country A] is the place I feel most at home, and I ended up returning, and now have spent most of my life here.”

4F40B: “I had the most wonderful time in my primary and middle school in [Country A], that even after I moved on, I still went back there for holiday as my parents still worked there. When my parents left [Country A] I lost home because there was no place anymore in [Country A] that I could go back in every semester break. I lost home in a place I loved and still love. But the truth is that even after my parents left I went back to [Country A] to work there.”

Although most participants in this cohort reported that many of their memories about the places they had lived were blurred, and that photos and keepsakes of their childhood were limited, they could recall their first impression when they just stepped into a new place, such as the smell, the climate, the taste of food, and the particular behaviour of the people. Participant 4M40B recalled the

smell of bonito flakes and the politeness of Japanese people, and the year round heat and humidity in Sumatra and how the people observed the Ramadhan. TCK participant 1F40A remembered how “yellow the sky could be and how people’s time tables were scheduled around the sun rise and sun set” in Pakistan. Each place in which the TCK had lived left memories embedded in their perceptions of a place called home. Some places might be forgotten, while other places were dearly imprinted in their memory, influencing the person they had become. Moving to various countries during their childhood had contributed to the development of their sense of being and belonging, and often one place turned out to be a favourite, as it was the place where they experienced major developmental milestones in their life, mainly during adolescent years.

Among the younger participant TCK (aged 30-39 year and aged 19-29 years) there were some who were already planning on settling down in one place some time in the future when they planned on starting a family.

3M19B: “I would like to start a family yes, but it's really hard to find someone who can fit with my life and I fit with theirs. I leave it open. When the right time comes the right person will too.”

4F19B: “In my mind, in the next 5-10 years I will be married, living in Mexico. Probably starting to have kids. I'll be a stay at home mom until the youngest reaches kindergarten age. I hope to be leading (with my husband) a community group in my church for middle school students.”

However, settling in did not necessarily bring about a clear sense of belongingness. A place called home remained an elusive concept for most adult TCK.

6F30B: “I don't belong anywhere. I recently chose a citizenship - though I didn't do it to belong or feel at home, I wondered if it would change my

perception of home. This is the place I have lived the longest and it is nice to be known but the concept of home is less achievable than the concept of love. I sometimes wonder if non-TCK's have any different knowledge about home or if we just think they do.”

Some participant TCK that I interviewed pointed out that settling in a place that was multicultural would be ideal for them. A big city where many cultures intermingled and a place that could offer their children some stability were preferable to having to adjust (yet again) to the challenges of a small town without the necessary infrastructure and with monocultured people who did not understand their history of a high mobility lifestyle.

3F19B: “To be honest I felt more lonely living in a small town in UK than in any city of the world where I couldn't speak the local language. Cities tend to have people from many nations, some TCK and people who have various interests. Small towns tend to be less exposed to foreign cultures, and quite stand-offish with strangers they can't immediately pigeon-hole.”

Participant 1F30A, who currently did not live in her passport country but instead lived in a major city in Asia, enjoyed the multicultural lifestyle the place could offer. She also thought it was unnecessary to relocate her family to other countries, unless the new place could offer more than their current location with its global lifestyle and good education and health care systems. Other participants also admitted that they thought moving around was not beneficial for their children—they did not want to continue the high mobility lifestyle that they had experienced during their own childhood. Unless the next destination could offer better education, infrastructure and social prospects for the children, some of the adult TCK I interviewed preferred to raise their children in one place and considered home to be

the place where they could spend a substantial period of time.

Home could be anywhere. As illustrated in Figure 5.4 (right side), the participant TCK also claimed that they were citizens of the world and considered home to be anywhere and everywhere. Even though some expressed a wish to settle somewhere, they did not necessarily want the place to be in their country of origin or passport country. They understood diversity and had experienced adjusting to living anywhere. Therefore, the adult TCK had no problem living anywhere and some even wanted to continue their high mobility lifestyle for themselves and also for their children.

1F40A: “My kids are now second generation TCK and they are in constant contact with my parents, something that I was not able to do as a child with my own grandparents.”

5F40B: “I don't like being stagnant and like the adventure of going somewhere new. Meet new people, eat different foods, breathe in a different air and feel a new soil under my feet. Home to me is the world.”

6F40B: “We fully understood that our lives were out of the ordinary, and even as a very young child I remember being thrilled at the opportunity. It made for an early maturation in many ways, becoming worldly well before most of my stateside homebody friends--in some cases even to present day. We were chameleon types, quickly assimilating our habits. To this day, for me, it truly is "wherever I hang my hat is my home." For instance, even a hotel room for a few days quickly becomes my natural feeling home. Leaving any place makes me slightly sad each time, even as I savor "going home" to wherever I'm headed.”

The participant TCK across all cohorts claimed that a high mobility lifestyle became a way of life and that they expected to continue having a similar lifestyle in the future. Their childhood experiences made them different and they could not foresee making significant changes in the future. Some TCK ended up choosing a career that would allow them to deal with cultural diversity, meeting people from all around the world and moving to new places every so often. Moving to the other side of the world does not seem to require much thought for the TCK, it is just an opportunity to explore another part of the planet—the world has become their oyster.

2F40A: “I hardly ever talk about my TCK-ness because I feel like I'm bragging. I did mention it in a job interview for my current position, which was in a culturally diverse area. I got the job, and love meeting people from all around the world. I am so curious to know people's story.”

7F30B: “I am [country of origin] but moved to [Country A] when I was 8; then to [Country B] as a teenager before returning to the [country of origin] for university. I travelled extensively with my parents when I was young, and then have continued to live overseas as an adult, living in [Country C], [Country D], [Country E], [Country F] and most currently, living in [Country G] with my husband. I don't think I will stay here long though...”

Participants in all the focus groups agreed that moving to another place in their adult years was much more exciting compared to having to live in their country of origin. For the most part, they missed the feeling of being a foreigner, as it was a feeling already acquired growing up as TCK. Being surrounded by other expatriates, life was always changing and never the same, people came and went, and the TCK were fine with this mutable environment. For the TCK I interviewed, living in a foreign country was familiar and a lifestyle they could understand—the sense that

home could be anywhere and everywhere.

Growing up as second generation TCK, the majority of participants in the cohort aged 19-29 years were aiming to find a career that would give them the same lifestyle in future. Except for a few who considered settling in one place when starting a family (not the country of origin), they wanted to expose their offspring to the same lifestyle they experienced. The participant TCK were, for the most part, positive about their upbringing and were confident that they could lead their (future) family in a high mobility lifestyle, a way of life that they knew and with which they were comfortable.

6F19C: “I am studying hospitality management. So I am hoping to work in the hotel industry, hopefully with the opportunity to continue explore and move around; and in the future, hopefully I can give my family the same upbringing I have had.”

5M19C: “I really hope I can live in a globalized 'world' city. I realize more and more that it is the only kind of surroundings I am really comfortable in. I hope to have travel as a constant aspect of my life both professionally and personally.”

8F19C: “I am fully bilingual (Spanish and English), I would like to be a translator or work as a teacher in international schools.”

2F19A: “I haven’t really thought of it because at this point I don’t know if I want to have a family in the future. I just don’t like to be tied down in one place and family gives me the idea that you need to finally settle down. I want an exciting, mobile, and adventurous life that I don’t foresee if I have a family.”

3M19B: “I had realized that knowing many languages and cultures, yet not really belonging to any, presents an opportunity -a career- in which I would be a bridge between the different world that I am part of would probably be suitable.”

Participant 7F19C claimed that “the world is definitely getting smaller and sometimes it doesn’t seem to make a difference in time zones etc., you can leave a message for someone on Facebook and you know it will get answered easily within 24 hours, as opposed to having to write a letter and wait for a response which may never come.” The development of the Internet and social media offered ways to connect and reconnect with others (i.e., family and friends) around the globe. One could also rekindle old friendships from somewhere one had lived before, and maintain friendships no matter where one lived. Many participants were actively finding ways to reunite with old friends from their childhood, such as managing online groups.

6F40B: “Previously I wrote letters, used the phone, but it did not work. All of my friendships lapsed. As social media has blossomed, I now have reunited with many of my childhood friends...It has been a conscious effort on my part. I continue to run my college reunions, probably because I'm nostalgic at heart. I started an online group out with the initial purpose of finding some of my friends from my childhood days, and it has grown well beyond my expectation. Interestingly, it has been most difficult to locate any friends from my high school days when I just moved back home. It's as though they do not exist anywhere.”

3F40A: “Facebook has been a great help and source of maintaining friendships all over the world, and even though someone may not be a friend

you can invite over for a coffee or wine, there are still friends I know all over the world...different degrees of friendship, but those who are out there are all TCK adults and value the meaning of friendship and time and miles in between.”

The social media was for some a more recent addition to their means of becoming global citizens (e.g., for participants in cohorts aged ≥ 40 years and aged 30-39 years), while for TCK in the cohort aged 19-29 years it was a way of life that made the world their oyster. Relationships could continue no matter where the TCK considered a place called home.

Theme four that emerged from the focus group discussions for Study 2 highlighted two sides of the coin: on the one hand, participant TCK wanted to settle in and not have their children lead a high mobility lifestyle, while on the other hand, participant TCK seemed to have become addicted to the high mobility lifestyle and wanted to pursue the same life in future. Few thought of settling in their home country or country of origin, and all of the TCK participants I interviewed saw home as anywhere and everywhere. For the TCK the word was their oyster.

5.4. Reflections on Study 2

Reflexivity involves reflecting on the way in which research is carried out and understanding how the process of doing the research shapes its outcomes (Hardy, Phillips, & Clegg, 2001). Using an asynchronous focus group was a novel experience and a study in itself. I had to maintain my role as moderator, as well as inform the participants of my situation being the parent of TCK myself. The Facebook focus group procedures allowed me to conduct more than one group discussion at the same time. Despite the literature study I had conducted beforehand, I had to maintain openness in order to learn from my participants, and had to

regularly give the participants the assurance that I had no agenda in moderating the discussion other than listening to their stories. Similar to traditional focus group dynamics, I as the moderator had to manage the group dynamics and allow the members to lead the discussion and to start a new posting.

In conducting more than one focus group simultaneously, I could ensure data saturation was achieved. For example, if one group came to some kind of consensus on a topic, I could post the topic to another group in search of a deeper understanding. As with face-to-face focus groups, I sometimes needed to prompt specific participants in order to regain their attention, as it was not possible to know their opinion or thoughts unless they made a post. I had to highlight and mention their names in my post and had to remind them of the unanswered questions via a private message system. Although this was done to ensure data saturation, it might have put the participants in an uncomfortable position when they maybe did not want to respond to the question. However, because I could not “read” their body language—as would have been possible with face-to-face focus group discussions—it was the only way for me to know where they would like to contribute or rather wanted to abstain. I also had to constantly remind myself not to interject my own opinion in the discussion and instead to encourage open and honest communication among participants. My supervisor served as my collaborator to keep me on track, addressing potential biases that could have crept into the moderation of the focus groups and in the data analysis. This was helpful, as she kept me in the position to separate my own voice and the voice of the participants in presenting the findings above.

In Study 2, the focus was on the experiences of adult TCK, how they made sense of their high mobility lifestyle during their childhood years, and the potential

impact of their TCK-ness on their perceptions of a place called home. The TCK in the cohort aged ≥ 40 years admitted that a high mobility lifestyle was addictive. Even though they appreciated a stable and rooted life with a life-long partner, they raised their children overseas and their children could be considered second or third generation TCK. Some participants in the cohort aged 30-39 were trailing spouses, and some have immigrated overseas commenting that they would like to expose their children to an overseas experience in the same way they experienced it during their childhood. However, there were also some participants in this cohort still struggling to make sense of their high mobility lifestyle and even loathing their upbringing as TCK. This group also experienced commitment uncertainty and were doubtful about investing in serious relationships, such as career and marriage and settling down, and they pursued careers that would send them overseas so that they could continue travelling. The participants in the cohort aged 19-29 years were also, for the most part, second generations of TCK, and for them the family might have different ways dealing with relocation, compared to TCK in older cohorts whose parents were novices on relocation at the time when they (the participants) were children.

Among the three cohorts, there were several issues that could have affected the participant adult TCK's perceptions and experiences, including communication, self-mobility, and the role of international schools. The Internet and modern day advanced ways of communicating were not part of the childhood experience of TCK in the older cohorts aged ≥ 40 years and aged 30-39 years, while the young cohort aged 19-29 years could have unlimited means to communicate globally. The rapid development of the Internet has shrunk the world and TCK today can be connected to people (family and friends) from all over the world. The new technologies have also allowed TCK in the older cohorts to find validation for their TCK-ness and

reconnect to old friends from childhood.

Whereas earlier overseas assignments were mostly related to the organisations for which their parents worked at the time, the younger TCK also came from families who chose *self-mobility*. There was no involvement with or support from a sponsoring organization in relocating overseas. The families relied on their own decision-making for self-mobility based on information about the socio-economic and political conditions of the places where they wanted to move to, ensuring the safety of their family, securing the academic pathway for their children, or merely immigrating to a preferred country rather than going back to the passport country. The availability and variety of international schools worldwide played a significant role in the family decision to relocate overseas. The TCK in the cohort aged 19-29 years experienced and participated in the rapid development and improvement of international schools worldwide.

Analysing the narrative tone in the transcripts from the seven focus groups, I detected another dimension of TCK leading a high mobility lifestyle that I interpreted as a certain degree of duality expressed in their stories. On the one hand, participants were quite positive about their experiences and felt fortunate about their upbringing, which they would not want to trade with anyone. On the other hand, there was a negative tone when the participants commented that they were sad and felt lonely and misunderstood throughout their life. If the high mobility lifestyle in their childhood brought so much misery, then why did most of the participants want to continue travelling and moving around? Was this duality in the findings of Study 2 a kind of binary opposition that represented the psychosocial dilemma TCK were facing at every stage of life?

In the next chapter I discuss the findings of Study 1 and Study 2 in an attempt

to construct a coherent representation of TCK, their place attachment confusion, and the tasks they need to complete in the process of constructing identity.

Chapter 6. Place Identity Construction of TCK

I want to understand the world from your point of view. I want to know what you know in the way you know it. I want to understand the meaning of your experience, to walk in your shoes, to feel things as you feel them, to explain things as you explain them. Will you become my teacher and help me understand?

-- James P. Spradley

In this chapter, I discuss the findings from Study 1 and Study 2 and how the different cohorts of participant TCK made sense of their high mobility lifestyle and the meanings they attributed to a place called home. The findings in both studies described the meaning of a place called home for participating TCK who ranged in age from 7 years to more than 40 years. The findings in Study 2, and in particular the memories of high a mobility lifestyle during the developmental years, confirmed, updated, expanded upon and enriched the narratives of the younger cohorts in Study 1. Both studies provided insights regarding how the TCK interacted with the places where they had lived or where they were currently residing, and how their experiences could have affected their meaning-making processes.

Merely generalising their experiences would not do justice to trying to explain the meaning of a high mobility lifestyle and place identity construction for TCK. We need to move beyond generalisation, to a social constructionist way of explaining the TCK life trajectories within their own unique interstitial culture. In this chapter, I present the place identity construction of TCK grounded in the findings from Study 1 and Study 2. This chapter is divided into four main parts that together comprise a model of place identity construction grounded in the voices of the TCK from Studies 1 and 2. In the first part, I discuss the process of attributing meaning to a place called home for each cohort. How do TCK construct meaning of a place called home in the multiple places where they have lived? I then proceed to

discuss the causal conditions that influenced the process of establishing place identity for TCK. Following this, I discuss the enabling modalities that each cohort of TCK needed to acquire in order to construct their place identity as well as the potential effects of maladaptation if the modalities were disabling. Finally, I discuss the outcomes experienced by TCK participants after they had acquired enabling modalities in their place identity construction and discuss the implications these findings might have for parents preparing their TCK for the next move.

6.1 Attributing Meaning to a Place Called Home

In the beginning of this dissertation, I reflected upon my encounter with a young boy who was asked where home is. He commented that home is complicated—it is neither here nor there. Following up on the question of where/what is home for TCK I explored the meanings that both young TCK (those aged 7-17 years) and adult TCK (those aged ≥ 18 years) attributed to a place called home. How do the TCK construct a sense of home or place identity living the high mobility lifestyle that they are exposed to during their developmental years? Several themes emerged from Studies 1 and 2, themes that provided the meanings that TCK ascribed to the core phenomenon of a place called home. Place identity construction for TCK was not limited to place-based notions of home—that is, a meaningful physical place where people develop emotional attachment (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011). Rather, home for participant TCK was where they developed emotional attachments to people and objects that they encountered in places they lived (Nowicka, 2007). Home for these TCK was experienced both as a location and as a set of relationships that shaped their identities and feelings of belonging.

Three themes were identified in the TCK place construction process, namely: the centrality of the family, an expanding network of relationships as the TCK

moved to different places and countries, and the view that the world is their ever-changing oyster in which home could be anywhere (Figure 6.1).

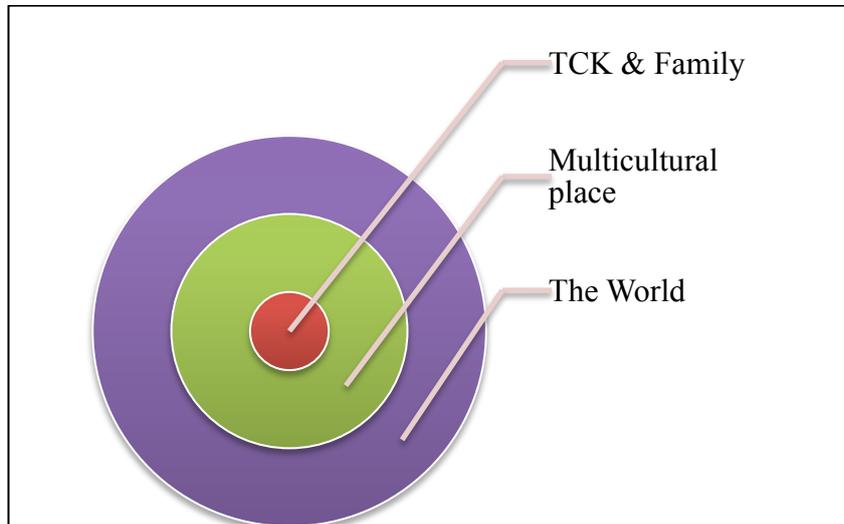


Figure 6.1 Place Called Home for Third Culture Kids

6.1.1 Family at the Centre of a Place Called Home

The notion of family and family life were at the centre of what TCK considered a place called home. For both the young TCK and the adult TCK family (with or without siblings) was the only constant companion during their many travels. Home became the place where the family could be together and not necessarily the physical space in which the togetherness emerged. Family rituals, the habits of each family member and familiar objects became evident in the images pasted on the collages during the CLET interviews, and provided the TCK in middle childhood and pre-adolescent years with a sense of security and continuity. The emotional attachment and interdependence within the TCK's relationships with family and familiar objects represented a sense of home during their high mobility lifestyle (Nowicka, 2007).

The extended family, such as grandparents, cousins and godfather or

godmother, also played a role in co-constructing a sense of home for the younger TCK. During holiday visits or occasional Skype conversations the relationships with the extended family added another dimension to co-constructing a place called home—that is, home is where the family is be it with the parents or with the extended family members. This was particularly relevant for the TCK aged 7-9 years who experienced the advantages of modern air travel and technological developments of the 21st century. However, the older TCK in cohort aged 30-39 years and ≥ 40 years did not have the luxury of frequent holiday visits or affordable long distance calls during their childhood. Therefore, they had less contact with their extended families until they repatriated at a later stage in life (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004). The advances in communication technology and travelling clearly changed the experiences TCK in the different age cohorts had in terms of the effect of these advances on the social interactions between the younger TCK and their extended family members (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2012; Manago, Taylor & Greenfield, 2012). Thus, we could conclude that home for TCK was not in the physical space but in the relationships and social interactions, in the togetherness of significant others with whom attachment was formed early in life.

6.1.2. Multicultural Places

The TCK constructed home as being neither here nor there. For them, home could be everywhere and anywhere. The TCK in middle childhood included the passport country, the country where the parents came from and the countries where they had lived as places they called home. The inclusion of more than one place or countries as a place called home was very much dependant on how well the TCK adapted to and the social-emotional experiences they had in that country. For the TCK home was an idyllic place and a place where they could maintain their

foreigner status.

For the younger cohorts, the idyllic home referred to places they visited during holidays and that were associated with freedom from school or other obligations. The idyllic home became associated with being away from the routine challenges of everyday life in the host country and embracing the excitement and adventures offered by a new (and different) place. In some cases, holidays represented a time when the (nuclear) family could stay somewhere without having to worry about being accepted or being different (Larsen, 2013). In other cases, visiting the place where the parents came from represented a home where the TCK could get to know their extended family, such as the homes of grandparents and cousins, and also their peers, and where the environment was free of urban congestion and pollution. During these times, the TCK were able to observe how people lived in that place. Relatives might include them in their daily routine or they might practise the language and participate in some (familiar) cultural events, without any obligation to comply. As a result of such experiences, TCK often left the holiday destination with fond memories. The holiday places were an escape for the soul and mind, a safe place in the sense that no one would judge or expect anything from the TCK except to enjoy life, family and relationships (Larsen, 2013). It represented the idyllic place and a place called home.

Wanting an idyllic home could also be interpreted as meaning the TCK had difficulties in adapting to or dislike for the current place they lived, and consequently they developed a fondness for certain places they visited. For some, these places were places they visited during holidays and where they could simply enjoy life without the need to adapt, places that provided the comfort of stress-free convenience. For others, the idyllic home had to be a safe place where a super hero

could protect them and their family. The presence of a super hero in the collage of the TCK for a place called home could be understood as a yearning for a way to cope with adaptation in a foreign place and to deal with situations or events such as losses (Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Gilbert, 2008).

Whereas the concept of an idyllic home for the younger TCK represented a place that offered freedom to do what one wanted to do, for the older TCK it meant settling in places where one was not bounded by the prescriptions of one or another culture. Home was multicultural places where the TCK were not demeaned and considered boastful by non-TCK who did not understand their high mobility lifestyle. TCK in the pre-adolescent and adolescent years expanded the concept of home to include opportunities for developing new friendships and social relationships. The new places offered the TCK a sense of belonging through social relationships as friends provided emotional connections (Clarke & Barry, 2010; Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014). For the TCK, the concept of home is based more on relationships, not space or place, and the idea of a home attached to a single place was quite confusing for them. However, friendships were often short-lived and superficial, and some TCK were experiencing *saudade*, a lingering feeling of sadness and empty holes in their life, and not having something or somewhere to hold on too. Consequently, in adulthood the TCK continued their high mobility lifestyle to satisfy their wanderlust or to find their idyllic home. Home for the TCK could be anywhere, and ideally they preferred to settle in a multicultural place reminiscent of the high mobility contexts they experienced during their developmental years.

6.1.3. Ever-changing World

The TCK that I interviewed for this project considered home as an ever-changing life situation rather than a place or specific locale. In both Study 1 and

Study 2, some participants were born overseas and have only experienced living in their country of birth and not in their passport country. As the TCK relocated again, the notion of a 'place called home' became more confusing to them as the place where they lived kept changing and home kept changing. Consequently, the TCK needed to make their own definition of home and construct their sense of self that was different than that of their non-TCK peers.

Living in several countries allowed the participant TCK to benefit from and acquire knowledge about the cultures and values of new places. For these TCK, life was far away from being a dull—it was always changing. Many participants in Study 2 were themselves TCK as children and ended up continuing their high mobility lifestyle in their adult years. They became the parents of the second and third generation of TCK—the children who participated in Study 1 and the younger adult participants in Study 2—and believed that a high mobility lifestyle would benefit their children in becoming multicultural and multilingual. The young adult TCK participants (aged 19-29 years) reported that their parents were much more alert to the possible consequences of their decision to relocate and the potential stress on their children, in particular the stress of losing their friends and a familiar environment (Adams & Kirova, 2007). Their parents gave particular guidance and helped their children to cope with the relocation. Having experienced a high mobility lifestyle themselves, these parents paid attention to adjustment in a new place, as well as maintained contact with the relatives and friends in the passport country, something that was made easier with the advancement of technology in the 21st century. Parents of second generation TCK also planned the relocation to coincide with the end of a school year and informed the children early enough so that they were able to complete their academic and social tasks.

The ever-changing world included changing scenery, excitement and disappointment, as well as the high and low of their social relationships, and the ongoing battle for education. Speaking the local language and English had been a key modality to the development of social relationships for the TCK (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014). The TCK were enrolled in international schools with the intention that this could ease the adjustment difficulties and give them the opportunity to learn the local language as part of community blending. For TCK, however, language acquisition is a constant battle. This is the case when the TCK have to be enrolled in a different language medium school than in the previous country. When they enter a new school, TCK need time to learn the language well enough to match their peers. For example, one participant with German passport attended German International School in Chile then moved Macau and had to attend Canadian International School because there is no German International School in Macau. The situation was of this participant was not unique and I observed that several participant TCK in both Study 1 and Study 2 struggled, on the one hand with establishing relationships that could represent a place called home, while on the other hand managing many different languages and diverse social relationships.

In this ever-changing world, culture shock has become the expected norm when entering a new place (Gaw, 2000; Huff, 2001). It is almost as if it is expected that one would experience culture shock despite having made a conscious choice about moving and having gathered extensive information about the new place. In the present study, having lived in at least three places other than one's passport country during the developmental years was a criterion for inclusion as a study participant. Accordingly, it was expected that the TCK would have repeatedly experienced culture shocks and that they might have anticipated such shocks when they entered a

new place.

However, the traditional notion of culture shock was not experienced amongst the participants in this study. Instead, participant TCK experienced an anticipated feeling of inflicted loneliness in the first two three months in a new place. Lacking quality long-term relationships (friendships) and failing to connect and maintain connections with others across time and space could make the TCK experience a sense isolation and loneliness, and even depression in the places they considered home for a short period of time (Ledbetter, Grifiin, & Sparks, 2007). While TCK family members might seem close or even very close to each other (Lijadi & Van Schalkwyk, 2014; McLachlan, 2008), each individual still had to undergo her or his own adjustment and re-adjustment to relocation (Van Bochove & Engbersen, 2015) and often the TCK kept their loneliness to themselves in an attempt not to concern the parents. There is a need to further explore the discourses within the TCK families in order to understand how, as a family, they make sense of their high mobility roller coaster lifestyle.

The experience of repatriation or reverse culture shock was a major challenge for many TCK as it implied yet another change (Gaw, 2000; Huff, 2001). In anticipating repatriation, the young adult participants in Study 2 thought that this relocation could be the end of their high mobility lifestyle, the ever-changing world with which they have become familiar. Although repatriation implied that TCK were amongst others that are similar rather than diverse, the struggles in changing schools were once again present as the TCK repatriated. As expected they would be going to local schools and might have to deal with involvement in the local community but had to do without the support of others who have had lifestyle experiences similar to theirs—that is, family and TCK friends.

According to Pollock and Van Reken's (2001, 2009) definition of TCK, their TCK-ness was only established once they repatriated to the passport country at some point in life. This was also the point when TCK became most acutely aware of how different they were compared with their compatriots who did not lead a high mobility lifestyle. The participants in Study 2 had all experienced repatriation to their passport country and all considered this a traumatic experience. Even when having repatriated during their developmental years, the adult TCK remembered the challenges they faced. Reverse culture shock was evident for them when the childhood memories of the passport country as a holiday place were challenged, with the passport country becoming a place to which they must now adapt to and accept the socio-cultural prescriptions of the so-called home country. The holiday was over, and the TCK were faced with the same tasks they previously faced in a host country, namely to adjust, to fit in, to learn and on top of that, to go to school or university with peers who, for the most part, had no understanding of the TCK's prior lifestyle and experiences.

Whereas participants in Study 2 have all experienced repatriation, the young TCK in Study 1—except for two participants—have not yet been exposed to a reverse culture shock experience in their passport countries. The younger TCK, however, did experience partial reverse culture shock when visiting their passport country during the holidays because they were unfamiliar with local cultures in that country and were feeling isolated from their extended family. It was particularly difficult when repatriation took place during primary or secondary school years. Parents would enrol their TCK children in a local school in the “home” country and for many, fitting in resulted in major challenges for the TCK even though they could speak the local language or held a passport from the country. Most of the adult TCK

commented that they were more successful in adjusting to an international school, where their student peers were familiar with their lifestyle, compared to the difficulties they faced adjusting to the peer pressure and judgement often found in local schools in the passport country.

6.2 Influences on Place Identity Construction of TCK

The findings for Study 1 and Study 2 reflected the possible influences that could affect the place identity construction of the TCK. These influences were unpredictability, complexity and ambiguity. Unpredictability referred to TCK not knowing where they would be next, their living arrangements, and the length of stay in any particular place. The availability of education and schooling and the self-mobility of their parents were also of concern. Complexity evolved from having to reconstruct a place called home out of many places where TCK had lived, leading to an ecological map representing the various cultures to which the TCK have had to adjust in each relocation. For TCK, their place identity construction was therefore ambiguous and they repeatedly had to revisit the transition cycle (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009) in order to find a sense of belonging. TCK had to create their own definition of place interaction in terms of their sense of origin, place attachment and community in order to construct a place identity within their high mobility lifestyle.

6.2.1 Unpredictability of Constructing a Place Called Home

Growing up and experiencing a high mobility lifestyle have presented TCK with unpredictable situations. TCK families were often relocated at the discretion of sponsoring organizations or for reasons of self-mobility. For the majority of TCK families, in particular those from Study 2, the sponsoring organization dictated the next destination and the length of stay. Parents of TCK took on overseas

assignments as a way towards career advancement and obtaining better remuneration and other benefits, even though the destination might not always have been favourable. The parents then would inform the TCK once they made their decision and signed the employment contract overseas.

Some sponsoring organisations provided relocation assistance, and to some extent determined the living arrangement and schooling for the children of their employees. The living arrangements reported by the TCK participants included the requirement to live within the premises of the sponsoring organization, living in the staff quarters, or being allowed to find their own accommodation for their families. Some participants were already living on the work premises provided by the sponsoring organization before they relocated overseas, and when they relocated they also stayed on their sponsor's work premises. For example, some hotel employees and their families lived in the hotel and had to raise their children on the hotel premises. Multinational petrochemical and manufacturing facilities were often located in rural areas, with special living arrangements being provided for employees that were close to work but often far away from the local or host community. Military personnel lived within a military compound overseas (Ender, 2006).

The living premises within the sponsoring organization compound in most cases were built as a mini replica of the place where the head office of the sponsoring organization was and with the purpose of providing the same sense of familiarity and convenience for the employees. These compounds also included familiar infrastructures such as sport facilities, schools and other academic facilities, medical assistance, a community hall, religious facilities, grocery stores and shops. The TCK thus grew up together with others living within the premises, isolated from the local communities (Ender, 2006). Unless there were organized social activities designed

to aid employees in blending in and interacting with local communities, young TCK did not have an opportunity to learn the local culture and its day-to-day practises. On the other hand, families of TCK who could choose their own living arrangements often lived within the host community in places that were convenient for their day-to-day activities, especially if children were involved. However, even though they could plan for the move and select their own living arrangements, the TCK still experienced unpredictability having to enter a totally unknown and foreign place without the supervision and/or support from a sponsoring organisation. The parents had to find all the information they needed by themselves. The diverse living arrangements made each relocation experience unique but also unpredictable for the TCK. Some TCK grew up experiencing all of these varied living arrangements and as a result acquired many ways of interacting with both expatriate and local communities.

Length of stay in one country was unpredictable for TCK, as this very much depended on the job assignment from the sponsoring organization. Some TCK families had a pattern of moving every year. Other TCK families had an employment contract with an option for extension or termination at the discretion of the sponsoring organization. Still other TCK families decided ahead of time how long they would like to work overseas and then came back as planned. Several TCK in Study 2 had lived in more than 10 countries by the time they finished high school. In short, TCK are always living in a temporary mode, not knowing how long they will stay but knowing they will have to move eventually.

After living in at least three different foreign countries without a timeframe of how long they would stay in each one, as was the case for the participants in this study, the TCK were reticent in committing to any social roles or relationships. It

became habitual for them to leave tasks unfinished or for them to be unexpectedly left by close friends. The experiences of childhood, of repatriation and reverse culture shock, and of juggling between being grateful and enjoying the excitement of a high mobility lifestyle on the one hand and, on the other hand, experiencing frustration and grief because of the losses and challenges, seemed to become more pronounced in adulthood. The unpredictability of their high mobility lifestyle have also lead to some adult TCK in Study 2 expressing commitment uncertainty when, for example, they changed their major while attending university, they experienced unsuccessful marriages, or they were not able to commit to a career, changing jobs frequently, all of which confirm similar findings from other studies (see also Cottrell, 2002; Fail, Thompson & Walker, 2004; Gilbert, 2008; Sears, 2011).

Previously, companies sending staff for overseas assignments realised the importance of the well being of each of family member in a new place. These companies accepted the importance of not neglecting the needs of the spouse and the children when the employee was relocated to a new country (Black & Stephens, 1989; Black & Gregersen, 1991; Hawes & Kealey, 1981; Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Recommendations for choosing an overseas residence were provided based on the housing allowance of the employees. A 2003 survey from the Society for Human Resource Management in the USA showed that 21% of the 574 responding companies in the USA provided spousal relocation assistance to secure the happiness and success of the relocating employee (Pratt, 2004). These companies provided in-house local language training for their overseas workers, preparing them to communicate with colleagues in the host country and helping them learn about the host country's culture and behaviour patterns, to understand the daily life patterns and interactions there, and to learn how

to integrate into the community (Foster, 2000; Hocking, Brown, & Harzing, 2007; Shim & Paprock, 2002). One can also ask what happened to families of TCK who worked for the 79% of companies in USA who did not provide assistance for the trailing spouse?

Apart from developing a sense of belonging within the company through relocation assistance, some sponsoring organisations also coordinated staff functions and gatherings so that the expatriate families could make friends with the locals in the host country. In Study 2, some participants aged ≥ 40 reported that their parents were proactive in raising the TCK and reached out to the local community. For example, having been relocated in a rural area, a group of mothers decided to do home schooling for their children. They got together and opened a school in their garage for the TCK children and also accommodating the poor local children. Their TCK children were encouraged to play with local children, enabling their children to engage in daily conversation in the local language and to observe some daily practises in the host country. Compared to TCK families who lived within their company's compound, the TCK families who did not live in the company's compound had a better chance to be exposed to the culture of the host country and to develop social interaction with local people.

Education and schooling is a major feature of any child's developmental years and another source of unpredictability. Most TCK went to international schools as these schools catered to the needs of expatriate families in terms of language (most international schools offer English as first or second language) and ensuring international accreditation. In Study 2, the average number of schools attended by the TCK is 4.4, with three participants having attended at least 6 schools before they graduated from high school. Some participant TCK in Study 1 who were

still of school-going age have also attended many different schools. In every place where the family settled, the school and education system could vary in terms of the academic calendar, differences in the curriculum, languages on offer, requirements to learn the local language, and the observation of local cultures of the country. The education systems of some international schools are also not ready to accommodate the TCK, while other international schools have increasing numbers of local students in attendance. Thus, schooling and education became unpredictable in constructing a sense of place belongingness for the TCK.

In recent years, the international school system has developed and advanced rapidly worldwide thereby providing an attractive solution for the educational needs of TCK. Despite also attracting many local students from the host country, the international school is the place where most TCK study and where they feel a strong sense of belonging as they were amongst others who were also experiencing a high mobility lifestyle. The international school provided much needed social interaction for TCK as they went through the process of adapting to a new place and constructing their identity. However, the challenges of adapting and adjusting to new places were aggravated when changing school occurred in the adolescent years. Concern for their child's education affected the decision of many parents about relocating (Liang & Chen, 2007; Waters, 2006) and if circumstances allowed, most parents would schedule their relocation at the end of school year to minimize disruption in the academic calendar. Parents of TCK were becoming more careful about deciding where to move to next considering the implications of education for their children (Cho, Hutchings, & Marchant, 2013). Some families would also leave their children with grandparents, or send them to boarding school if they were dissatisfied with the education system in the host country or if a suitable international

school was unavailable (Langford, 2001; Sear, 2011; Pearce, 2011).

The social interaction within the school was very different for the adult TCK aged ≥ 40 years. Previously, the international schools catered predominantly to expatriate children and participants were associating mostly with other students who were experiencing a similar lifestyle. Nowadays, the international schools are inundated with local children and the younger TCK (e.g., those aged 19-29 years and those aged 13-18 years) commented that they were not excited about international schools as there were more local than international students, and the locals formed a clique and spoke local language instead of integrating with the non-local TCK. The earlier sense of belongingness experienced by the older cohorts of TCK was lost and the younger TCK, who needed to move when their parents decided to move, had difficulty fitting in and breaking into the cliques of local students who might have been together since primary school. Thus, the international school that previously provided for some form of place attachment now added to the unpredictability of place for TCK leading a high mobility lifestyle with implications for their place identity construction.

Self-mobility is a recent phenomenon where people with their own initiative choose to leave their passport country in pursuit of a goal overseas. Self-mobility has increased rapidly in recent years with the advancement of transportation and communication, thereby enabling people to move to new places in search of what the place would offer (Doherty, Richardson, & Thorn, 2013; Richardson & McKenna, 2014). The “camera told us where to go next,” claimed participant 12F15 from the TCK adolescent cohort. The symbol of a camera was used to represent her father’s job as an editorial photographer for a lifestyle magazine, a job that was unpredictable in nature and depended very much on the intention and the motivation of her father.

Participant 12F15 reported that her parents visited the new overseas country before making a decision to take on an assignment there. Engle, Schlaegel, Dimitriadi, Tatoglu, and Ljubica (2015) explain self-mobility using a theory of planned behaviour and claim that the intention for self-mobility depended on an individual's attitude towards expatriation, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Yet, self-mobility added another dimension to the unpredictability of a high mobility lifestyle.

Participants in Study 2 particularly shared an enthusiasm for living abroad and seeking out a better future in places other than the passport country of either parent (Sears, 2011). The participants perceived their cross-cultural upbringing as beneficial and as having given them many benefits. Therefore the majority of participants in the emerging adult cohort continued to experience a high mobility lifestyle, mostly through self-mobility or pursuing further education overseas instead of in the passport country. In addition, they were looking for careers that would allow them to continue travelling or to be stationed overseas. They kept their relocation options open, in part because the excitement of the unknown and newness of an unfamiliar place had become addictive.

The role of the expatriate community in the host country and the parents being second generation TCK were two supporting influences on younger TCK following their parents' high mobility lifestyle. Whereas in Study 2, the TCK reported witnessing how their mothers struggled in their adjustment, the whole experience turned positive for younger cohorts as they claimed how savvy their parents were in handling the relocation. The traditional expatriate training and mentoring seemed to be no longer necessary for younger cohorts in this study. With advances in the Internet and communication media, families were now able to

prepare themselves for relocation (Cho, Hutchings, & Marchant, 2013). Adult TCK participants in Study 2 particularly commented on expat blogs, websites and groups in the social media where families could obtain information and advice prior to making the decision to move to a new place. Parents could retrieve information from expatriate groups about, among other things, suitable residential areas, the cost of living, medical facilities, the daily necessities, and the availability of schools before the move. The family could thus make connections with people in the new place even before they moved.

This contemporary form of migration was particularly evident amongst the older cohorts (Study 2) who opted to continue their high mobility lifestyle and raise their children in the similar way. In the 21st century, social discourse between place and person and new prospects for finding a social representation of a person have emerged as many places around the world offer a diversity of options for education, career, family or retirement. Nowadays, with various means of travelling, places have no boundaries. Time and space are compressed in such a way that people can travel anywhere at any time (Bacigalupe & Càmara, 2012; Green, 2002; Madianou, 2012; Nedelcu, 2012).

Acculturation theory is inadequate to explain the adaptation process of the family of TCK, as the length of stay in one country varies for each TCK. Moreover, TCK families did not move to a new place to stay permanently, making them different from migrants who come to the host country. The jurisdiction and immigration systems in most countries only permitted TCK families to stay for the same period of time as the work assignment, and they did not have the same rights as local citizens. They had no right to voice their opinion to the legislature or to vote. I recalled participants mentioning that their house was full of unpacked boxes, stuff

that their parents bought to bring back when their assignment completed. Some boxes were carried from places to place and not unpacked until they repatriated. The notion of having to leave at some point kept the families on their toes, never allowing them to acculturate in any real sense of the word. Fail, Thompson and Walker (2004) claimed that the TCK developed a constructive marginalized identity and that they accepted being different as part of their identity. Not fully acculturating in any particular place for any length of time and the unpredictability embedded in a high mobility lifestyle also have implications for the construction of place identity of TCK.

6.2.2 Complexity of Constructing a Place Called Home

The complexity of constructing a place called home for TCK referred to the flux and variation they experienced with relocation. The most exasperating experience in moving to a new place is to lose the sense of self and to lose touch with the people closest to us (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011). Having multicultural parents and being a second generation TCK added to the complexity of their place identity construction.

I constructed an ecological map (Figure 6.2) to explicate the complex nature and interconnectedness of different cultures in the life world of TCK. The ecological map of TCK includes the many places where they established connections throughout their developmental years such as the passport country and the host countries and their expatriate community. The evidence of the ecological map could be found in few collages of the young participants, in which they pasted flags from all countries they lived and the countries where their parents came from and labelled them as places called home. The ecological map also aligned with the multicultural identities adopted by adult TCK and the interconnectedness between TCK and the

social-emotional places in their lives. Figure 6.2 highlights this complexity showing the overlapping sections between the TCK and the passport country, the host country/countries, and the expatriate community that influences TCK's place identity construction.

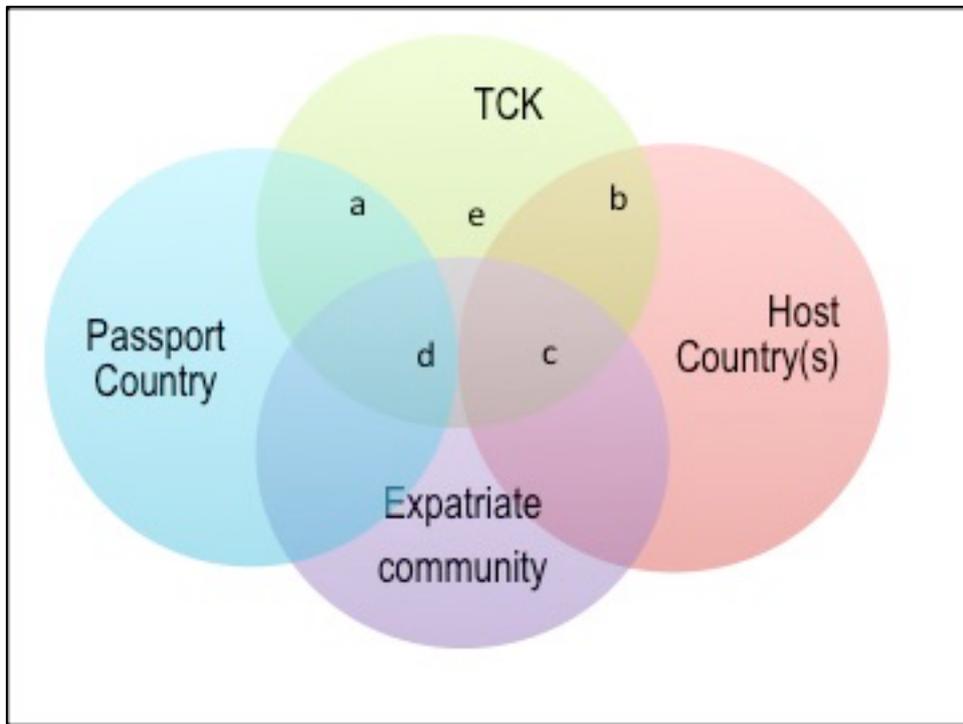


Figure 6.2 Ecological map of TCK

Section a. The passport country will always be in the map of a TCK's upbringing, regardless of whether the TCK had ever lived there prior to repatriation. Monoculture parents indirectly introduce the culture from the passport country at home. TCK who have multicultural parents might have two passport countries if allowed, or they might have to choose one of the two countries when they turn 18 years old. The culture from the passport country is claimed to be the first culture of the TCK, and for the TCK of multicultural parents there is already complexity in the mixture of the cultures of their father and their mother.

Internationally, identification systems recognize the passport country as the

national identity of a person, thereby providing legitimacy to travel between countries. Even within the international schools, students are identified with their passport country as their so-called national identity. However, it could be very confusing for the young TCK (middle childhood) if they were asked in the school to dress up in their national costume or to bring food from their passport country, particularly if they have never lived in that country or only know their passport country from anecdotal comments made by parents and short visits to the country during holidays. In Study 2, some participants reported that they only learned about their passport country when they repatriated and some participants even had to learn the language of the passport country as second language.

Section b. This section represents the interaction between TCK and the local community in the host country. The participant TCK in my study commented on their families having lived amongst the locals and made friends with the local people. TCK also met local peers who attended the international school. In this social context, the TCK learned the culture of the host country/countries, adding further complexity to the concept of a place called home. However, little is known about how the TCK engage within this social context and I suggest for further study to learn the acculturation processes involved in the interaction between the TCK and the local people using age and length of stay among the variables.

Section c. This section represents the interaction between the TCK and the expatriate community. The expatriate community consists of individuals and families who have come to live in a country on temporary basis or who have decided to stay permanently and make a home in that country, perhaps because they are married to a local person from that country (Van Bochove & Engbersen, 2015). Within the expatriate community there are well-established clubs to welcome

newcomers and that particularly involve the trailing spouse in various activities and events in order for them to become part of the community.

Over time, the expatriate community have become closer and developed into a support community for its members (Johnson, Kristof-Brown, Van Vianen, De pater, & Klein, 2003; Wang & Kanungo, 2004). Advice, insights and information were shared by families and passed on to newcomers, new friendships were forged, and within the expatriate community people shared numerous moments in their lives such as birthdays, another baby being born, school graduation, sport victories, job promotions and so on. Finding contentment in each other's company, the expatriate friends became the extended family overseas, and parents gained accumulated life experiences that assisted them for the next move. Through the expatriate community, parents of TCK could also meet other families from various countries and observe how these families adjusted to life in the new places. The adult TCK also reported that engaging with the expatriate families gave them a sense of belonging amongst people with their same nationality. During their developmental years, the TCK experienced the excitement, the comfort, the sadness and the loss of friendships within this expatriate community.

Willis and Yeoh (2002) studied expatriate communities living in various cities in China from 1997 to 2001, and found that TCK families tended to settle in neighbourhoods that were mostly populated by other expatriate families. The results in this study also showed that the TCK chose to settle within the expatriate community unless they have specific living arrangements (Fetcher, 2007; Willis & Yeoh, 2002). These expat communities were often a bit away from the local population, close to international schools, and populated with English friendly chain stores and restaurants (Fetcher, 2007; Van Bochove & Engbersen, 2015). Somehow

the condition of being in an expatriate community and being in the same boat as everyone else—that is, being away from ‘home’ and living in the foreign country and yet being close to familiar shops, malls, food chains, and so on-- provided a sense of belonging to the TCK. Not surprisingly, the TCK found a sense of belonging within the expatriate communities, as they offered helping hands and stayed connected when the TCK left for a new destination.

Section d. This section represents the repatriation phenomenon according to which the TCK have the option to interact with peers from the passport country or with the expatriate community that existed in their passport country. The adult cohorts in my study reported that in the passport country they found it easier to fit in and to get close to the expatriate people being amongst people who understood their TCK life experiences. Their international experiences influenced the TCK to find a sense of belonging amongst people who were familiar with their high mobility lifestyle and the complexities of fitting in. In the expatriate community within their passport country they could relate with greater ease and develop a sense of community—something that was very difficult with non-TCK who have not left the passport country for any length of time and who were often prejudiced of the TCK.

Section e. This section reflects the interstitial culture of the TCK that is a unique though complex feature of choosing a high mobility lifestyle. The adult TCK in my study commented on deciding to continue a high mobility lifestyle (e.g., self-mobility) and choosing where they would want to live and raise their families, and it could be anywhere—neither in the passport country nor in the countries where they had lived before. In places such as Macau, Hong Kong, Jakarta and other big cities of the world the TCK have even contributed to the development of the place where they settled without necessarily being part of the expatriate community. In a recent

publication from Latin America, Viteri (2015) described how investor, developer and the international families (i.e., the TCK families) influenced the development of a small town of Cotacachi in Ecuador. The town became a little paradise and an international hub, and it thrived on the interstitial culture that was only understood by people who lived there.

6.2.3 The Ambiguity of Place Identity Construction for TCK

The ambiguity of constructing a place called home for the TCK pertains to the feeling of uncertainty experienced by the TCK when they tried to apply the same definition for place (i.e., home, sense of belonging, place attachment, etc.) to their circumstances. As discussed in chapter 2, the concept of place and place identity were initiated from the experiences of non-TCK and referred to the sense of origin and some kind of social-emotional attachment formed with a particular place (Prohansky, 1978; Creswell, 2004; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; Wester-Herber, 2004). However, the same conceptualisation of place might not fit or explain the meanings of place for the TCK. For example, the sense of origin for the TCK includes all the places where they had lived and established some kind of physical and social-emotional link, such as place of birth, passport country or the country of their grandparents (Nette & Hayden, 2007). Place attachment for TCK was dependent on the outcome of the social relationships with others throughout their developmental years (i.e., the birth of siblings, marriage of relatives, acquisition and losses of friends or pets, experience in club or organizations that TCK joined, etc.) rather than with just one country or place as is the case with non-TCK.

Place identity construction for TCK could therefore be considered as an ambiguous process of never being able to respond in any coherent manner to the

question of where do you come from or where do you belong. Although the place of birth or the passport country served as tangible indicators of their ancestry, where their families came from, or where their father and/or their mother came from, the TCK did not experience any place attachment to the passport country. They enjoyed visiting their grandparents' houses, as they could find many photos of their parents and relatives and some of their parent's old stuff, all of which helped them to feel related. During visits to their grandparents, they would be told of many stories of their parent's childhood, would eat traditional food and goodies and would learn about the tradition and ritual of that place. However, in the latter stage of life, the passport country can be the most unfavourable place to live due to trauma of repatriation.

The host country always served as temporary home, with the TCK not knowing how long they would need to stay there but knowing that someday they will have leave the host country. The transient nature of their lifestyle limited the possibility that place attachment could develop and the host country could be called home. In their adult years, participant TCK often longed to be able to re-kindle the memories of the places they had lived before. Even the younger TCK treasured numerous memorabilia or keepsakes collected by their parents in places where they had lived, mostly photos, some limited personal belongings and art. Some participants in the cohort aged 30-39 years and cohort aged ≥ 40 years ended up spending their adult life in places where they lived previously in their childhood, as they held fond memories of the life they experienced there. Other TCK found their place identity in being foreigners and never attaching to any one place for too long.

Thus, I tend to agree with Monicka (2007) and claim that the meaning of home for the TCK depends on the emplacement of people and objects throughout

their lives, and that a place called home is an ambiguous concept for the TCK in my study. Does it mean place and society have to change and adapt to the needs of the TCK by becoming a multicultural place; or is it that the TCK can only find their sense of self and construct their identity when they are surrounded by others with a similar lifestyle? How do the attributes of a place called home, the complexity of a high mobility lifestyle, and the ambiguity of where home is contribute to the identity construction processes of TCK? What type of place identity modalities do TCK have to construct in order to find a coherent sense of self? This question is discussed in the following section.

6.3 The Enabling Modalities of Constructing Place Identity of TCK

Growing up globetrotting—a recent metaphor used to describe high mobility lifestyle—TCK participating in this study experienced unpredictability, complexity and ambiguity that influenced their place identity construction. What became obvious in conducting this research was the importance of the social interaction that occurred in the identity construction and reconstruction of the TCK as they relocated to a new place. They needed to develop enabling modalities in order to adapt appropriately within each new context at different stages of life. The inability to acquire these modalities in place identity construction could cause place identity confusion and difficulties that could affect the ability of TCK to adapt and commit later in life.

Every relocation to some extent demanded that the TCK re-visit earlier psychosocial crises and developmental tasks in their life cycle (Fail, Thompson, Walker, 2004; Sears, 2011). For example, in both Study 1 and Study 2 it was evident that when the TCK moved to a new place, they needed to (re)develop hope that the world would provide and that they were worthy as human beings. They needed to

revisit the notions of trust and mistrust in order to re-build their self-confidence and autonomy, master a new environment and learn about life and culture so as to co-construct identity through social interaction with new peers. The TCK's apparent revisiting of earlier psychosocial crises and the findings of the present study guided me in identifying certain enabling modalities that TCK need to develop in order to make meaning of their high-mobility lifestyle in relation to the places where they have lived, a process I define as the place identity construction of TCK.

6.3.1 Sense of Stability

The TCK in middle childhood (age 7 to 9) in this study had relocated at least twice and had lived in at least three countries in a short period of time. They were not sure about where home is and treated all places they have lived or visited as home. They started to doubt their sense of origin, as they only had limited information and occasional visits to their passport country. Erikson (1968) termed this stage as a sort of entrance to life, when children used their imagination and dedicated themselves to education and learning the social skills their society expected from them. TCK compared themselves with other classmates and self-evaluated their skills, for example, at reading and writing with those of peers of their same age. The TCK in many ways were different from others in their current place of residence—that is, in terms of physical characteristics, language ability and a lack of understanding of the culture of the host country. They were prone to be bullied and misunderstood.

The enabling modality for place identity construction for TCK aged 7-9 is a *sense of stability*. This sense of stability is primarily established within the family or through the caregiver, with parents being the primary source of stability by maintaining daily routines and familiar patterns that enable the TCK to establish

constancy in the face of adjusting to change. The family of TCK should acknowledge the different nature of the TCK's upbringing and life circumstances, and provide the sense of stability needed to adjust in the host culture. Inability to develop a sense of stability can lead to frustration such that the TCK feel nostalgic about the previous place(s) they lived or dream about, places free of the need to adjust and of comparing themselves to others.

From middle childhood to puberty, children begin to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments. They initiate projects, see them through to completion, and feel good about what they have achieved. At this stage, expansion of their social circle leads to development of their social skills and self-concept, as well as boosting self-esteem. They may begin acquiring friends as their interest in others grows. They learn the sense of right and wrong, acquire certain skills and begin to make small decisions on their own. They have started to describe and retell experiences, and to express thoughts and feelings more frequently. Providing a sense of stability to TCK children is crucial so that they could feel safe and secure to move on with their social interaction.

Disruption in family relationships, family routine or absence of a family member may cause TCK to often wish that they had never left and long to return to their previous place of residence for which they have happy memories. For example, perhaps the weekend family outing has changed in the new place, as a parent might have to work on weekends and have a day off only on a weekday (when the child is at school). Consequently, the TCK might detest doing homework, hate school and consider the new country unfavourable as it has taken away their happiness in spending weekends together with their family. Therefore, I propose that young TCK develop the enabling modality of a *sense of stability*, and parents need to consider

this prior to the move and discuss the matter openly with their children, working out a good solution for everybody.

6.3.2 Sense of Belonging

Sense of belonging is the enabling modality for the TCK, particularly those in their pre-adolescent years, in constructing their place identity. It is a key aspect in promoting social learning behaviour, necessary to boosting the feeling of being accepted and reducing depression (Choenarom, Williams & Hagerty, 2005). Mace and Winter (2014) advised that, in order to avoid identity struggle in the future, the TCK needed to secure membership in at least one cultural group. The questions for TCK were with which cultural group did they want to associate and where did they want to establish a secure membership. One participant in Study 1 recalled her feeling of not being accepted when she had to attend lower primary school in country B, her parents' country of origin, prior to immigrating to Country A.

“I was born in [country A]. People in [country B] don't understand my accent, my standpoint, and my sarcasm... [Country B] is home for me because of family and my cousins. I don't have friends. I don't have many things to do there. I also don't like the school there, it is very different culture, it is foreign, the environment also dirty, I prefer clean space. [Country B] is beautiful but only for holiday.”

The pre-adolescent TCK in the excerpt above had found it difficult to learn the social rules in the place of origin (the country where her parents come from), the country where people automatically identify with the participant due to physical similarity. Yet, she had no sense of belonging in that country and it could not feature in her place identity construction process. In another example, a TCK who comes

from Indonesian parents who immigrated to Canada might have difficulty adapting to Indonesian culture and might not be able to speak with his or her Indonesian cousins. Going to school in Indonesia would become a nightmare as people would constantly question why the TCK—who physically looks the same as his or her local peers—could not speak the language properly and did not know the social rules of interaction. Therefore, it is difficult for this TCK to develop a sense of belonging to Indonesia and the TCK is frustrated because people keep associating him or her with Indonesia instead of Canada.

In their CLET collages in Study 1, pre-adolescent participants included the image of their father's work. I argue that this is the stage when these TCK started to refer to the parent's work as a way of developing a sense of belongingness. In the pre-adolescent years, TCK understand that they are different compared to their peers in not only their physical appearance or their passport country, but due to their high mobility lifestyle related to their parent's work. They might even develop a sense of belonging to the sponsoring organisation or the institution or organisation where their parents worked and as a result of attending organised annual staff gatherings and other celebrations. One participant from cohort ≥ 40 continued following his parents' career path as missionaries because this career gave him a sense of belongingness. Therefore I propose that TCK in their pre-adolescent years need to develop the enabling modality of a sense of belonging in the process of constructing their place identity.

6.3.3 Sense of Direction

In adolescence, young people start high school and prepare themselves for future education and career choice. In this stage, adolescents face the task of figuring out their basic identity that they will build upon throughout their life.

Researchers had long agreed that most of the important or significant events that occur during this period are most likely to be commemorated in the future and become unforgettable personal memories (Conway, 1990; Pennebaker & Gonzales, 2009). These events and memories also give direction to the adolescents for their career choices and future commitments in life and relationships.

The tasks are not different for adolescent TCK, but seemingly posed a big dilemma because of all the other distractions and confusions experienced in a high mobility lifestyle, particularly as they continue the struggle to belong and to find acceptance of and affirmation for who they are. The TCK adolescents need additional guidance on how to make the best of their skills and to avoid wasting their unique talents and capabilities. An enabling modality for place identity construction for the adolescent TCK is therefore a sense of direction and guidance for the future. A sense of direction and guidance for adolescent TCK would enable them to commit more easily and to utilize the great qualities they possess as a result of high mobility lifestyle, such as an international education, multilingualism, intercultural competency, great tolerance to diversity and to think more on global perspective (Forster, 2000; Hocking, Brown, & Harzing, 2007). In my study, participants in the cohort aged 19-29 years were determined to have a career that allows them an exposure to international experiences. Yet, many of them experienced commitment uncertainty.

I argue that not having a *sense of direction* could be the result of the accumulated unpredictable situations discussed above. Moreover, in most host countries, children can only stay abroad with their parents as foreign citizens under their father's (or mother's) work permit until they are 18 years old, at which time they need to repatriate. The adolescent TCK could feel anxious in their preparation

for adulthood, not only because they needed to leave their parents, but also because this would be the first time they will have to undergo the rollercoaster of transition cycling on their own. Some TCK from Study 2 claimed that the languages they learned in the early years of relocation were forgotten. All three of the cohorts from Study 2 (young adult, adult and middle adulthood) claimed that relocation during the adolescent years was the hardest challenge, something that left big scar. This claim is in line with a study by Mace and Winter (2014) who reported that relocation and changing school during adolescence caused the TCK more difficulties compared with relocation during pre-adolescence. Adolescent TCK need to develop the enabling modality of a *sense of direction* in the construction of their place identity if they want to succeed in their future lives.

6.3.4 Sense of Connectedness

The majority of the young adult TCK in my study continued the high mobility lifestyle, mostly through self-mobility and by seeking opportunities to study abroad or have a career that required them to travel. The focus groups from Study 2 revealed that the adult TCK still had an on-going battle in finding their belongingness, thus they were reluctant to put much effort in developing social relationships. Therefore, the enabling modality for place identity construction of the young adult TCK is a sense of connectedness, the feeling that they are part of social relationships as well as their making an effort to seek out social relationships.

Participants in the cohort aged ≥ 30 years recalled the hardship of maintaining relationships after they left a country due to the high cost of telecommunication and the fact that some of their efforts were only one-sided. However, the TCK in their emerging adult years (i.e., aged 18-29 years) found the Internet to be a source of information and very useful for communication purposes. Social media can cut

across time and geographical distance, and allow an unlimited flow of information. With the help of digital communication, there are many ways to maintain connectedness. The TCK also mentioned that re-connecting with old classmates from childhood and college fosters them with reciprocal feelings of being acknowledged and significant.

Resolving connectedness can lead to comfortable relationships and a sense of commitment, safety and care within a relationship. Avoiding commitment and relationships can lead to feelings of being marginal, loneliness, alienation, social withdrawal or non-participation. Therefore, I propose that the enabling modality of a *sense of connectedness* is needed if young adult TCK want to engage in long-term relationships and overcome the uncertainty, ambiguity and indecisiveness resulting from a high mobility lifestyle.

6.3.5 Sense of Community

Hearn, Saulnier, Strayer, Glenham, Koopman and Marcia (2012) claimed that in the adulthood stage, people tend to the issue of personal integrity. Personal integrity is the feeling of being at peace with oneself and the world and in which people can look back on their lives positively and happily if they have left the world a better place than they found it. This is the time when individuals contemplate their accomplishments within the community in which they live. By being part of and having a sense of community, individuals can establish their sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; McMillan, 1996; Sarason, 1974) and at the same time their personal integrity. *Sense of community* is established when individuals practise and influence the daily customs, values and traditions in concert with other members of the community, even though they might not know everyone within the community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

For the TCK in my study, moving between places initiated emotional transnationalism, which Liu (2014) described as a personal negotiation of home, identity and sense of belonging in searching for a place called home. This transnational movement caused culture shock that separated the concept into two parts: home as a place of origin and home as the sensory world of everyday experience that creates a sense of belonging to the world (Carlisle-Frank, 1992). The TCK develop wanderlust to continue their high mobility lifestyle and long to fill in the hole in their hearts for an idyllic home.

In narrating a coherent life story, the enabling modality for the TCK in adulthood is having a *sense of community* in order to deal with being simultaneously pulled in opposite directions—that is, making home in one place and overcoming their emotional transnationalism and wanderlust. A few TCK from Study 2 declared that being unable to make a home was unbearable to the point where they needed help from a psychologist to re-construct the meaning of their life experiences. If the adult TCK lived in the passport country, then they needed to establish a sense of community with the non-TCK there who has difficulty in understanding that the TCK are essentially hidden immigrants. If the TCK continue their high mobility lifestyle in their adulthood years, they might not be able to fully interact with and influence the community of the host country due to their legal status. For example, the TCK cannot vote or voice their opinions due to their foreign status in the host country.

The TCK may choose to settle down in a country that can offer the best lifestyle that they can afford, in a country that has, for example, easy and free access to information, favourable tax considerations and retirement benefits. Most participant TCK opted to live in a multicultural place as a way of dealing with their

wanderlust. In Study 2, most of the TCK cohort aged ≥ 30 resided outside their passport country and built their sense of community among expatriate communities. The participants from cohort ≥ 30 years claimed that they became aware of their TCK-ness in their adult years from printed or Internet sources. Their exposure to an increasing number of third culture individuals in the expatriate communities gave them a validation of their own life experience and a sense of community. From this cohort, there were a few TCK who have published an autobiography along with accumulated narratives from other TCK as a way of influencing the daily customs, values and traditions of their TCK community (Lijadi, 2012). The adult TCK also demonstrated positive and unconditional efforts in assisting new expatriates to settle in the new place and by developing a global responsible support network for future generations.

Nowadays, people can travel anywhere they are permitted to go (Bacigalupe & Càmara, 2012; Green, 2002; Madianou, 2012; Nedelcu, 2012). Life would be dull without exploring what the world can offer. Time and space are compressed in such a way that even in placeless situations people can build community. Places are claimed to be expandable to virtual places where a sense of community can be built instantly and across geographical borders, as the TCK can talk to anyone anywhere at any time (Al-Khouri, 2013; O'Hagan & Ashworth, 2002; Zook, Dodge, Aoyama, & Townsend, 2004). Yet, the virtual community cannot replace commitment to work, marriage and raising children—adult developmental tasks that TCK and non-TCK have to face irrespective of their place identity construction. Several TCK from the focus groups in Study 2 faced difficulties committing to unsuitable partners who could never comprehend the agony of the TCK's upbringing resulting in divorce. In other cases, people who think TCK have no loyalties to their country because they

choose to live in multicultural environments and extend their loyalty to the world often offended the adult TCK with their insensitivity. Thus, how far and for how long can the TCK continue moving to satisfy their wanderlust? Is it still necessary to stay in one place in order to build the sense of community?

6.4. The Outcomes of Having Enabling Modalities in Place Identity

Construction of TCK

Having enabling modalities in constructing place identity, I argue, can help creating a homeostasis for the TCK family, boost the acceptance of being different, build a profile of the global citizen, and be comfortable with maintaining friendships in the placeless situations. Everyone in the ecological map of the TCK (Figure 6.2) has a role to play in the co-construction of place identity including the family, the expatriate community, the international school and society as a whole. There is a need to raise awareness of the existence of the TCK phenomenon among greater society to help the TCK in constructing a coherent sense of self that includes their place identity.

6.4.1 Homeostasis of TCK family

In a new foreign place, each family member needs to adjust his or her life, thinking and behaviour (Fetcher, 2007), all of which may create tension within the family. According to Olson's circumplex model of the family system, families are assumed to be intuitively changed in response to demands and the growing needs of family members and adjust their interactions to meet the necessary levels of flexibility and cohesion within the family system (Olson, 1993). Compared to non-TCK families, TCK families need to invest much more to establish a sense of stability by ensuring homeostasis in the family system, including cohesive

communication and interaction within the members.

6.4.2. Acceptance of Being Different

By accepting their differences, the TCK can learn about other culture(s) in their current place of residence and also observe the practises of the different culture(s). International schools accept local children whose parents consider international education to be beneficial for the future of their children. The TCK may face difficulties in the first few months in adjusting to a new school. However, having local peers in the school might provide a sense of stability, as the non-TCK is not as mobile as the TCK. Interaction with non-TCK peers allows practising the local language and learning the local culture, thus TCK from a young age can build empathy and sensitivity to local issues in their current place of residence.

To be related to others is fundamental to the development of a sense of belonging (Goodenow, 1993). Research in educational psychology emphasizes the importance of having peers and a sense of belonging, as these are positively correlated with academic achievement (Deci & Ryan, 1991; Goodenow, 1993; Osterman, 2000). A lack of social relationships and sense of belonging results in feelings of isolation, frustration and sadness that directly affect academic performance (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). TCK develop a sense of belonging when they were among other people whose upbringing was similar to theirs—that is, people in the expatriate community, the international schools, or in the Facebook group of Third Culture Kids. Evidence from my study showed several ways in which the families of TCK have helped their children to find a sense of belonging such as scheduling relocation at the end of school year so the TCK can start a new grade together with other students. The TCK were enrolled in a new school with the same curriculum system and language of instruction as the prior school to ease

academic adjustment. Social clubs (e.g., sports, arts, religious activities) that are similar with the ones they had joined in a previous country(s) also help the TCK to maintain a sense of mastery and they have the opportunity to make friends with children outside of school.

From Study 2, I learned that the participants were only aware of the impact of their unique upbringing in their adult years, when Pollock and Van Reken (2001) launched their book explaining the theory of growing up as TCK. The feeling of being understood and validated has urged the adult TCK to speak up and share their life experiences in many forms including autobiography, blogs, memoirs, video and group chats in social media, all of which attract scholars worldwide to explore the phenomenon intensively. The need to accommodate the TCK is being revisited and schools, teachers and counsellors are recognizing the difficulties faced by TCK and their families in adjusting to a new place, thereby giving rise to a support system to assist TCK in developing a sense of belonging.

6.4.3 Global citizen

Selmer and Lam (2008) and Cottrell (2002) declared that the TCK match the profile of future leaders of international companies, as 40% of TCK have at least a bachelor's degree, are sensitive to their surroundings, respect local culture and have a three dimensional worldview due to their multicultural upbringing. The TCK were cautious in expressing their opinion when interacting with the non-TCK and others who were very grounded and rooted in their social and cultural beliefs. The TCK made efforts such as learning the local language, joining interest groups in the community or actively volunteering for community services in order to establish connectedness.

6.4.4 Relationships in Placeless-ness

Digital communication allows communities to develop that are not bound by geographical space. Thus, even in placeless situations there are unlimited ways to connect to anyone anywhere at any time (Al-Khoury, 2013; O'Hagan & Ashworth, 2002; Zook, Dodge, Aoyama & Townsend, 2004). Place is expandable to a virtual place where sense of community can be built instantly across great physical distances. Although I find it hard to be convinced that people could establish a sense of community within the cyber-world, the TCK participants in Study 2 claimed that for them there was a sense of belonging every time they logged in on the TCK group in the social media. They were pleased to meet other TCK and contributed their thoughts, opinions and advice to novice members as well as to researchers like myself in order to validate their life experience. It was in this community—the virtual TCK community—that they made a difference and left a legacy for generations to come, as well as generated awareness of the challenges they were facing. I believe there is always a place for anyone, if he or she wants it.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

*He who once had the experience of belonging to place,
always finds a place for himself afterwards;
whereas he who has been deprived of it, searches everywhere in vain.*
--- Paul Tournier

The present study aimed to describe how the TCK made sense of a high mobility lifestyle and the meanings they attributed to a place called home. From the two studies that I reported, the TCK claimed to find a home in the world where third culture communities exist, communities that consist of individuals who share the same international high mobility lifestyle. In the third culture community, the TCK are articulating the same voice and echoing each other. The sense of belonging in the third culture community is being built as TCK receive validation of the bliss and agonies they had been experiencing throughout their life. The third culture community is formed neither by engagement nor involvement of its members, but by the power of imagination.

The third culture community is intangible yet a concrete experience when TCK meet in places such as international schools, expatriate compounds, multicultural cities, or in places where people are highly mobile, such as in airports and tourist or holiday destinations. The TCK gains an embedded knowledge and understanding of the world that comes with benefits and challenges, and a world in which is to define home when constructing their place identity. Recently, thanks to social media, the third culture community has a visible existence in the virtual world. Other than that, the third culture community is a hidden population spread across the world. In the third culture community, even though the members have not met or know each other from before, they all have an understanding of what it means to be TCK. The third culture community has a certain pattern of life style and behaviour

as a result of its high mobility lifestyle.

The sense of having a third culture confuses the TCK in their day-to-day social interactions and continuing their life. Places around the world offer various choices for parents to choose where to live and work and to start a family and raise children. In the process of finding a coherent sense of self in any place they reside, the TCK acquire five enabling modalities in an attempt to construct a coherent sense of self. These enabling modalities are (i) sense of stability, (ii) sense of belongingness, (iii) sense of direction, (iv) sense of connectedness, and (v) sense of community.

Sense of stability is more prominently needed by the TCK in the middle childhood. In this life phase, the TCK have a strong tendency to be gullible, and identifying themselves with all places they encountered in their lives. The TCK who kept wishing or longing for favourable place might be frustrated. Adapting to the current place requires time and motivation to learn as well as support from their ecological map: their family, schools and environment. Providing secure and routine family interaction could help the TCK build trust in the new place.

Sense of belonging promotes social learning behaviour and interpersonal skills. This enabling modality becomes significant for TCK in pre-adolescence. For pre-adolescent TCK, the sense of belonging is found in schools that understand the nature of the TCK's international mobility and could help students adjust to their new environment. On top of providing a sense of stability, parents may choose a school with the same curriculum to minimize disruption in academic life and to stimulate belongingness.

The constructing of identity reaches its peak during adolescence, the period when adolescents increasingly question parental norms and values and search for a

self-defined set of norms, values, and commitments. TCK in most places worldwide are hidden from professionals assisting young people with finding a sense of self. The TCK wish for a sense of direction to guide them to deal with an ever-changing world. Unless TCK are being recognized as third culture individuals, it is hard for a young person to come forward being different and it is easier for him or her to stay in isolation. Their future success in life, in relationship and in their careers depends on developing a sense direction, and on avoiding the commitment uncertainty evident in those who grew up without guidance.

In order to deal with constant prejudice and misunderstanding on the part of non-TCK, TCK need to build sense of connectedness. This enabling modality is developed from early childhood, when the TCK learn to be sensitive to their surroundings, respect different cultures and accept that they are different compared to non-TCK. It finds expression in early adulthood when TCK manage to engage in long-term relationships and commit to a future of either settling in one place—not necessarily the passport country—or continuing with their high mobility lifestyle. For the TCK, a sense of connectedness develops amongst others who understand their lifestyle and away from the prejudices often expressed by non-TCK.

The TCK also need to acquire a sense of community, an enabling modality through which they take responsibility for the future generation. Although their high mobility lifestyle has created a group in a placeless situation—that is, lacking a physical place to call home—TCK develop a sense of community in a virtual place where they can feel a sense of belonging and make a difference. For the TCK, a sense of community is not created in any fixed locale but in the relationships that they developed and maintained with family and friends despite geographical separation.

The question now is: “Is the third culture a culture?” A culture is shared history of value, tradition, belief and behaviour among people in a context. People who undergo the third culture lifestyle—that is, constantly being uprooted, having people come and go, meeting and saying goodbye to people from many cultures, not knowing when and where to go next—develop certain values, worldview and behaviour. The TCK learns to manoeuvre between cultures and possess the skills to deal with multicultural situations. In the current definition of culture, what are missing for the third culture to be considered a culture are the tangible elements of culture and the shared history and tradition. But if we look at the bigger picture, at the vast array of literature that has evolved around the TCK phenomenon, at how people are constantly in negotiations with culture through, for example, intercultural marriage, migrations, and self-mobility, we do find a shared history. The findings of my study with young TCK and adult TCK further affirmed the tangible elements of the third culture. The world is constantly developing and new communication and travel technologies, the rapid expansion of international schools and the development of metropolitan multicultural cities cater to the needs and lifestyle of the TCK and the interstitial culture in which they live. Therefore, I believe the third culture is a culture, a culture that will grow exponentially with the growth of mobile families worldwide.

7.1 Implication

In this section, I give my recommendations for future utilization of the data collection methods that I employed for this study, namely the Collage Life story Elicitation Technique and the Facebook focus group. I also provide recommendations for future study of the TCK phenomenon and the development of counselling practises to ensure the wellbeing of the TCK. Lastly, I present reasons

for the need to revisit the definition of TCK.

7.1.1 The Collage Life Story Elicitation Technique (CLET)

The collage life story elicitation technique (CLET) has proven to be applicable for semi-structured interviews with children as young as age 7 across different cultures. In this study, the CLET—both in direct face-to-face interviews and in written form—involved both verbal and non-verbal cues that I might have missed if I only used a traditional interview approach. There are few things that need to be considered in using CLET. It is recommended for novel users to be familiar with the technique and protocol by conducting a pilot study to become familiar with age appropriate and types of magazines to prepare, the length of time needed for conducting the CLET taking into consideration working with young children, and how to conduct the written part of the CLET. Availability of experienced collaborators for CLET analysis is crucial to ensure the transparency and trustworthiness of the findings. The number of academic journals and workshops that explain and utilize the CLET is increasing as the technique is proving to be cross-culturally friendly and easy to implement. The CLET protocol is continuously being enriched and re-visited by the inventor in order to expand its utility in many settings and contexts.

7.1.2 The Facebook Focus Group

The Facebook focus group allows researchers to recruit study participants and to conduct focus groups with the participants who live in different countries around the world and at any convenient time. Apart from being able to recruit hard-to-reach participants using social media, the online focus group produces textual data immediately available for analysis including non-verbal text which is used to express

emotion, such as emoticons, the usage of punctuation marks, different font types, and font colour, etc. Therefore, Facebook focus groups save tremendous time in transcription, as well as time and cost of having to travel conducting traditional focus group interviews.

The ethical issues in utilizing Facebook for research purposes are still being debated. Within Facebook, there are on-going focus groups that are open to the public and with administrator(s) who maintain the rules and the common interests of the group members. The groups in Facebook are actually a community in which the members of the groups interact according to the purpose of the group. Since the groups are public, everyone can read member posts, follow the discussion and post their own opinion. Does this mean the researchers can use the text for analysis? In the present study, I made sure I got consent from each participant prior to starting the Facebook discussions, and to comply with ethical requirements in psychological research.

There is, however, a limitation of Facebook Focus groups. Each participant needs to have Internet access, a computer or smart phone, have a Facebook account and respond to the invitations by the group administrator. Nonetheless, if these conditions are met, the utilization of Facebook is quite simple and straightforward even for those who are not computer savvy. Moreover, users can de-activate their Facebook account at any time. So even though the participant is not a regular Facebook user, the researcher can guide him or her upon their willingness to join Facebook.

7.2 Future Research on TCK

The present study focused on individuals who have lived in at least three

different countries during their developmental years in order to explore the meaning of their high mobility life experience. I wanted to ensure that I could capture all the nuances of moving and making the adjustments that high mobility individuals have to undergo. I employed a cross-sectional study approach in order to explore the meaning of their life experience in different stages of their developmental years. However, I am curious to know if my findings can represent and be extended to CCK—that is, those who interacted with fewer foreign cultures or lived in a different country for a significant period of time during their developmental years.

The demographic information from the participants in my study was overwhelming as there are TCK who moved literally across the continent, i.e., from USA to South Africa to Hong Kong, from Japan to USA to Thailand, from Indonesia to UAE then to Qatar, etc. There are also TCK who moved within the same continent, such as from Indonesia to Singapore then to Malaysia, or from Spain to Italy and to France. I wonder if the cultural distance between the passport country and the host country will affect the adjustment process. I also wonder if Hofstede's work on cultural distance in early 2000 can still be used to map and analyse the recent population diversities around the world (Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, & Sanders, 1990). Most researchers in cross-cultural psychology still use Hofstede's theory. There is a need to revisit the cultural distance theory, and take into consideration issues of globalization and multiculturalism, as well as the third culture and the TCK that I investigated in this research project.

Some TCK have difficulties in learning languages in the host country(s) and some speak the same language as the host country(s). Findings from Study 2 showed that being able to speak local language helped in adjustment. Further study needs to focus the importance of TCK's learning the local language not only for adjustment

but also for developing sense of belonging.

7.3 Counselling Practise for TCK

The TCK in all cohorts from the present study stated that from a young age they felt different and found it difficult to blend in with the local children. School psychology may study how to promote psycho-education on multiculturalism in schools and in the wider community. Further studies are also needed to understand how multiculturalism is integrated in the school curriculum and how schools can assist TCK in adjustment and preparation for repatriation.

The adult TCK participants mentioned that their parents did not understand their struggle and that they had nobody to confide in about their difficulties. They also noticed the difficulties faced by their parents, especially the non-working parent, but did not want to bother their parents with their problems. Future studies are recommended to explore how communication occurs within the TCK families, particular with regard to how families make sense of their high mobility lifestyle and how they make decisions pursuing this lifestyle.

Furthermore, due to their struggle in academic achievement, adjustment in passport country, loneliness, grief and loss rendered the TCK vulnerable for developing depression and/or other psychological distress. Future studies should focus on effective intervention strategies for TCK facing the transition cycle during relocation (leaving, entering and involvement phase). There is also a need for further study of the repatriation phenomenon and intervention strategies that would make this transition, particularly during the adolescent stage, more successful.

7.4 Re-defining TCK

Ann Cottrell (2002), one of the scholars who has been studying the TCK

phenomenon over a decade recently posted a survey addressing the question whether the definition of TCK is appropriate in capturing the experiences of children who grow up in different places other than their passport country. Would an individual who only lives less than a year outside their passport country fit the definition of TCK? How about individuals who never live in their passport country, who was born outside their passport country and who settled in the place that is not their passport country? How long does an individual need to live outside their passport country to gain their 'third culture-ness'? In Europe, do children who live in several countries in the European Union fall under the definition of TCK? There are still so many questions on this phenomenon that need to be addressed.

Epilogue

Reflexivity of a Transnational Researcher and TCK Parent

Meeting my fate. When I was 14, I liked to draw panoramic scene paintings using pointillism—a style of painting that uses only black dots the size of punctuation marks—of a small town located some 900 metres above sea level, surrounded by snowy mountains and with houses built around a church. It was definitely not the view of the tropical places where I grew up. I did not draw for a long time as I was occupied with growing up and wanting to see the world. I found jobs that could take me to see the world. Working in the international hospitality industry was one of them.

I was always fascinated by how different places could shape the behaviour and culture of people. I recall a 1982 box office movie “An Officer and a Gentleman,” which gave a glimpse of the upbringing of a man who came from a military family, was stationed all over the world, and who later on pursued the same career as his parents. When asked where he came from, the man answered “Nowhere and everywhere,” the answer frequently given by TCK when they encounter the same question. The movie also portrayed the keenness of young ladies from a certain rural area in the United States of America to marry military personnel in order to have better life and to see the world.

I could relate very well to the idea of seeing the world with your soul mate. When I told my mother that I was dating an Austrian man, she reminded me of my paintings, as the scenic picture in the paintings were very similar to the panoramic landscape of Austria. I guess it was my fate to find a soul mate from that country and a man that shared the same passion of working and living overseas. This was the start of my journey raising two TCK.

Embarking on a high mobility lifestyle. The first place that my husband and I lived was Bali, Indonesia. We lived in a small apartment provided at the beachfront resort where my husband worked. The resort was located exclusively within other luxurious resorts in the enclave of the island, far away from the local community. I was overwhelmed with the living arrangement. We were given housekeeping service, laundry service and even room service, as the apartment was not equipped with cooking and cleaning facilities. We only had a small pantry for simple cooking and a little terrace for drying our towels. It was a blessing in disguise, as we were entitled to all the benefits mentioned above, yet at the same time, I felt as though every housekeeping staff knew what we had in the apartment and every single piece of clothes we wore. The kitchen staff knew where we were last night and how many bottles of wine we ordered per month!

I was working at another resort within walking distance of where we lived. We had our first daughter during this time, and we had a Balinese nanny to take care of her when we both worked. Our neighbours were other hotel employees, including families from Japan, Australia, America and The Netherlands with children of various ages. That was the community in which my daughter started her life and grew up. Besides the hotel staff, my daughter hardly interacted with local children. From time to time, my mother, my brother, or my sisters-in-law came to visit us. So my daughter was used to hearing several different languages spoken at the same time.

After three years in Bali, in 2005, we relocated to Taiwan. We had so many farewell parties, including parties with close friends, my co-workers, my social clubs, my husband's co-workers and the official farewell from the companies where we worked. We spent a few days in Jakarta on the way to our new place so we could

say goodbye to my family and some of our friends there. We did not have much stuff as we were living in a furnished apartment in Bali, so we only brought along our beloved wooden furniture and paintings that we had collected together.

In Taiwan, once again, we had to live within the work premises, but this time in a high-rise hotel in the middle of the busy Taipei business district. It was my first experience living in a fully furnished apartment (converted from hotel rooms), high above the ground, without a backyard, a garden or a back door. I needed to get used to having neighbours living one metre across from my door. I had no housework to do as we had the same housekeeping benefits as before in Bali. As the trailing spouse I was not allowed to work. I could not decorate the apartment as we were told to maintain it as it was. Therefore, we did not buy anything except for a piano, which I played on as often as I could.

We decided to have our second daughter in Taipei. Most of our neighbours were single, with only one family who had children the same age as ours. Therefore, we decided to enrol my eldest daughter in a bilingual English and Chinese nursery and so that she could play with other kids for few hours in the morning. I did not feel lonely, as I was so busy with my children. I did not want to have a nanny. I made few acquaintances with other mothers from the nursery, mostly expatriates or locals who married foreigners. We arranged play dates for our children during weekdays, and my daughters learned that some people lived in a house with garden and had a dog and a fish tank. Their friends came from anywhere except Taipei, as we did not have a chance (or made an effort) to make friends with Taiwanese families. I did not get too close to anyone as I was not used to the lifestyle of not going to work, of having lunch in fancy places and of leaving the children with the nanny when I had nothing to do all day.

Since my oldest daughter had not started school, we could explore the country anytime in off-days and we travelled back to either Austria or Indonesia when my husband took his annual leave. We saw families come and go every month, so many new faces, farewell parties and welcoming parties. Then it came our time to say goodbye. My husband made the decision to resign, as he did not agree to the next destination offered from his company. He decided to look for other opportunities instead.

People move for various reasons. For us, the reason to move to Macau was for more money. We could have moved to another city, but the job in Macau offered the highest salary and benefits and there was a chance for us to get permanent residency that would allow me to work as well. We were invited for a visit to Macau before my husband signed his contract. We took a guided for a tour of the city, looked at options for housing, and had interviews with schools. Macau was so different in 2007, and there was not much to offer families, as there were hardly any parks or indoor activities for little children and only few relatively new international schools. However, the prospects of the gambling industry looked very promising and we decided to compromise.

Our farewell in Taipei was quite simple compared to Bali, as we did not have as many friends. My girlfriends made a little lunch gathering. My husband's co-workers made a nice gesture by lining up in the hotel lobby to escort us leaving the hotel. I did not feel at all sad; in fact I was happy to leave. We could have our own apartment in Macau, and no more living in the hotel!

In Macau I started to work, self-employed, teaching early childhood education in music and movement. I took evening courses and received my Master Degree in Counselling and Psychotherapy. During the daytime, I met, interacted and

dealt with expatriate communities everywhere I went in Macau. I became involved with the expat club in Macau that focused on doing charity work. I observed how the expatriate families raised their children, dealing with various discrepancies with what they were used to knowing and doing and adjusting to rapid changes in Macau. It is mostly because of them that I became passionate to study the Third Culture Kids phenomenon and continue to pursue my doctoral degree in Psychology. I would like to know how to be able to ensure the wellbeing of the TCK in finding their place in the world.

From time to time, I wonder if we have made the right decision to move to Macau. I wonder what had made other families leave their beloved homelands and move to Macau. We became close to several families in the same situation. We live in Macau but our hearts are somewhere else. As a parent, I sometimes feel guilty that we don't put the children's wellbeing as our first priority and settle somewhere more permanent. Having experienced several relocations myself, I have a sense of the emotions and challenges during the transition. I experienced culture shock, the feeling of being clueless the first few months in a new place and having no control over rules and restrictions for expatriates. We had no idea how long we would stay in one place, so we lived in a temporary mode. We left boxes unpacked and paintings and art pieces wrapped, as we did not think we needed these things in the current country, and we have them ready for the next place we will go to. Where the next place will be and when we will uproot our children to relocate elsewhere is still uncertain. I do know, however, that my husband and I have not yet fully satisfied our wanderlust as yet and we will most likely continue with our high mobility lifestyle once my doctoral studies are completed.

Leaving. I was often sad and jealous when my friends decided to leave or

repatriate back, as the feeling of being left behind is bitter and having to make a new friends with incoming expatriates was an overwhelming task. I learned about their decision to repatriate and the challenges they faced back home. Besides being directed to do so by the sponsoring organization, families also decided to repatriate for the sake of their children's education, to take care of their elderly parents, or to retire in their passport country.

Three to six months or so before leaving the country, parents were occupied with searching for a new residence, a new school, required vaccinations and other details of the new place. The trailing spouse might have to give up his or her job and has already started to look for another job. Resignation and recommendation letters, sending new résumés and farewell parties are all on the agenda. The whole ritual starts close to the last month before leaving, including saying goodbye to the football club, ballet school, tennis club and swimming club, and so forth. Two weeks prior to the arrival of the relocation truck, piles of boxes can be found everywhere. Parents are busy sorting out stuff to be moved, and in some cases there is a constant wailing and anger explosions, as TCK are reluctant to give away or throw out some of their belongings, belongings that are not useful in the new place or that will not fit in the container. Friends and relatives come and go to wish farewell. On the last day of school, friends and teachers are in tears and many requests to stay in touch are received. Would this be our experience as well when we decide to relocate to the next destination or repatriate to one or the other's country of origin?

Entering. Then comes the big day, when all their belongings are moved, with only luggage being left. There is now one last look at the empty house, then one plane ride followed by arrival at the new destination. For parents, there is a new residence, new co-workers, new social networks and a new job. For TCK, there is a

new school, new faces, new teachers and a new system. For the whole family, there is a foreign place, foreign food, foreign culture and foreign language, etc.

Disoriented and confused, TCK and his or her family might have to stay in temporary lodging until the new residence is sorted out. Then the family moves into the new residence, unpacks and renegotiates space in the new residence. These are just some of the observations I have collected as the parent of TCK watching newcomer TCK entering and settling in.

Involvement. The unspoken tension and frustration in adjusting to the new place may subside in due course. Parents of TCK are often quoted as saying that children adapt very fast and that they pick up the local language in no time. If only it was as easy as it sounds. And when everyone has settled in, it is time to move again. The same drama of relocation repeats itself and may be even more dramatic the next time, as TCK now have different belongings, different sets of friends and activities, and different roles in the community where they settled for a short period of time. Bidding farewell as a pre-adolescent or adolescent is not as easy as when you are five years old.

My husband was relocated every two years until he decided to change his career and moved to Macau. We now fall into the generic expatriate circle. I call it generic, as we chose to settle in a neighbourhood mostly populated with other expatriates family, a bit away from the local population but close to international schools and surrounded by English-friendly chain stores and restaurants. We mingle with other expatriate families and inevitably our children play with other expatriate children. Most of us are entitled to an “expatriate package,” which may include relocation assistance, a housing allowance, health insurance, a school allowance for children and travelling benefits. Most companies in Macau also give in-house local

language training for their overseas workers and their families in an attempt to make them better able to communicate with local colleagues, to learn the know-how of the host country, to understand the daily life discourse, and to integrate into the community. However, we speak mostly English, and only use our mother tongues—that is, Indonesian or Austrian-German—when we meet others from the same countries. Most of the expatriate children become very fluent with the English language as they watch English films, read English books, speak English at home, use English as survival language and even use social media in English. As parents, we try to speak our native languages with our children as often as we can. Thus, our children have become multilingual, with fascinating semantic skills and being able to switch languages whenever they need to.

Building (un)attachment. Both of my daughters were born overseas and have two passports and now also permanent residence in Macau. They learned about the countries where we, their parents, came from during summer holidays. In the countries in which we resided as a family, I came to notice that our belongings were divided between my parents' house (Indonesia), my in-law's house (Austria), our current apartment in Macau and our holiday house (Austria). We learned to become less attached to and minimize our personal stuff—that is, our apartment is furnished with a minimalist concept. Photos, music CDs and movies are kept in our computer's hard drive. Only age appropriate toys and books are kept, and we have started reading e-books to further minimise the stuff in our house. My husband thinks I have no personal attachment to anything, as I keep throwing away stuff that we have not used in the past two or three years. My two daughters learned from very a young age to give away their toys, outgrown clothes and old school artwork, as we don't have much storage space, or to leave their stuff at their grandparent's house that

were more spacious. Consequently, our daughters do not get too attached to their stuff. We have taught them that we only keep stuff that we will need in the next place we go to, as we may not always get a good relocation package. In short, we are already unconsciously preparing ourselves for the next move, even though we are not sure when we will be moving.

Learning about passport country(s). Whenever we go to Austria, we always plan to spend at least two weeks. During this time, we meet with relatives and friends—mostly ex-colleagues of my husband who we have become close to our family over the years. My mother-in-law would have prepared all my husband's favourite food, which my daughters have also become fond of. My daughters are excited to spend hours in my husband's ex-bedroom, to play with his old toys—those wooden toys, handmade dolls, nothing plastic and shiny, his pretend-play-costumes, old ski suits, toboggan, cardigan, jumpers, and so forth that used to be daddy's when he was young.

Last December in 2014, we went back to Austria for the first time at Christmas after 12 years of marriage, and our daughters are now 11 and 9 years of age. We took the opportunity to introduce the children (and me) to all the rituals that Austrians engage with during the holy season. My daughters were fascinated, as what they had learned in Macau about being Catholic is quadrupled in all aspects in Austria. From the Salzburg airport up to the grandparent's house, the country was full of Christmas decorations. Each house made an effort to put lights and other ornaments in their huge pine trees. Every little town hosted an Advent market, selling traditional homemade Christmas decorations, gingerbread cookies, glüh wine, traditional winter clothes, and many other things. Near the town where we lived, there was a nativity scene with characters built to actual size—not the artificial

scenes my daughters were familiar with in Macau. Every café and bakery shop sold gingerbread cakes and cookies and piggy marzipan figurines, which people bought and gave to their relatives as a good luck symbol for the coming year. The days were shorter in winter and it was a bit strange that it was already dark after 16:30. It was a truly new Christmas experience and learning about their passport country. I wonder how many families are as lucky as we were and able to experience what Christmas is like in their passport countries? And that is just one side of our multi-cultural heritage. How about other celebrations such as Christmas in my (their mother's) country?

We spent Christmas 2012 in Indonesia. My extended family lives in different cities in Indonesia, so with the limited time we had we could only spend a few days with each of them. The majority of the Indonesian population is Muslim, therefore Christmas was not as elaborate as we later experienced in Austria. We went to Jakarta to meet my father and my younger brother and his family and then we went to Makassar in South Sulawesi to stay with my mother. The weather was warm and the days long. My daughters asked for a Christmas tree. Pine trees are very expensive in Indonesia and we do not like plastic Christmas trees. My mother has a banyan tree planted in a pot, a perfect tree 1.5m in height, so we moved it from the garden to the house and decorated it. It turned out to be unique and beautiful. Instead of turkey or ham for Christmas dinner, we had seafood, grilled fish, chilli crabs and prawns, and ate with our hands. We went to church on Christmas day at 11am, attending the English service so my daughters could understand the mass. We needed to arrive 30 minutes early, as there was a security check and line-up. There were two big military vehicles and many policemen to guard the church in order to maintain peace and in anticipation of any disturbances from other religious groups.

There was a mixed crowd in the church, mostly Chinese Indonesian and some Caucasians. After church, we gathered in the auditorium next to the church for a buffet lunch. Everyone ate fast and left. We stayed a little bit, as a few people recognized my mother and chatted with her. Later, we treated the girls to a “becak” ride (pedicab) around the city centre. It was a peaceful day but entirely different from our Austrian experience two years later.

My husband’s family has never moved their residence since they had children, whereas my parents have changed their place of residence more than five times. I hardly have any stuff from my childhood in Indonesia besides photos. When going on holiday to Austria, my girls don't bother to bring any toys as they are very content to play with old toys that are available to them there. Going to Indonesia, however, means they will bring their I-pads or Kindles to read since there are no toys available to them there. Consequently, the children have developed different emotional attachments to their passport country (Austria) and to my country (Indonesia). In our case, my children have developed a sense of origin in Austria that is stronger than in Indonesia, as they could trace back the place where their ancestors lived while in Indonesia there was very little traces left of my childhood.

Understanding my own TCK. We decided to enrol our daughters in a local school that offers an English based curriculum. The school has become popular among expatriate families as it adheres to local culture while at the same time providing a multicultural learning environment. My elder daughter at the young age of 12 currently understands that in different places she is expected to act and to think differently. For example in Jakarta, humility or being humble is highly expected, whereas being assertive is expected in Salzburg. She is very comfortable expressing her opinion with anyone in a manner such that people consider her as being polite

and very mature. My younger daughter, currently aged 9 easily accepted the fact that her best friend moved away and now uses emails, Skype and FaceTime to communicate with her. She is still not convinced that the modern way of communication might be able to replace the same bond she had before, but it is convenient. She also realized that she needed to develop new friendships, believing that it is better to have many friends, as you never know which among them might leave any time soon.

Multilingualism. TCK who are born overseas often learn two (or more) languages simultaneously: the language(s) spoken by their parents and also the language(s) spoken in the place they live. Bi/multicultural TCK may be exposed to more languages simultaneously: (1) the language spoken by their mother, (2) the language spoken by their father, (3) the common language spoken by their mother and their father, meaning that within their family they might be using a language which may be the second language for their parents, (4) the language spoken in the place they currently live, and (5) the language offered in the school. My daughters are a good example of this phenomenon as are the other multicultural families living in Macau or Hong Kong. My daughters were immersed in many languages as soon as they opened their eyes. I was speaking Indonesian to them, my husband was communicating in German with them, and when we were together we were speaking English, as English is the language I use in communicating with my husband (my German is at the same level as that of my two daughters). We have employed nannies from the Philippines and Indonesia, so my daughters are accustomed to hearing English with a Filipino accent or an Indonesian accent. When they went to nursery school and kindergarten and later on primary school, they learned English and Chinese Putonghua and were exposed to the Cantonese and Portuguese

languages spoken by their peers and the local community.

It is very fascinating for me to observe how my two daughters acquire and use all the languages. My eldest one seems to be able to pronounce the words in German, English, Indonesia and Chinese Putonghua with correct pitch, tone and without any accent influenced by all the languages she learned. She can detect different accents in English, whether it is UK English (Scottish, Irish or British English), Australian English, Canadian English and American English. My younger daughter speaks better in English than in Indonesian or German but she understands Indonesian or German. When she speaks with my mother (an Indonesian speaking with a South Sulawesi dialect), she can use certain proverbs in that dialect even though I, the native Indonesian speaker, will hesitate to use. She loves to listen to French songs, a fondness she developed after visiting her cousins in France. From an early age, I observed that my younger daughter has chosen her preferred language to use and to learn, and it is definitely not German or Indonesian.

Repatriation phenomenon. The thought of repatriation often came up in our late night conversations. For our family, repatriation to Austria is applicable solely to my husband, whereas for my daughters and myself, repatriation means relocation to another place, a place where we might end up living permanently. We have (un)intentionally prepared our family to go back. I am learning the German language, as I will need to pass a language test to get my residency in Austria. We hired a native German tutor to teach our daughters German with the aim of having them attain the same level of proficiency as their cohorts in Austria and because there is no German international school in Macau. We travel as often as we can to Austria, exposing our daughters to the culture, rituals and tradition and keeping in touch with our friends and relatives. We subscribe to German TV channels and have

bought many German storybooks. I wonder if our effort will help us to adjust smoothly when we move to Austria. We have yet to experience the “hidden immigrant” syndrome according to which our TCK are in fact foreigners in their passport country. Will our daughters experience this? I have witnessed several TCK struggle in their first years of university after repatriation because of the hidden immigrant syndrome. It was not just the case that the TCK lacked the will to adjust, society was not making it easy for them.

I dedicated my doctoral study to gaining a better understand of the TCK phenomenon and to creating more awareness of TCK in the eyes of the general public, not just within the expatriate communities and international schools and among counsellors. We have not yet decided how long we are going to stay in Macau and where we will go next. That is our life, a life of uncertainty and representative of the lives of many TCK families. One haunting question that the TCK hope never to be asked is “how long you are going to stay here?” The parents might know the answer, but definitely not the TCK. What the TCK know is that they are never sure if they will be welcomed with open arms in the new place.

I am pleased to have been able to take part in introducing the TCK phenomenon to the world. What I aimed to achieve with my dissertation is to make more people pay attention to the place identity construction of the TCK and so that *they can bloom where they are planted!*

The end—for now!

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Appendices

Appendices I - Information leaflet for Study 1 for Parents of TCK

A PLACE CALL HOME

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to invite your child to participate in a research project about the life stories and experiences of young and middle age children who have relocated to several countries following their parent's career. The project deals with the stories we tell and that construct our sense of belonging within ourselves, community and interrelatedness within society. Your child honest and truthful participation is very valuable and I hope that he or she will enjoy collaborating with the fieldworker or myself and give as much information as she or he feels comfortable in giving to ensure the success of this project. The project is conducted by Anastasia A. Lijadi, Doctoral Candidate from the University of Macau, under supervision of Prof. Gertina J. Van Schalkwyk, and has ethical approval.

The project entails a semi-structured interview with a fieldworker (co-researcher) or myself; who will explain all the procedures in more detail. During the interview, your child will be asked to (a) make a collage, and (b) share his or her stories verbally. Both the collage and the stories form part of the research data for this project. Your child participation in this project is voluntary, and he or she can withdraw at any point in time without stating any reasons or consequences to your family.

As indicated above, your child participation forms part of a research project and we will be analysing the data according to qualitative methods for narrative inquiry. I will submit a final report for possible publication in a scholarly journal. I assure you, however, that no identifying information of any nature will be used in the final analysis or report writing. Because we value your child's participation, you are also invited to collaborate in the analytic process and/or to read the final report of the findings. Please indicate to the fieldworker if you intend to participate in the analytic process or want to read the final report.

Please sign the consent form attached to confirm that you have read this introduction and agree to participate in this project giving permission to the fieldworker to record the conversation and for the materials to be used for research purposes.

Kind regards

Anastasia A. Lijadi
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Appendices II – Biographic Data

BIOGRAPHIC DATA (for all participants)

<i>Please indicate the correct information by ticking the appropriate box next to each question or entering the information in the space provided</i>			
1. Name			
2. How old are you?	_____ years		
3. What is your gender?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		
4. Where were you born?			
5. How many siblings do you have?			
6. Which grade are you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Lower Primary Education <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Primary Education <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary education		
7. What is your parent's passport?	Father_____ Mother _____		
8. What is the highest level of education of your parents?	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Primary education <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary education <input type="checkbox"/> Technical or vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> University </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Primary education <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary education <input type="checkbox"/> Technical or vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> University </td> </tr> </table>	Father <input type="checkbox"/> Primary education <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary education <input type="checkbox"/> Technical or vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> University	Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Primary education <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary education <input type="checkbox"/> Technical or vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> University
Father <input type="checkbox"/> Primary education <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary education <input type="checkbox"/> Technical or vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> University	Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Primary education <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary education <input type="checkbox"/> Technical or vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> University		
9. What is your parent(s) job?	Father _____ Mother _____		
10. How long have you been living here?	_____ years		
11. Where have you lived before?	1 st country: _____ 2 nd country: _____ 3 rd country: _____ 4 th country: _____ 5 th country: _____		
12. What language(s) do you speak?			
13. What language do you speak at home?			
What religious group or belief system do you regularly subscribe to?			
14. What extracurricular activities do you join after school?			
What leisure activities do you do with your family regularly?			
15. What activities do you do with friends?			

Appendices III – Informed Consent (for parents of TCK)

INFORMED CONSENT

I, _____ understand the content and nature of this project: A PLACE CALL HOME, and allow my child, name: _____ to voluntarily participate in a semi-interview for this purpose.

I understand that the collage and stories, presented to the fieldworker during the interview will be used for research purposes alone and that it will be handled confidentially.

I understand that any personal detail regarding my child, my family and any other identifying information will be anonymously processed into a final research report that will be submitted for publication.

I am aware that I may, at any stage and without prejudice, withdraw my consent to allow my child's participation in the project.

I agree that the interview may be recorded by voice recorder and understand that these tapes will be archived for future research purposes only and without jeopardising my child or my family.

I will assist my child to complete the biographic questionnaire attached.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and declare to give consent for my child to participate in the project.

I will contact the researcher or fieldworker if I have any further questions about the project and the way it is conducted.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendices IV – Informed Consent for Online Focus Group Participants

INFORMED CONSENT

I, _____ understand the content and nature of this project: A PLACE CALL HOME, conducted by Anastasia A. Lijadi, Doctoral Candidate of Department of Psychology, University of Macau, and to voluntarily participate in an online Focus group discussion with Facebook.

I understand that all my comments within this focus group will be used for research purposes alone and that it will be handled confidentially.

I understand that any personal detail and any other identifying information will be anonymously processed into a final research report that will be submitted for publication.

I am aware that I may, at any stage and without prejudice, withdraw my consent to participate in the project.

I agree that the discussion will be archived for future research purposes only and without jeopardising myself.

I will complete the biographic questionnaire attached.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and declare to give my consent to participate in the project.

I will contact the researcher if I have any further questions about the project and the way it is conducted.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendices V – Demographic Profile of Participants from Study 2

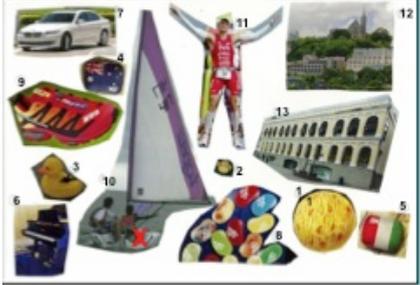
No	Name	Sponsor	Gender	Status	No. of	Current	Siblings	Language	Education	Father	Mother
1	1F40A	DK	F	In relationship	8	Immigrate	3	2	Diploma	Sweden	Sweden
2	2F40A	BK	F	Married	8	Repatriate	0	2	Master Degree	USA	USA
3	1M40A	MK	M	Married	4	Immigrate	3	3	Master Degree	Canada/UK	USA
4	3F40A	BK	F	Married	2	Immigrate	3	2	Diploma	British	British
5	2M40A	BK	F	Single	4	Immigrate	3	4	PhD	Ethiopian	French
6	3M40B	DK	M	Single	3	Repatriate	0	1	Diploma	USA	USA
7	4F40B	BK	F	Married	4	Immigrate	0	1	Diploma	Germany	Germany
8	5F40B	DK	F	In relationship	6	on the move	1	2	Master Degree	US	US/Thai
9	4M40B	DK	M	Married	6	Repatriate	5	1	Master Degree	USA	USA
10	6F40B	BK	F	2nd Marriage	5	Repatriate	2	1	Master Degree	USA	USA
11	1M30A	DK	F	Single	7	Repatriate	0	4	Master degree	France	France
12	1F30A	BK	F	Married	4	Immigrate	3	2	Bachelor	British	British
13	2F30A	BK	F	Married	3	Repatriate	1	1	Master Degree	USA	USA
14	3F30A	DK	F	Married	4	on the move	2	3	Bachelor	Malaysian	Malaysia
15	4F30B	BK	F	Divorced	6	Repatriate	0	2	Bachelor degree	USA	USA
16	5F30B	BK	F	Divorced	4	Repatriate	1	3	Bachelor degree	Indonesian	Dutch
17	2M30B	BK	M	Married	6	on the move	1	4	Master degree	UK	UK
18	6F30B	BK	F	Married	3	Repatriate	4	2	Master degree	UK	UK
19	7F30B	BK	F	3rd Marriage	5	on the move	4	4	Bachelor degree	USA	USA
20	3M30B	BK	M	Single	3	on the move	0	2	Diploma	France	France
21	1F19A	BK	F	Single	4	on the move	2	2	Student	Netherland	Netherland
22	2F19A	BK	m	In relationship	3	on the move	1	3	Bachelor degree	Philippines	Philippines
23	1M19A	BK	M	Single	3	Repatriate	1	4	Bachelor degree	Indonesia	Indonesia
24	2M19A	BK	M	In relationship	4	Repatriate	2	3	Bachelor degree	US, UK	US, UK
25	3M19B	BK	M	Single	5	on the move	0	3	Bachelor degree	Syrian	Romanian
26	3F19B	BK	F	Married	3	on the move	0	1	Diploma	USA	USA
27	4F19B	MK	F	In	3	Repatriate	2	2	Student	USA	USA
28	4M19B	BK	M	Single	3	on the move	0	3	Diploma	UK	UK
29	5F19C	BK	F	Married	5	Repatriate	2	2	Bachelor degree	USA	USA
30	6F19C	BK	F	In	5	on the move	1	3	Student	Holland	Holland
31	7F19C	BK	F	Single	3	on the move	0	2	Student	Indonesian	Indonesian
32	8F19C	BK	F	Single	9	on the move	0	3	Student	British	British
33	M195	BK	M	Single	3	on the move	0	3	Vocational	UK/India	UK/India

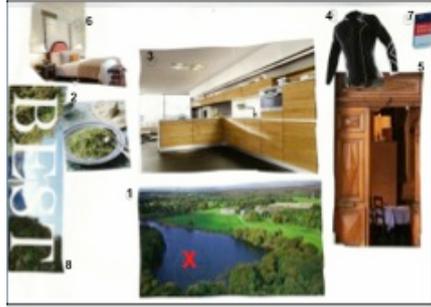
Appendices VI - CLET Protocol Analysis

Middle Childhood

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
1F7 Relocation: 3 times, current status: On the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">My parent (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">Place we live now (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">We are from China (2) X</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">First time experiencing snow in Amsterdam (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">My security blanket (5)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 5 images	Human related: 1 (Image 1) Artefacts: 2 (Image 2 & 3) Nature: 1 (Image 4) Objects in residence: 1 (Image 5)	Social Interaction: 2 (Story 1 and 4) No social interaction: 3
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Player –at Landmark of country	I am proud being Chinese
Silent Voice	Not available	
Juxtaposition	Not available	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
2F7 Relocation: 3 times; current status: On the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">Many Lotus Flower (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">My mother like massage (7)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">I am from Canada (1) X</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">My first bike, my dad taught me to bike (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">We did a lot of picnic (5)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">We watched TV (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">We did camping in our backyard (6)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">I like lasagne (8)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">My first triathlon (10)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">My father made pancake on Sunday (9)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 10 images	Human related: 2 (Image 3 & 10) Artefacts: 7 (Image 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) Nature: 1 (Image 1)	Social Interaction: 7 (Story 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10) No social interaction: 3 (Story 1, 2, 8)
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – at Nature	My home is in Canada (passport country)
Silent Voice	Nil	
Juxtaposition	Food I ate at home vs. Lotus flower in my passport country	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
1M8 Relocation: 3 times; Current Status: On		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; gap: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">We need car at home (7)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">My father exercises a lot (11)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">My father came from England (13)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Shoes (9)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">I was born in Australia (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">We currently live in Macau (12)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Rubber ducky (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">We took ferry to go or to leave home (10)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">My mother was born in the year of the monkey (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Piano (6)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">We got ice cream if we are good (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">My sister loves Italy (5)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">My father likes Jelly bean (8)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 13 images	Human related: 2 (Image 10 & 11) Artefacts: 6 (Image 1, 2, 4, 8, 12, 13) Objects in residence: 4 (Image 3, 6, 7, 9) Transportation: 1 (image 10)	Social Interaction: 4 (Story 1, 5, 8, 10) No social interaction: 9 (Story 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13)
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – at transportation	The boat brings me out of Macau
Silent Voice	Super hero that can fly and safe me	
Juxtaposition	Parents (image 2 and 11) vs. Shoes - objects in the house (image 9)	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
2M8 Relocation: 3 times; Current Status: On the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; gap: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Comfortable bed (6)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">We used to have nice kitchen in England (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Iphone to call people (7)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">I like mountain (8)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">My mother cooked pasta for me</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">My father & my brother did trail hiker in Macau (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">I want to live in Germany, because it is not polluted (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; color: red; text-align: center;">X</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Cupboard to put stuff (5)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 8 images	Human related: 0 Artefacts: 1 (Image 2) Nature: 2 (Image 1 & 8) Objects in house: 5 (Image 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)	Social Interaction: 3 (Story 2, 3, 4) No social interaction: 5 (Story 1, 5, 6, 7, 8)
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – at Nature	I wish to live in Germany
Silent Voice	Castle, as it is safe	
Juxtaposition	The mountains (image 1 and 8) vs. Image 2 (pasta), people in different place eat different food	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
3F8 Relocation: 5 times; Current Status: On the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I wish we have a horse (8)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I wish our living room like this (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I wish my home to be like (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I like to ride bike (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I want to learn horse-riding (7)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I wish we have garden (6)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I wish we can dine outdoor (10)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I wish to have this room (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">My dream house (1) X</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I wish to have nice view (5)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">Shoes (9)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 10 images	Human related: 2 (Image 3, 7) Artefacts: 1 (Image 2) Nature: 2 (Image 5 & 6) Objects in residence: 5 (Image 1, 2, 8, 9, 10)	Social Interaction in story: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 No social interaction: 8 (Story 1, 7, 8, 9, 10)
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	2 (unrelated to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – At Object in the residence	My dream house
Silent Voice	My own study room	
Juxtaposition	Home with pool vs. Home with garden	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
3M9 Relocation: 3 times; Current Status: On the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">We used to do horse-riding in England (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">We like to go to the beach (9)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">Fossil hunting with my family (8)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">We had shed to put our toys (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I played at the forest (5)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">We had good kitchen</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">My father built our kitchen</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I only like England (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">I played with my cousin (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">We like to hike (10)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: The first 10 images only	Nature: 6 (Image 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 19) Objects in residence: 4 (Image 2, 4, 6, 7)	Social Interaction in story: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 No social interaction: 1 (Story 3)
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – at passport country	England, place I was born
Silent Voice	My friend house in England	
Juxtaposition	Fun things I did with my brother vs. fun things I did with my family	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>4M9</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times; Current Status: On the move</p>		<p>I went to movie with my father(1)</p> <p>My parents drink wine (7)</p> <p>Lotus flower in Canada (10)</p> <p>My godfather took me there (11)</p> <p>My grandma made fig jam (2)</p> <p>My grandparent's house (4)</p> <p>My mother drinks coffee (8)</p> <p>Rock climbing (12)</p> <p>I always want to have a dog (3)</p> <p>Mountains (5)</p> <p>Got stung by bee (6)</p> <p>My father likes to run (9)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 12 images</p>	<p>Human related: 1 Artefacts: 3 (Image 2, 7, 8) Nature: 6 (Image 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12) Objects in residence: 2 (Image 3, 9)</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 7 (Story 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12) No social interaction: 5 (Story 2, 3, 4, 5, 10)</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – at Passport country	My grandparent's house
Silent Voice	Skiing	
Juxtaposition	Activities I did indoor vs. activities I did outdoor	

Pre-adolescence

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>4F10</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times, current status: On the move</p>		<p>We had Roses in USA (7)</p> <p>Many flowers in Taiwan (5)</p> <p>I ate Berries in Macau</p> <p>My mom used to bake cookies (9)</p> <p>I like kiwi (4)</p> <p>I was Flower girl in my cousin wedding (8)</p> <p>I want a dog (3)</p> <p>My first pet (1)</p> <p>Breakfast (2)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 9 images</p>	<p>Human related: 0 Artefacts: 2 (Image 2, 9) Nature: 0 Objects in residence: 7 (Image 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 7 (Story 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9) No social interaction: 2 (Story 3, 6)</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Player – in the middle	I am in the middle, this is my home
Silent Voice	My mother used to bake cake for my birthday when we still lived in USA	
Juxtaposition	In USA I had a pet, in Macau I tried berries	

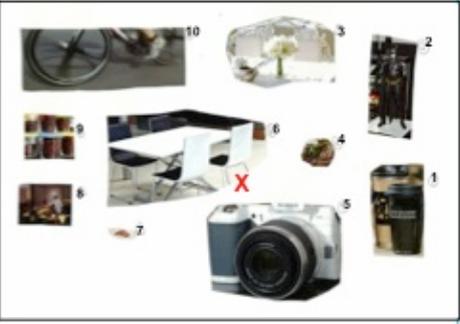
Data	Collage	Micro Narratives												
5M10 Relocation: 5 times, current status: On the move		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>My family (1)</td> <td>My parents (2)</td> <td>Current residence (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Current country, happy (4)</td> <td>Lived before (5)</td> <td>First time skiing (6) X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>We are proud being Chinese (7)</td> <td>House in Amsterdam (8)</td> <td>I like Horse riding (9)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Minecraft (10)</td> </tr> </table>	My family (1)	My parents (2)	Current residence (3)	Current country, happy (4)	Lived before (5)	First time skiing (6) X	We are proud being Chinese (7)	House in Amsterdam (8)	I like Horse riding (9)			Minecraft (10)
My family (1)	My parents (2)	Current residence (3)												
Current country, happy (4)	Lived before (5)	First time skiing (6) X												
We are proud being Chinese (7)	House in Amsterdam (8)	I like Horse riding (9)												
		Minecraft (10)												
Images Analysis: 10 images	Human related: 4 (image 1, 2, 6, 9) Artefacts: 5 (Image 3, 4, 5, 7, 8) Objects in residence: 1 (Image 10)	Social Interaction: 7 (Story 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10) No social interaction: 2 (Story 7, 8)												
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)												
I positioning	Spectator - at the human related image	First time skiing and see snow												
Silent Voice	Nil													
Juxtaposition	My current residence vs. the house I build with my Minecraft game													

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives								
5F10 Relocation: 5 times, current status: Repatriate		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Taipei, we lived in apartment (2)</td> <td>Snow in Shanghai (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I won sport competition (4) X</td> <td>My family is my home (1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I won swimming champion in Vietnam (4)</td> <td>My brother and I are very closed (5)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Malaysia in food (6)</td> </tr> </table>	Taipei, we lived in apartment (2)	Snow in Shanghai (3)	I won sport competition (4) X	My family is my home (1)	I won swimming champion in Vietnam (4)	My brother and I are very closed (5)		Malaysia in food (6)
Taipei, we lived in apartment (2)	Snow in Shanghai (3)									
I won sport competition (4) X	My family is my home (1)									
I won swimming champion in Vietnam (4)	My brother and I are very closed (5)									
	Malaysia in food (6)									
Images Analysis: 6 images	Human related: 3 (image 1, 4, 5) Artefacts: 2 (Image 2, 6) Nature: 1 (image 3)	Social Interaction: 5 (Story 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) No social interaction: 1 (Story 6)								
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)								
I positioning	Spectator - at the human related image	I am proud of myself								
Silent Voice	Vietnam									
Juxtaposition	Weather is different at different places vs. International school									

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
6F10 Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">We lived in Macau before (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">We like Singapore, current residence (2)</div> <div style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-bottom: 10px;">X</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">My family is from Turkey (1)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 3 images	Human related: 0 Artefacts: 3 (Image 1, 2, 3)	Social Interaction: 3 (Story 1, 2, 3) No social interaction: 0
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Player - Middle	All is my home
Silent Voice	Nil	
Juxtaposition	All home is different	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
6M11 Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Place that my family is happy (5)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I wish my home has storage space (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I want to have a big door at home (7)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">We had nice home in London (8)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">My father likes to cook at home (6)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I like home with many storage area (10)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I like neat bathroom (9)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I wish to have living room similar to this (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">I wish my home close to the park (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">I wish my home near beach (1)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 10 images	Artefacts: 2 (Image 2, 6) Nature: 2 (image 1, 3) Objects in residence: 6 (Image 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10)	Social Interaction: 6 (Story 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8) No social interaction: 4 (Story 4, 7, 9, 10)
Congruence	1.5 (50% unrelated to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Player - In the middle	My dream home
Silent Voice	My family	
Juxtaposition	Kitchen for father and storage for mother	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives												
7M11 Relocation: 4 times, current status: on the move		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>My current home Macau (1)</td> <td>We used to have garden (7)</td> <td>Red hair is common in UK (8)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mom cook steak (3)</td> <td>England fish and chips (5)</td> <td>I did sport (11)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mom drinks coffee (6)</td> <td>My siblings (11) X</td> <td>Car in England (9)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Only me love sashimi at home (4)</td> <td colspan="2">Casino in Macau (2)</td> </tr> </table>	My current home Macau (1)	We used to have garden (7)	Red hair is common in UK (8)	Mom cook steak (3)	England fish and chips (5)	I did sport (11)	Mom drinks coffee (6)	My siblings (11) X	Car in England (9)	Only me love sashimi at home (4)	Casino in Macau (2)	
My current home Macau (1)	We used to have garden (7)	Red hair is common in UK (8)												
Mom cook steak (3)	England fish and chips (5)	I did sport (11)												
Mom drinks coffee (6)	My siblings (11) X	Car in England (9)												
Only me love sashimi at home (4)	Casino in Macau (2)													
Images Analysis: 11 images	Human related: 1 (Image 8) Artefacts: 7 (Image 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11) Nature: 1 (image 7) Objects in residence: 1 (Image 10) Transportation: 1 (image 9)	Social Interaction: 6 (Story 1, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11) No social interaction: 5 (Story 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10)												
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)												
I positioning	Spectator – at the Artefacts	With my siblings												
Silent Voice	I want to have a dog													
Juxtaposition	Place I was born vs. place I live now													

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives												
7F11 Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>I ride bike (10)</td> <td colspan="2">My family dine out a lot (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Coffee for mother (9)</td> <td>My father favourite meal (4)</td> <td>My brother likes batman (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I do homework (6)</td> <td colspan="2">Mom drinks coffee (1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Buffet restaurant (8)</td> <td>My mother favourite food (7) X</td> <td>We used camera to keep memory (5)</td> </tr> </table>	I ride bike (10)	My family dine out a lot (3)		Coffee for mother (9)	My father favourite meal (4)	My brother likes batman (2)	I do homework (6)	Mom drinks coffee (1)		Buffet restaurant (8)	My mother favourite food (7) X	We used camera to keep memory (5)
I ride bike (10)	My family dine out a lot (3)													
Coffee for mother (9)	My father favourite meal (4)	My brother likes batman (2)												
I do homework (6)	Mom drinks coffee (1)													
Buffet restaurant (8)	My mother favourite food (7) X	We used camera to keep memory (5)												
Images Analysis: 10 images	Human related: 1 (image 2) Artefacts: 7 (Image 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9) Objects in residence: 1 (Image 6) Transportation: 1 (Image 10)	Social Interaction: 7 (Story 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9) No social interaction: 3 (Story 1, 6, 10)												
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)												
I positioning	Player - In the middle													
Silent Voice	Friends and siblings													
Juxtaposition	Indoor (do homework) vs. outdoor activities (ride bike)													

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives											
8M11 Relocation: 4 times, current status: on the move		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>My solitude (8)</td> <td>I missed our previous home (9)</td> <td>I want to be super hero (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I want a dog (2)</td> <td>I was born in England (10)</td> <td rowspan="2">I wish to have big house close to the sea (1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Watched movie (5)</td> <td>Camera kept our memory (4)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Computer for everyone (7)</td> <td>Played Wii (6)</td> </tr> </table>	My solitude (8)	I missed our previous home (9)	I want to be super hero (3)	I want a dog (2)	I was born in England (10)	I wish to have big house close to the sea (1)	Watched movie (5)	Camera kept our memory (4)		Computer for everyone (7)	Played Wii (6)
My solitude (8)	I missed our previous home (9)	I want to be super hero (3)											
I want a dog (2)	I was born in England (10)	I wish to have big house close to the sea (1)											
Watched movie (5)	Camera kept our memory (4)												
	Computer for everyone (7)	Played Wii (6)											
Images Analysis: 10 images	Human related: 2 (image 3, 5) Artefacts: 5 (Image 1, 4, 5, 8, 9) Nature: 1 (Image 10) Objects in residence: 3 (Image 2, 6, 7)	Social Interaction: 7 (Story 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) No social interaction: 3 (Story 1, 2, 8, 9, 10)											
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)											
I positioning	Spectator – at the artefacts	Blue sky											
Silent Voice	IPhone to communicate												
Juxtaposition	Indoor (play Wii, computer) vs. outdoor activities (watch movie)												

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives												
8F11 Relocation: 4 times, current status: on the move		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Macau (11)</td> <td>Under water (8)</td> <td>My mother with laptop (9)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>My father drinks coffee (6)</td> <td>My father is chef (5)</td> <td>My family favourite food (4)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>My father works in hotel (7)</td> <td>Macau (10)</td> <td>Current home in (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I was born in Bali (1)</td> <td></td> <td>Bali full of art work (2)</td> </tr> </table>	Macau (11)	Under water (8)	My mother with laptop (9)	My father drinks coffee (6)	My father is chef (5)	My family favourite food (4)	My father works in hotel (7)	Macau (10)	Current home in (3)	I was born in Bali (1)		Bali full of art work (2)
Macau (11)	Under water (8)	My mother with laptop (9)												
My father drinks coffee (6)	My father is chef (5)	My family favourite food (4)												
My father works in hotel (7)	Macau (10)	Current home in (3)												
I was born in Bali (1)		Bali full of art work (2)												
Images Analysis: 11 images	Human related: 1 (image 9) Artefacts: 7 (Image 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11) Nature: 3 (Image 1, 8, 10)	Social Interaction: 8 (Story 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10) No social interaction: 3 (Story 8, 9, 11)												
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)												
I positioning	Player - In the middle	This is my home												
Silent Voice	A house with black dog with all family members													
Juxtaposition	Nature vs. city													

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
9F11 Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">I am half Japanese (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">I lived in Singapore for 2 years (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">I am half Indonesian (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">I met my best friend in school (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">My school in Singapore (5)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 5 images	Human related: 0 Artefacts: 3 (Image 3, 4, 5) Nature: 2 (Image 1, 2) Objects in residence: 0 Transportation: 0	Social Interaction: 3 (Story 3, 4, 5) No social interaction: 2 (Story 1, 2)
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Player - On top of the collage	This is my home
Silent Voice	Nil	
Juxtaposition	Nil	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
9M12 Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move		<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">All my friends have phone (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">Our pet (2)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">I use I Pad in school (5)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">Wallet (6)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">Ipod (4)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">Our pet (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">I like grapes (3)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 30%;">Watch movie together (7)</div> </div>
Images Analysis: 7 images	Human related: 1 (Image 7) Artefacts: 1 (Image 3) Objects in residence: 5 (Image 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)	Social Interaction: 4 (Story 4, 5, 6, 7) No social interaction: 3 (Story 1, 2, 3, 6)
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – at the object of the house	The pet
Silent Voice	Nil	
Juxtaposition	Cat vs grapes (favourite animal vs. favourite fruit)	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>10M12</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move</p>		<p>Phone (5)</p> <p>Flower in Macau (3)</p> <p>My family love cat (1)</p> <p>Comfortable chair (6)</p> <p>Cool hat (10)</p> <p>I like watch (8)</p> <p>I like pasta (4)</p> <p>Shop with mom (9)</p> <p>Ipod (2)</p> <p>I like tea (7)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 10 images</p>	<p>Artefacts: 5 (Image 4, 7, 8, 9, 10)</p> <p>Nature: 1 (Image 3)</p> <p>Objects in residence: 4 (Image 1, 2, 5, 6)</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 6 (Story 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 10)</p> <p>No social interaction: 4 (Story 3, 5, 6, 8)</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – at the artefacts	The pet
Silent Voice	Nil	
Juxtaposition	Jacket vs. cat (I want to look cool vs. my pet)	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>10F12</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move</p>		<p>Flower (10)</p> <p>Bike (1)</p> <p>Plane (11)</p> <p>Cake (3)</p> <p>Kitchen (9)</p> <p>Ginger bread house (12)</p> <p>My bedroom (13)</p> <p>Wii (2)</p> <p>Head set (18)</p> <p>IPad (14)</p> <p>Breakfast (19)</p> <p>Camera (16)</p> <p>Double-decker bus (8)</p> <p>Ice cream (7)</p> <p>Shopping (17)</p> <p>Buffet (15)</p> <p>Books (5)</p> <p>TV (4)</p> <p>Waterpark (6)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 19 images</p>	<p>Artefacts: 7 (Image 3, 6, 7, 12, 15, 17, 19)</p> <p>Nature: 1 (image 10)</p> <p>Objects in residence: 8 (Image 2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 16, 18)</p> <p>Transportation: 3 (image 1, 8, 11)</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 12 (Story 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19)</p> <p>No social interaction: 7 (Story 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18)</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – between nature	I love nature
Silent Voice	Dollhouse	
Juxtaposition	Camera vs. Ipad	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives						
11M13 Relocation: 5 times, current status: Repatriate		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>My childhood friends in Vietnam (1)</td> <td>My family (2)</td> <td>Apartment I lived in Vietnam (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I lost my friend when we left Vietnam (4)</td> <td>My ancestor house in Malaysia (5)</td> <td>When I grow up I want to be medical doctor (6)</td> </tr> </table>	My childhood friends in Vietnam (1)	My family (2)	Apartment I lived in Vietnam (3)	I lost my friend when we left Vietnam (4)	My ancestor house in Malaysia (5)	When I grow up I want to be medical doctor (6)
My childhood friends in Vietnam (1)	My family (2)	Apartment I lived in Vietnam (3)						
I lost my friend when we left Vietnam (4)	My ancestor house in Malaysia (5)	When I grow up I want to be medical doctor (6)						
Images Analysis: 6 images	Human related: 5 (Image 1, 2, 4, 5, 6) Artefacts: 1 (Image 3)	Social Interaction: 6 (all stories) No social interaction: 0						
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)						
I positioning	Player – at my ancestor house	I am proud to be [nationality]						
Silent Voice	nil							
Juxtaposition	nil							

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives									
13M13 Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Arrived in Singapore airport (1)</td> <td>I travelled via tube in London (2)</td> <td>I used to lived in Singapore (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I live in London now (4)</td> <td>I used to lived in apartment in Singapore (5)</td> <td>My former school in Singapore (6)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I played with my friends here (7)</td> <td>I visited here with my family (8)</td> <td>Airport in London, our new home (9)</td> </tr> </table>	Arrived in Singapore airport (1)	I travelled via tube in London (2)	I used to lived in Singapore (3)	I live in London now (4)	I used to lived in apartment in Singapore (5)	My former school in Singapore (6)	I played with my friends here (7)	I visited here with my family (8)	Airport in London, our new home (9)
Arrived in Singapore airport (1)	I travelled via tube in London (2)	I used to lived in Singapore (3)									
I live in London now (4)	I used to lived in apartment in Singapore (5)	My former school in Singapore (6)									
I played with my friends here (7)	I visited here with my family (8)	Airport in London, our new home (9)									
Images Analysis: 9 images	Artefacts: 8 (Image 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) Transportation: 1 (image 2)	Social Interaction: 7 (Story 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9) No social interaction: 2 (Story 2, 5)									
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)									
I positioning	Actor – in the middle	This is my home									
Silent Voice	nil										
Juxtaposition	nil										

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>12M13</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move</p>		<p>TV (6)</p> <p>We have many books (11)</p> <p>I played drum (8)</p> <p>Ipad (7)</p> <p>Macau. I lived here the longest (7)</p> <p>Bed (5)</p> <p>Mobile-phone (10)</p> <p>Ipod (9)</p> <p>We have to choose between wealth, care, family, friendships (12)</p> <p>My family (1)</p> <p>I belong to place I was born and places that my parents come from (3)</p> <p>My father always accompanied me to football game (4)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 12 images</p>	<p>Human related: 2 (Image 1, 4)</p> <p>Artefacts: 3 (Image 2, 3, 12)</p> <p>Objects in residence: 7 (Image 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 5 (Story 1, 2, 4, 10, 12)</p> <p>No social interaction: 7 (Story 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11)</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Player	This is my home
Silent Voice	My father	
Juxtaposition	Place (Macau) vs. activities I do with my father	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>12F15</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move</p>		<p>Camera led our life (1)</p> <p>My father taught me art</p> <p>Fireworks in Macau (4)</p> <p>Familiar with Chinese store (7)</p> <p>My family loves to travel (6)</p> <p>I love Chinese food specially noddle (5)</p> <p>My life is always spiced up by my parents and places I</p> <p>Different fashion different place (3)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 8 images</p>	<p>Human related: 5 (Image 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)</p> <p>Artefacts: 3 (Image 1, 4, 5)</p>	<p>Social Interaction: All stories</p> <p>No social interaction: Nil</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – by the food (Artefacts)	I love Chinese noodles
Silent Voice	Red lantern to remind me of China	
Juxtaposition	Firework vs. Astronaut (excitement vs. adventure)	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>11F14</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move</p>		<p>I was born in Paris (1)</p> <p>I lived in Shanghai (2)</p> <p>Double decker bus (11)</p> <p>All my family is with me (6)</p> <p>Food from different places (3)</p> <p>My parents guided me to discover different lifestyles (7)</p> <p>I felt anxious to move (4)</p> <p>Camera (9)</p> <p>Phone (8)</p> <p>I played videogames as its hard to make friends (5)</p> <p>Different place, different styles (10)</p> <p>Go with the wind (12)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 12 images</p>	<p>Human related: 2 (image 2, 4)</p> <p>Artefacts: 4 (Image 1, 3, 9, 10)</p> <p>Nature: 1 (image 6)</p> <p>Objects in residence: 3 (Image 5, 7, 8)</p> <p>Transportation: 2 (image 11, 12)</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 7 (Story 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 12)</p> <p>No social interaction: 5 (Story 5, 6, 8, 9, 11)</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Spectator – by the transportation	Let the wind lead my life
Silent Voice	Nil	
Juxtaposition	Place I was born vs. Place I have lived	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives
<p>14M15</p> <p>Relocation: 4 times, current status: on the move</p>		<p>Bedroom (1)</p> <p>Coffee in the morning (2)</p> <p>My mother gets flowers for home (3)</p> <p>Computer for study and work (4)</p> <p>I like music, playing guitar (5)</p> <p>Macau, I live here now (6)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 6 images</p>	<p>Human related: 2 (Image 1, 5)</p> <p>Artefacts: 2 (Image 2, 6)</p> <p>Nature: 1 (image 3)</p> <p>Objects in residence: 1 (Image 4)</p> <p>Transportation: 0</p>	<p>Social Interaction: 3 (Story 3, 5, 6)</p> <p>No social interaction: 3 (Story 1, 2, 4)</p>
Congruence	1 (related to the topic)	1 (related to topic)
I positioning	Player – in the middle	I love nature
Silent Voice	Friends, family	
Juxtaposition	Coffee (permanent) vs. Macau (temporary)	

Data	Collage	Micro Narratives			
<p>13F16</p> <p>Relocation: 3 times, current status: on the move</p>		<p>My family and friends (1)</p>	<p>My friends (2)</p>	<p>Coherent mind and soul (9)</p>	<p>Pursuing my dream (5)</p>
<p>Images Analysis: 10 images</p>	<p>Human related: 5 (image 1, 2, 3, 7, 9) Artefacts: 5 (Image 4, 5, 6, 8, 10) Nature: 0 Objects in residence: 0 Transportation: 0</p>	<p>Social Interaction: All stories No social interaction: 0</p>			
<p>Congruence</p>	<p>1 (related to the topic)</p>	<p>1 (related to topic)</p>			
<p>I positioning</p>	<p>Actor – in the middle</p>	<p>All is home</p>			
<p>Silent Voice</p>	<p>Happy me, healthy food</p>				
<p>Juxtaposition</p>	<p>Indian music, dancing vs. friendships</p>				