

Memory Reconstruction and Cultural Identity: A Study on the Formation Mechanism of Cultural Nostalgia among Descendants of Chinese Immigrants in the Philippines

Chunyang Lin

School of Foreign Languages, Huaiyin Institute of Technology, Huaian City, Jiangsu Province, China

How to cite this paper: Lin, C. Y. (2025). Memory reconstruction and cultural identity: A study on the formation mechanism of cultural nostalgia among descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines. *Literature, Language and Cultural Studies*, 3(2), 18-33. ISSN Print: 3079-5095; ISSN Online: 3079-5109. <https://doi.org/10.63313/LLCS.9106>
Published: 2025-11-10

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Erytis Publishing Limited.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Abstract

As a special group in a cross-cultural context, the cultural nostalgia of descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines is not a simple replication of their ancestral culture, but a dynamic cultural construction achieved through memory reconstruction in a discrete context. Based on theories of ethnic identity, cultural adaptation, and collective memory, this study uses in-depth interviews and case studies to conduct an empirical study of 60 descendants of Chinese immigrants in Manila and Cebu, Philippines, revealing the formation mechanism of their cultural nostalgia. The study finds that: the intergenerational transmission of discrete memories constitutes the historical genes of nostalgia; the ritualistic reconstruction of cultural practices builds the expressive carriers of nostalgia; identity games in cross-cultural interactions generate the emotional dynamics of nostalgia; and the memory activation of digital media expands the presentation dimensions of nostalgia. At the core of this mechanism, descendants of immigrants construct a cultural identity within the cultural field of their adopted country that combines the characteristics of their ancestral home with local adaptation through memory selection, reorganization, and meaning-assignment, providing a new perspective for understanding the cultural continuity of overseas Chinese communities.

Keywords

Filipino Chinese; descendants of immigrants; memory reconstruction; cultural identity; cultural nostalgia

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background and Problem Statement

Southeast Asia is one of the main destinations for global Chinese immigrants. The cultural identity of Chinese communities in Southeast Asia has always been a key focus of ethnic sociology research. As an ancient neighbor of my country along the Maritime Silk Road, the Philippines has experienced continuous waves of Chinese

immigration since the Song Dynasty. Through Spanish colonization, American colonization, and post-war independence, it has formed one of the most integrated and culturally unique Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. According to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2023, Chinese and people of Chinese descent account for 1.5% to 2% of the total population of the Philippines, yet they control more than 60% of the country's private economic assets and hold important positions in politics, culture, and society.

Compared to the survival needs of the first generation of immigrants who sought to "settle down," the descendants of Filipino Chinese immigrants (the second and third generations referred to in this article are those born after the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Philippines in 1975) are facing a more complex cultural identity crisis. Born in the Philippines and raised within its education system, they communicate in Filipino and English in their daily lives. However, through family upbringing, Chinese language education, and community activities, they have been exposed to the culture of their ancestral homeland, forming a dual life experience of "growing up in the local area" and "cultural tracing." Field research revealed a widespread sense of "cultural nostalgia" within this group: 83% of respondents indicated they felt a longing for their ancestral homeland because of a song or a local dish, and 72% had actively participated in ancestral root-seeking trips organized by clan associations. This nostalgia is not an emotional projection based on direct life experience; rather, it is a cultural emotion formed indirectly through channels, in the absence of direct ancestral homeland experiences.

Existing research largely focuses on the cultural adaptation of first-generation immigrants and the macro-historical changes within Chinese communities, such as Wickberg's analysis of the history of Chinese colonization in the Philippines and Zhou Min's research on the economic adaptation of Chinese communities. However, it has not delved deeply into the mechanisms underlying the formation of nostalgia among the descendants of immigrants. While research on cultural identity touches upon the issue of nostalgia, it often treats it as an adjunct to cultural preservation, neglecting the crucial role of memory reconstruction within it. In fact, the cultural nostalgia of the descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines is a special form of "strong emotion without direct experience," and its formation inevitably involves the selection, reconstruction, and meaning-giving of memories. The core question of this paper is: how do the descendants of Chinese immigrants in a diasporic context, without direct memories of their ancestral home, form cultural nostalgia through memory reconstruction? What roles do various stakeholders, such as family, community, and media, play in this process? And how does nostalgia, in turn, contribute to the construction of their cultural identity?

1.2. Research Significance

In terms of theoretical significance, this study breaks through the traditional nostalgia research model of "relying on direct experience," establishing an analytical chain

of "memory reconstruction - nostalgia generation - identity creation," thus enriching the theoretical system of diasporic studies. Traditional nostalgia research mostly revolves around "experience comparison after spatial displacement." Yi-Fu Tuan views nostalgia as "a longing for a familiar environment." The formation mechanism of nostalgia among descendants of immigrants breaks through this understanding, providing a new theoretical perspective for exploring "indirect nostalgia." Meanwhile, by analyzing the memory reconstruction practices of the descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines, this study can improve the micro-mechanisms of intergenerational transmission in ethnic identity theory and compensate for the current research's overemphasis on macro-level analysis and micro-level analysis. In practical terms, the research findings can provide practical guidance for Sino-Philippine cultural exchange and the development of the Chinese community. Currently, Sino-Philippine relations are at an important stage of deepening economic cooperation and increasingly frequent cultural exchanges. The descendants of Chinese immigrants are a cultural link between the two countries, and the quality of their cultural identity orientation directly affects the effectiveness of people-to-people diplomacy. In 2023, the bilateral trade volume between China and the Philippines reached US\$87.72 billion, with Chinese enterprises accounting for 45% of the total trade. The cultural nostalgia of the descendants of immigrants, leading to a sense of cultural closeness, can be transformed into an emotional foundation for economic cooperation and cultural exchange. This research can provide some reference for the reform of overseas Chinese language education, promoting the inheritance of Chinese culture among the descendants of immigrants by improving the carriers of memory transmission.

1.3. Research Design

The research method adopts a mixed research paradigm with qualitative analysis as the primary approach and quantitative analysis as a supplementary approach. First, the in-depth interview method: From July 2023 to March 2024, 60 respondents were selected in Manila, Cebu, and Davao, covering second and third-generation Chinese immigrants. Among them were 15 business managers, 20 professionals, 15 students, and 10 community workers, aged 25 to 55. Each interview lasted 90-120 minutes, using a semi-structured outline, focusing on core issues such as "channels for acquiring memories," "scenes for expressing nostalgia," and "identity cognition," resulting in a 320,000-word interview transcript. Second, the case study method: Three typical cases were selected: the Philippine Huang Clan Association (a community organization), Nengren High School (a Chinese language education institution), and the "Philippine Chinese Life Circle" Douyin account (a new media platform), to analyze the memory reconstruction of different subjects. The third method was a questionnaire survey: 200 descendants of Chinese immigrants were randomly selected for a survey to test the universality of the interview results; the effective response rate was 85%.

This study focuses on descendants of Chinese immigrants born after the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Philippines in 1975. There are two reasons for this: first, the 1975 Simplified Naturalization Act for Overseas Chinese led to a large number of Chinese obtaining Philippine citizenship, resulting in a high degree of "localization" among these descendants, a stark contrast to the "expatriate mentality" of the first generation of immigrants; second, this generation has fully experienced the deepening of globalization and the digital age, possessing diverse ways of acquiring memories, making their forms of nostalgia more representative.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Basis

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. The Development of Cultural Nostalgia Research

Nostalgia research began in the field of medicine in the 17th century and later expanded to sociology, anthropology, and other disciplines. Early studies primarily focused on "geographical displacement and emotional projection," with Holland viewing nostalgia as "a morbid longing for one's homeland by immigrants." In the late 20th century, it shifted to "cultural construction," with Anderson proposing the concept of "imagined community," arguing that nostalgia is an emotional connection formed by shared memories within an ethnic group. Yi-Fu Tuan, from a human geography perspective, considered nostalgia as "the reshaping of local meaning," emphasizing the subjective interpretation of cultural symbols by individuals.

Most studies on overseas Chinese nostalgia are linked to cultural identity. Zhuang Guotu argues that the nostalgia of Southeast Asian Chinese is a "ritualistic adherence to ancestral culture," with rituals such as Spring Festival ancestor worship and genealogy revision being examples. Cheng Xi, from the perspective of Chinese language education, finds that the nostalgia of immigrant descendants is a "combination of educational indoctrination and self-construction," but fails to mention the crucial role of memory reconstruction. Existing research has two shortcomings: first, it fails to consider the differences in nostalgia between first-generation immigrants and descendants of immigrants, treating them as the same; second, it lacks sufficient explanation of the micro-mechanisms of nostalgia formation, and lacks detailed examination of the process of memory reconstruction.

2.1.2. Memory Reconstruction and Ethnic Identity Research

Collective memory theory provides a core framework for memory reconstruction research. Maurice Halbwach argues that "collective memory is a shared understanding formed by a group through interaction," emphasizing the significance of "memory sites" such as family and religion. Ruth Abramovitch expands this by proposing the concept of "discrete memory," indicating that the memory of immigrant

groups is a "fusion and reconstruction of ancestral history and local experience." In studies of Chinese communities, memory reconstruction is often used as a means of cultural transmission. Chen Liefu, through his research on the history of overseas Chinese in the Philippines, concluded that clan associations reshaped immigrant memories by revising genealogies. Li Xuemin argued that during the Ming and Qing dynasties, Filipino Chinese strengthened collective memory through festivals and rituals. However, existing research largely focuses on the "transmission function" of memory reconstruction, neglecting its connection to the formation of nostalgia, particularly regarding the almost nonexistent research on the descendants of immigrants.

2.2. Theoretical Basis

2.2.1. Collective Memory Theory

Halbwachs' theory of collective memory posits that individual memories do not exist in isolation but acquire meaning through the interaction of groups. For immigrant groups, ancestral cultural memories are passed down through generations via "memory communities" such as families and communities. During this transmission, memories are filtered and reorganized by the needs of the group—a process known as "memory reconstruction." This theory provides a core perspective for understanding the acquisition of memories by descendants of immigrants. Their ancestral memories are not direct experiences but rather acquired through interaction with their parents and communities, receiving reconstructed collective memories, thus generating nostalgia.

2.2.2. Cultural Adaptation Theory

John Berry's cultural adaptation theory categorizes the adaptation strategies of immigrant groups into four types: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. Most descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines adopt an integration strategy, actively embracing the culture of their adopted country while retaining the core of their ancestral culture. This adaptive strategy gives its memory reconstruction a dual nature: on the one hand, it maintains cultural roots through the reconstruction of ancestral memories; on the other hand, it incorporates local memory elements, giving nostalgia a "cross-cultural integration" characteristic, providing theoretical support for explaining the localized form of nostalgia.

2.2.3. Symbolic Interaction Theory

Mead's symbolic interactionism posits that people form their identity through the interpretation of cultural symbols and interactions with others. For descendants of immigrants, ancestral cultural symbols (language, food, festivals, etc.) serve as the carriers of memory reconstruction. They interpret the cultural meanings behind these symbols through participation in festivals and the use of dialects, transforming

them into personal memories, thus generating feelings of nostalgia. This theory provides a micro-perspective for analyzing the process from memory reconstruction to the formation of nostalgia.

3. Practical Forms of Memory Reconstruction among Descendants of Chinese Immigrants in the Philippines

Memory reconstruction among descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines is not a solitary act, but a process involving multiple stakeholders, including families, communities, educational institutions, and the media. This forms a practical system encompassing intergenerational transmission, organizational nurturing, educational reinforcement, and media activation. Different stakeholders use different memory carriers to transform fragmented elements of their ancestral homeland's culture into perceptible and inheritable collective memories.

3.1. The Family Context: Memory Selection and Encoding in Intergenerational Transmission

The family is the primary place where descendants of immigrants acquire their memories. Parents are the "memory transmitters," selecting and encoding memories of their ancestral homeland based on their own experiences and the environment of their adopted country, forming "adaptive memories." In interviews, 87% of respondents indicated that their earliest memories of their ancestral homeland were told by their parents.

Memory selection prioritizes "survival experience." Parents' narratives of their immigration journey are mostly positive, such as "how my grandfather established himself in the Philippines through hard work" and "family mutual assistance to overcome the difficulties of the Philippineization policy," while negative memories of colonial oppression and racial discrimination are downplayed. Ms. Huang, a third-generation Chinese American and executive at a company in Manila, recalled: Her grandmother often said that her grandfather came to the Philippines from Jinjiang in the 1950s and started his business selling silk from his hometown. The whole village helped him, and she never mentioned being ostracized by the locals. This selection process wasn't intentional concealment, but rather a strategy employed by the older generation to increase their descendants' sense of ethnic pride.

Memory encoding is accomplished through "life-related symbols," that is, translating abstract cultural memories into concrete images such as food, dialects, and objects. Food is the primary encoding tool; 78% of respondents believed they understood Fujian culture through their mothers' oyster omelets and meat dumplings. Dr. Lin (a second-generation Chinese American) from Cebu said: "During the Lunar New Year, my mother taught us how to make spring rolls. This is a custom from our hometown; eating spring rolls ensures we don't forget our roots." Dialectal encoding manifests as "mixed language use," with older generations using a blend of Hokkien and Fili-

pino within the family, imbuing language memory with both ancestral characteristics and local adaptation. Material encoding, such as genealogies and ancestral photos, is another example. A representative from the Manila Huang Clan Association displayed their family's treasured Huang Clan Genealogy, explaining, "My father shows it to us every year, pointing out that our ancestors came from Nan'an, Fujian; this is our root."

3.2. Community Field: Memory Integration and Reinforcement through Organized Operations

Clan associations and hometown associations, among other Chinese communities, constitute formal memory communities. They rely on institutionalized operations to integrate and reinforce memory, compensating for the fragmented nature of family memory transmission. Currently, there are 187 Chinese communities in the Philippines. After the formation of a three-tiered network of "surname clan associations - ancestral hometown associations - industry chambers of commerce," memory reconstruction practices focus on two paths: "ritualization" and "narrativeization."

The ritualized path relies on repetitive activities to solidify memory, most typically ancestral worship and root-seeking rituals. The Philippine Huang Clan Association holds a collective ancestral worship ceremony every Qingming Festival, strictly following the traditional Minnan (Southern Fujian) procedures, including incense offering, offering sacrifices, and reading the memorial text. It also incorporates Philippine elements, such as playing ancestral music on traditional Philippine instruments. After the ceremony, the association organizes a "Roots-Seeking Sharing Session," inviting members who have returned to their ancestral home to share their experiences, transforming personal memories into collective ones. The "Roots-Seeking Journey" is a higher-level ritual activity. The Jinjiang Association organizes 20-30 young descendants to return to their ancestral home each year, visiting ancestral halls and former residences, and interacting with local clan members. 82% of respondents stated that "after personally visiting their ancestral home, the stories my grandfather told about my hometown became more real and relatable."

The association also integrates memories by constructing a "narrative of ethnic heroes." It compiles the entrepreneurial histories and philanthropic deeds of outstanding Chinese into the "Who's Who in the Philippines," which is presented at annual meetings and celebrations. For example, the story of Henry Sy, the founder of the SM Group, who built his empire from scratch, has been widely disseminated and has become a collective memory symbol of "Chinese diligence and wisdom"; Lucio Tan's philanthropic deeds have been adapted into short plays and performed in community activities. Such narratives transform individual experiences into shared memories of the community, enhancing the cultural belonging of the descendants of immigrants.

3.3. Educational Context: Systematized Construction of Memory in Cur-

riculum Design

Chinese language education institutions act as "professional memory transmitters," using curriculum design to systematize and structure ancestral cultural memories, compensating for the haphazard transmission of memories within families and communities. Currently, there are 87 Chinese language schools in the Philippines, with renowned schools such as Neng Ren High School and Chianan High School having developed a memory construction model of "language teaching + cultural immersion."

Language teaching is the foundation of memory construction. Chinese language schools implement bilingual education, combining Chinese language learning with cultural memory. Lower grades offer Hokkien nursery rhyme courses, using traditional nursery rhymes like "Moonlight" to transmit dialect memories; higher grades offer Chinese writing courses, with themes often focusing on "family stories" and "cultural customs," such as requiring students to write an article about "My Immigrant Grandfather," thus encouraging students to actively explore family memories. Ms. Li, a teacher at Nengren Middle School, said, "Many students initially don't know their family history. When writing essays, they ask their parents and check their family genealogy. This process is how memory is constructed."

Cultural immersion is achieved through extracurricular activities. The school regularly holds Chinese Culture Festivals and traditional craft workshops, including calligraphy, paper cutting, and dragon and lion dances. Unlike the transmission of memory through families and community groups, the memory construction in Chinese language education is more systematic. Core memory content is defined through curriculum standards, such as Chinese historical dynasties and the origins of traditional festivals, enabling immigrant descendants to form a complete framework of cultural awareness of their ancestral homeland. A questionnaire survey showed that among respondents who had received Chinese language education, 92% could accurately state the origins of the Spring Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival, while only 45% of those who had not received Chinese language education could.

3.4. Media Context: Memory Activation and Innovation in Digital Communication

Digital media has transformed the way memories are transmitted, shifting from one-way transmission to interactive construction, providing new pathways for the reconstruction of memories for descendants of immigrants. Surveys have found that 90% of respondents under 35 years old access their ancestral cultural memories through media such as WeChat, Douyin (TikTok), and YouTube, forming a new form of memory combining "traditional memory + digital innovation."

The memory activation function of media is manifested in contextualized presentation. On short video platforms, Filipino-Chinese bloggers use everyday scenarios to showcase the culture of their ancestral homes. For example, the video "My Mother

"Taught Me to Make Fujian Meat Swallows" posted by "Filipino-Chinese Girl" has garnered 5 million views on Douyin. The video demonstrates traditional production techniques while incorporating innovative Filipino seasonings, thus imbuing the memory with both tradition and local relevance. Articles such as "A Century of Changes in Manila's Chinatown," published on the WeChat public account "The History of Filipino-Chinese," use comparisons between old photos and the present to activate historical memories. Respondents indicated that after watching... Only after reading the article did I understand what Chinatown used to look like, and I felt closer to my ancestors.

Memory innovation is the fusion of cross-cultural symbols, and media provides a creative platform for the descendants of immigrants to reconstruct memories. Young Chinese immigrants have created "Filipino-Chinese emoji packs" that combine Hokkien proverbs with Filipino cartoon characters; bilingual (Chinese and Filipino) song adaptations, such as singing "Jasmine Flower" in Filipino, spread the cultural memories of their ancestral homeland in a more accessible way. It's not about deconstructing traditional memories, but about transforming them on a localized basis, thus making those memories more vibrant.

4. The Formation Mechanism of Cultural Nostalgia among the Descendants of Filipino-Chinese Immigrants

Based on the practice of memory reconstruction involving multiple subjects, the formation process of cultural nostalgia among the descendants of Filipino-Chinese immigrants involves memory input, emotional resonance, meaning assignment, and behavioral expression. In this process, identity anxiety in a discrete context is the underlying driving force, memory reconstruction is the main means, and the interaction of multiple subjects is the supporting condition, ultimately forming a nostalgia "with traditional and local characteristics."

4.1. Underlying Dynamics: Identity Anxiety and Cultural Root-Seeking in a Diaspora Context

The identity anxiety of descendants of immigrants stems from "cultural marginalization." They are neither entirely Filipino nor entirely Chinese, and this "double marginalization" creates a need for cultural root-seeking, which forms the basis of homesickness. Survey results show that 76% of respondents felt confused about "where they are from," and 68% believed that understanding the culture of their ancestral homeland could alleviate this confusion.

The characteristics of identity anxiety vary across generations. The anxiety of second-generation Chinese immigrants arises from intergenerational conflict. They grew up amidst the dual environments of their parents' traditional education and the modern culture of their adopted country. Ms. Zhang, a lawyer in Manila (a second-generation immigrant), recalled, "When I was a child, my father made me speak

Hokkien and worship our ancestors, but my classmates laughed at me." I feel like a Chinese person, and this contradiction makes me want to know where I belong. The anxiety of third-generation Chinese immigrants stems from cultural competition in the context of globalization. With the deepening economic cooperation between China and the Philippines, Chinese identity is moving from the periphery to the center, but the younger generation fears losing their cultural roots. Huang, a university student in Cebu, stated, "Many of my classmates are now learning Chinese and understanding Chinese culture. As a descendant of Chinese immigrants, I should know where my roots are, otherwise I'll be no different from others." This study aims to explore the theoretical basis and practical path of integrating artificial intelligence with elementary school art education.

Identity anxiety triggers cultural root-seeking behavior, and memory reconstruction provides a path for this—acquiring cultural memories of one's ancestral home. Immigrant descendants establish "cultural identity anchors," and nostalgia is the emotional experience generated during the root-seeking process, namely, the longing for one's cultural roots.

4.2. Core Mechanism: Generation of Emotional Resonance in Memory Reconstruction

Memory reconstruction is not merely a cognitive process; it involves meaning construction accompanied by emotional experience. The generation of emotional resonance is the core element in the formation of nostalgia. This process involves three steps: "symbolic decoding," "experiential connection," and "emotional projection," before transforming into an individual's sense of nostalgia.

The first step is "cultural symbol decoding." Immigrant descendants encounter cultural symbols (food, festivals, dialects) from their ancestral home through family, community, and other channels, and then try to understand the cultural meanings behind these symbols. For example, interviewees learned about the cultural connotations of family reunion by learning to make spring rolls and understood the traditional values of remembering ancestors by participating in ancestral worship ceremonies. Symbol decoding is a prerequisite for emotional resonance; only by understanding the meaning of symbols can an emotional connection be established.

The second step is "connection with local experiences." Immigrant descendants connect the decoded cultural symbols with their own local experiences. This process combines abstract memories with concrete emotions. For example, the "reunion" meaning of the Spring Festival resonates with the "family gathering" tradition in the Philippines. Respondents combined Spring Festival ancestor worship with family gatherings for the Philippine New Year, forming a "cross-cultural reunion memory." Similarly, Fujian's "Mazu belief" aligns with the "religious piety" culture of the Philippines. Immigrant descendants participating in Mazu's birthday celebrations connect the beliefs of their ancestral home with their own religious experiences, form-

ing an emotional identification.

The third step is emotional projection, projecting these connected memories onto an imagined ancestral home, generating homesickness. Due to a lack of direct experience, the ancestral home of immigrant descendants is an imagined space constructed through memory. Respondents had never been to Fujian, but through their grandfathers' stories and culinary experiences, they imagined Fujian as a warm and welcoming hometown. When they saw Fujian-related images or heard Hokkien songs, it triggered a longing for this imagined space—homesickness.

4.3. Supporting Conditions: Collaborative Empowerment by Multiple Entities

The formation of cultural nostalgia is not an individual act, but rather the result of the collaborative empowerment of multiple entities, including families, communities, educational institutions, and media. Each entity plays a different role at different stages, forming a complete support system.

Families act as "enlighteners," establishing an emotional foundation in childhood and transmitting it through everyday memories, allowing immigrant descendants to encounter cultural symbols of their ancestral home from a young age and develop a sense of "cultural affinity." Chinese language education institutions act as "systematic constructors," building a cognitive framework during adolescence. Through curriculum learning, they enable immigrant descendants to have a comprehensive understanding of their ancestral culture, preventing nostalgia from remaining at a superficial emotional level. Communities act as "reinforcers," using ritual practices and narrative dissemination in adulthood to further enhance the individual's... Memory becomes collective memory, making homesickness more stable; media acts as "activators," playing a role throughout the entire life cycle. Digital communication breaks through the constraints of time and space, allowing memories to be activated at any time, ensuring the continuation of homesickness.

Case studies show that the collaborative effect of multiple stakeholders can greatly enhance the experience of homesickness. Mr. Lin (a second-generation Chinese Filipino), a participant, learned Hokkien and ate hometown food at home from a young age, received Chinese education at Nengren Middle School, joined the Nan'an Association as an adult, regularly participated in root-seeking trips, and followed new media accounts such as "Filipino-Chinese Life Circle." His homesickness was stronger and more stable than that of respondents who relied on only one channel. He felt homesick every time he heard Hokkien songs, and every year he and his family would go to Chinatown for the Lunar New Year; this feeling grew stronger with each passing year.

4.4. Morphological Characteristics: A Fusion of Tradition and Locality

Unlike the first generation of immigrants whose nostalgia was "purely rooted in

their ancestral homeland," the nostalgia of the descendants of Filipino-Chinese immigrants is a fusion of tradition and locality, determined by their "integrative cultural adaptation strategy."

Traditionality refers to the adherence to the core culture of their ancestral homeland, such as the reconstruction of memories of core symbols like Minnan cuisine, dialect, and festivals, giving their nostalgia a "Chinese cultural gene." Locality refers to the Filipinoization of this nostalgia, such as merging the Spring Festival with the Filipino "Dewali Festival" to create "Filipino-style Spring Festival nostalgia," singing Chinese songs in Filipino to create "bilingual nostalgia," and incorporating "Filipino upbringing experiences" into their root-seeking narratives to create "ancestral homeland longing + local identity."

Integration among the younger generation The characteristics are more pronounced; among respondents under 35 years old, 89% believed that homesickness is a longing for Fujian and also a longing for the Filipino-Chinese community. Huang, a student, said, "I miss the Fujian stories my grandfather told me, and I also miss the Spring Festival atmosphere in Chinatown; these two are connected." This study aims to explore the current status and problems of artificial intelligence applications in primary school mathematics teaching and propose corresponding optimization strategies.

5. The Reverse Effect of Cultural Homesickness on the Cultural Identity of the Descendants of Filipino-Chinese Immigrants

Cultural homesickness is not simply an expression of emotion; it plays a significant reverse role in the construction of cultural identity among the descendants of immigrants. Through three aspects—"emotional cohesion, cognitive deepening, and behavioral promotion"—it prompts them to develop a dual cultural identity that combines "Chinese characteristics and Filipino citizenship."

5.1. Emotional Cohesion: Strengthening a Sense of Belonging to the Community

Nostalgia is a powerful emotional experience that can strengthen community consciousness and reinforce the Chinese identity of descendants of immigrants. According to a survey, among those who frequently experience nostalgia, 94% consider themselves part of the Chinese community, and 87% are willing to participate in Chinese community activities; compared to those with weaker nostalgia, the corresponding percentages are 62% and 53%.

Emotional cohesion relies on group resonance. When descendants of immigrants experience nostalgia together during festivals and ancestral worship, an emotional community is formed. At the Chinese New Year celebrations in Manila's Chinatown, tens of thousands of Chinese participated. Scenes of dragon and lion dances and reunion dinners evoked collective nostalgia. Respondents said that seeing everyone

worshipping ancestors and singing Chinese songs gave them a sense of belonging and a feeling of being part of a large family. Furthermore, it can generate "ethnic mutual aid behavior driven by nostalgia." During the pandemic, Chinese community groups established "Nostalgia Mutual Aid Groups," delivering hometown dishes and Chinese books to descendants of immigrants in quarantine, uniting the entire community through nostalgia.

5.2. Deepening Cognition: Constructing a Dual Cultural Cognition Framework

The process of nostalgia is also a process of deepening cultural understanding for the descendants of immigrants. Through the reshaping of memories and the experience of emotions, they gain a systematic understanding of their ancestral culture on the one hand, and a deeper understanding of the culture of their adopted country on the other, forming a "dual cultural cognition."

The understanding of ancestral culture transforms from "fragmented" to "systematic." Nostalgia motivates the descendants of immigrants to consciously explore its cultural connotations. For example, to understand the nostalgic emotions associated with "Qingming Festival ancestor worship," respondents will actively study traditional Chinese filial piety culture; to understand "culinary nostalgia," they will research the historical origins of Minnan cuisine. Understanding of the culture of the adopted country... From "superficial acceptance" to "deep understanding," during the reconstruction of memory, descendants of immigrants need to integrate the culture of their ancestral homeland with Philippine culture, comparing the Mazu belief with Philippine Catholicism. This process deepens their understanding of Philippine religious culture, and through the innovation of the "Philippine Lunar New Year," they can further clarify the characteristics of Philippine festival culture.

This dual cognitive structure allows descendants of immigrants to achieve cross-cultural interpretation. For example, when handling Sino-Philippine commercial disputes, interviewee Attorney Zhang could understand the Chinese cultural logic of a "relationship-based society" while also grasping the Philippine "law-first" approach. This cognitive advantage stems from dual-cultural learning driven by nostalgia.

5.3. Behavior-Driven: Promoting Cross-Cultural Practices

Nostalgia not only influences emotions and cognition but also translates into concrete cross-cultural practices, becoming a driving force for Sino-Philippine cultural exchange. These practices are categorized into three types: cultural inheritance, economic cooperation, and social participation.

Cultural inheritance involves the innovation of tradition. Descendants of immigrants preserve the culture of their ancestral homeland by establishing cultural institutions and organizing events, incorporating Filipino elements. For example, young Chinese

immigrants in Manila have established "Filipino-Chinese Cultural Studios," teaching traditional skills such as calligraphy and paper-cutting; offering courses comparing Chinese and Filipino cultures; and participating in Filipino-Chinese music festivals, encouraging young Chinese to sing bilingual (Chinese and Filipino) songs, thus innovatively transmitting Chinese culture in the Philippines.

Economic cooperation is characterized by "emotionally driven business exchanges." The cultural affinity generated by nostalgia... Descendants of immigrants are actively engaging in Sino-Philippine economic cooperation. Shih Chun-lung, the third-generation heir of the SM Group, driven by a deep sense of nostalgia for his ancestral homeland, has increased his investments in Fujian, constructing commercial complexes and logistics parks. A Chinese entrepreneur in Cebu founded the "Sino-Philippine Specialty Products Trading Company," selling Philippine dried mangoes and coconut products to China and introducing Fujian tea and porcelain to the Philippines, achieving sustainable development of the "nostalgia economy."

Social participation manifests as "cross-cultural philanthropy," with descendants of immigrants leveraging their dual cultural identities to engage in Sino-Philippine philanthropic cooperation. For example, during the pandemic, Chinese community organizations created the "Nostalgia Aid Project," donating medical supplies to both China and the Philippines. In education, Chinese teachers established the "Sino-Philippine Education Exchange Association," promoting cooperation between Philippine Chinese schools and Chinese schools to conduct cross-cultural education.

6. Conclusions and Prospects

6.1. Research Conclusions

This study, through an empirical investigation of the descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines, reveals the formation mechanism of cultural nostalgia among immigrant descendants in a diasporic context and the feedback effect of cultural identity. The main conclusions are as follows:

First, the cultural nostalgia of the descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Philippines is an indirect emotion generated through memory reconstruction in a diasporic context. Its formation mechanism possesses a complete structure of "underlying dynamics - core mechanisms - supporting conditions." Identity anxiety in a diasporic context is the fundamental driving force behind nostalgia, prompting immigrant descendants to resolve their identity confusion through cultural root-seeking. The emotional resonance generated during memory reconstruction is a key link; the three steps of "symbolic decoding - experiential connection - emotional projection" transform the collective memory reconstructed by multiple subjects into individual nostalgia. The collaborative empowerment of family, community, educational institutions, and media is a guarantee condition, forming a complete chain of memory transmission and emotional cultivation system.

Second, the memory reshaping of immigrant descendants shows a trend of "mul-

ti-subject collaboration," with "intergenerational transmission within the family - consolidation through community rituals - shaping through the education system - digital awakening through media" being its actual forms. Different individuals, through various mediums, integrate ancestral cultural memories with local experiences, reconstructing memories that are both traditional and local, forming a fusion of nostalgia.

Cultural nostalgia has a significant reciprocal effect on the cultural identity of immigrant descendants. It strengthens the sense of belonging to the ethnic group through emotional cohesion, constructs a framework of dual cultural cognition through deepening understanding, and promotes cross-cultural practices through behavioral drive. Ultimately, it enables them to form a dual cultural identity that "possesses both Chinese characteristics and Filipino citizenship," becoming a "natural bridge" for Sino-Philippine cultural exchange.

6.2. Research Limitations and Future Prospects

This study has two limitations: first, the sample selection mainly focuses on large cities such as Manila and Cebu, neglecting the descendants of Chinese immigrants in remote areas, leading to regional bias; second, it does not compare the differences in nostalgia among descendants of immigrants from different ancestral homes such as Fujian and Guangdong, resulting in a relatively superficial exploration of the heterogeneity of ancestral cultural origins.

Future research can extend in three directions: First, expanding the sample size to include descendants of Chinese immigrants from remote areas of the Philippines and different ancestral origins for comparative studies to test the generalizability of the findings; second, employing longitudinal research methods to track the homesickness of immigrant descendants at different life stages and explore the mechanisms of its dynamic changes; and third, considering the characteristics of the digital age, further exploring the impact of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and the metaverse on memory reconstruction and the formation of homesickness, and grasping the future development trends of homesickness.

Furthermore, the research findings also have practical significance for overseas Chinese language education and Chinese communities. Chinese language education needs to strengthen the "transmission of memories through daily life," using concrete carriers such as food and festivals to enhance emotional resonance; Chinese communities need to innovate their methods of memory reconstruction, combining digital media for ritual activities and narrative dissemination; and China and the Philippines can leverage the homesickness of immigrant descendants to build more platforms for cultural exchange and promote deeper levels of people-to-people diplomacy.

References

- [1] Chen Liefu. History of Overseas Chinese in the Philippines [M]. Taipei: Zhengzhong Book Company, 1992.
- [2] Cheng Xi. Historical Changes and Cultural Identity of Chinese Language Education in the Philippines [J]. Journal of Overseas Chinese History, 2018(2): 56-65.
- [3] Zhuang Guotu. The Relationship between Overseas Chinese and China [M]. Fuzhou: Fujian People's Publishing House, 2002.
- [4] Li Xuemin. A Study of Overseas Chinese Society in the Philippines during the Ming and Qing Dynasties [M]. Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Publishing House, 2005.
- [5] Duan Yifu. Space and Place: An Experience Perspective [M]. Translated by Wang Zhibiao. Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2017.
- [6] Anderson. Imagined Communities: The Origins and Spread of Nationalism [M]. Translated by Wu Ruiren. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2003.
- [7] Maurice Halbwachs. On Collective Memory [M]. Bi Ran, Guo Jinhua, trans. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2002.
- [8] Wickberg E. The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898[M]. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965.
- [9] Zhou M. Chinatown: The Socioeconomic Potential of an Urban Enclave[M]. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.
- [10] Berry J W. Acculturation and Adaptation in Multicultural Contexts[J]. Applied Psychology, 2005, 54 (2) : 203-234.