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Los Angeles

Not/All about Fun:

College Students' Social Norms and Identity Construction on Facebook

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Liang-Wen Lin

2015

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Not/All about Fun:

College Students' Social Norms and Identity Construction on Facebook

by

Liang-Wen Lin

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Douglas M. Kellner, Chair

Youth identity that explores the relationship between self and society is a central concern of youth studies. The very question whether there is still as much influence of social background on identity construction or identity is more individually achieved has aroused debates in youth studies. Nowadays young people live in a world of social media where they utilize multimedia resources to express themselves and manage interpersonal relationships in different ways. Facebook has become the most popular social network site among college students in Taiwan and has begun to play a substantial role in their college life.

The purpose of my research is to reveal how college students in Taiwan interpret and negotiate the social norms regulating their online interpersonal relationships and how they construct their identities regarding impression management and cultural consumption on Facebook. Based in Taipei, Taiwan, this research applied a multi-sited approach and methods

including in-person interviews, online observation and a visual approach of photographic analysis. I refer to the conceptions of performance introduced by E. Goffman, distinction proposed by P. Bourdieu, and surveillance developed by M. Foucault as the primary theoretical frameworks in this research.

My research reveals a potential cultural pedagogy of Facebook in higher-education practices in terms of obligated sociality and impression management. I suggest that young people face the pressure of their day-to-day practices on social network sites because it is not about fun—instead, it is about how to maintain their college student identity online regarding school work, friendship, emotion expression, and self-image. In this context, I examine how they interpret and negotiate with the norms—obligated sociality, un/certainty in keeping friendships and the rules of emotion expression, and emphasis on struggles and contradictions when they confront the norms. I argue that college students use metaphor as an expression of negative emotion to deal with the struggles between publicity, privacy and belonging.

I suggest that individuals demonstrate unifying and consistent practices of identity construction between online and offline activity through different cognitive structures of identity construction, which are socially produced, exercised by habitus, and different from socio-economic status. My argument contributes to the debates on identity in youth studies for it provides the real-world evidence and connects the logic of identity construction practices online to the ones offline.

The dissertation of Liang-Wen Lin is approved.

John N. Hawkins

Carlos A. Torres

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2015

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Youth identity that explores the relationship between self and society is a central concern of youth studies. The very question whether there is still as much influence of social background on identity construction (Blackman, 2005; Williams, 2007; Willis, 1977) or if identity is more freely and individually achieved (Bennett, 2011; Bennett & Kahn-Harris, 2004; Weinzierl & Muggleton, 2003) has aroused debates and become a significant topic in youth studies. Nowadays young people live in a world of media where they utilize multimedia resources in expressing themselves and deal with interpersonal relationships in different ways. Media has thus become a critical medium and a space to investigate youth identity. Facebook originated in the United States and has become the most popular social network site among college students. It has reached college students in Taiwan and has gradually begun to play a substantial role in their college life due to cultural globalization facilitated by media and the international mobility of higher education. Specifically, Taiwanese youth culture embodies a hybrid of American, Japanese, and Korean popular culture because of Taiwan's historical context and geographic location (Chang, 2004; Lin & Chang, 2008). This cultural phenomenon thus reflects not only the global influence of the American site Facebook, but also the cultural interflow within the Pacific Rim area between Taiwan, Japan, and Korea.

Facebook has become the most popular social network site in the United States since May 2009, and retains 3 out of 4 visitors of the social network category as of April 2011.[1] Facebook (2011a) also reports that approximately 70 percent of Facebook users are located outside of the United States. Facebook thereby is a global site whose members are from all over the world. In Taiwan, Facebook experienced tremendously rapid growth in the number of users in 2009. Taiwan documents that Facebook is the second most popular website only after Yahoo, as of September 2009[2].

Launched in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg at Harvard (Facebook, 2011), Facebook quickly spread to other university campuses as a social network site to facilitate interaction amongst college students. It soon became the most popular social network site amongst college students in the United States. Facebook has become a focus of research interest as it has grown as part of college youth culture. In the same way that "Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life," proclaimed on its login page, Facebook has substantially affected the dynamics of self presentation and interpersonal interactions between college students. Why and how youth create and live in a cultural world on Facebook have thus become significant topics within youth cultural studies.

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[1] See www.comScore.com(2011b).

[2] See udn.com(2009) and www.nownews.com(2009).

As a social network site, Facebook not only provides a platform where users store and

share personalized information in the form of multimedia resources but also publicizes three

distinct features: profile, friends list, and comments (boyd & Ellison, 2008).

Stated by boyd (2007), the Facebook profile can be seen as a form of digital body

where individuals must write themselves into being. By creating profiles on Facebook, young

people on the one hand articulate personal information to express who they are, and on the other

hand appropriate multimedia resources to signal their cultural tastes. As Kellner (1995) argues,

media culture thereby provides resources for identity and new modes of identity in which

appearance, style, and image replace such things as action and commitment as constitutive of

identity. Enumerating information and multimedia resources that youth use to define their

identity and cultural tastes are in fact provided by Facebook, consumer markets, and cultural

industries. Hence, profile creation is in itself an act of cultural consumption, as cultural

consumption is one of the most significant ways people perform self identity and distinguish

themselves from others (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Storey, 1999, p.136).

The creation of a friends list is what constitutes the social network component of

Facebook. Mutually confirmed and binary (friend or not friend) features of friendship result in

differentiated definitions of 'friend' online from definitions offline because users often friend

anyone they know and do not particularly dislike (boyd, 2007; Zollars, 2009). Friending,

defriending, and unfriending subsequently become challenging for interpersonal relationships

due to the fact that virtual networks on Facebook are heavily intertwined with those in reality.

"Connecting and sharing with the people in your life" results in a dilemma from the melding of

multiple friend groups. Asynchronous communication of multiple audiences easily makes

Facebook an example of a panoptic gaze exerting surveillance (Foucault, 1979). Along with an

individual's profile, friends list and comments from other people are also parts of an individual's

self performance both in the front stage and back stage (Goffman, 1959). Young people thus

develop complex and dynamic strategies to cope with the conflicts between friendships and self

presentation, and thereby form their identity in a co-creative way.

Facebook thereby is a contested terrain creating a youth cultural world. On the one

hand, Facebook provides a unique space for performance and communication; on the other hand,

it reinforces ideologies of consumer capitalism. Identity expressed by young people on Facebook

subsequently becomes a controversial issue of the subculture versus post-subculture debates

within youth cultural studies. From the Chicago School to the Birmingham Centre for

Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), subcultural theorists emphasize the collective context of

youth cultural practices by arguing the influence of social structure. The driving force of the

theory is that status positions influence and generate forms of collective action through which

youth construct their cultural reference to interpret, react, conform, or resist the world (Blackman,

2005; Williams, 2007). Identity is therefore homogeneous, fixed, and originates from one's status

position. However, post-subcultural theorists stress fragmented and individual practices of youth

culture because of increasing individuality and consumerism in a late capitalist society (Bennett,

2005; Bennett, 2011; Bennett & Kahn-Harris, 2004; Weinzierl & Muggleton, 2003). The driving

force of the theory is of individual choice and consumption. In other words, structure constraints

are replaced by agency. Identities thereby are heterogeneous, fluid, multiple, and temporary.

Given the social and theoretical context of Facebook elucidated above, there is much

research collected on college students' cultural worlds online. Most of these studies explore

young people's general motivations and behavior,[3] while interpersonal relationships have been

studied as its own popular topic.[4] As a critical topic in youth cultural studies, presentation of the

self and identity has also caught researchers' attention.[5] Meanwhile, there are fewer studies on

cultural distinctions [6] and surveillance mechanisms [7] that youth display on Facebook.

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[3] e.g. Joinson, 2008; Kim, Kim & Nam, 2010; Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield, 2006; Madge, Meek, Wellens, & Hooley, 2009.

[4] e.g. Chu & Choi, 2010; Ellison, Steinfield & Kampe, 2007; Lewis & West, 2009; Sheldon, 2008.

[5] e.g. Back et al., 2010; Robards & Bennett, 2011; Selwyn, 2009; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008.

[6] e.g. Lewis, Kaufman, Wimmer, & Christakis, 2008; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008.

[7] e.g. Brandtzæg, Lüders & Skjetne, 2010; Fuchs, 2009.

Additionally, social structural factors still proved to be influential.[8] In Taiwan, research on

Facebook culture and usage emerged primarily in 2010 due to the fact that Facebook has become

popular only since 2009. Compared to Western research, research on the cultural world of

Facebook in Taiwan contains general motivations and behavior [9] and interpersonal

relationships; [10] topics on presentation of the self and identity, cultural distinction, and

surveillance are not studied as of yet. Additionally, research shows that social structural factors

are similar in both the West and in Taiwan.[11]

Youth in Taiwan join Facebook because of its interactive games while youth in

America join Facebook to keep in touch with their pre-established offline friends. Various

motivations reflect different social contexts and consequently lead to different youth cultural

worlds on Facebook. A cross-cultural comparative perspective can broaden understanding of

Facebook's cultural meaning in the global context, especially as current research on Facebook is

primarily U.S.-based. Current empirical research is deficient in sophisticated articulations of how

youth construct their distinct status and identity through self performance and social interaction

with peers under the surveillance of unseen audiences. To this end, conceptions of self

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[8] e.g.Hargittai, 2007; Kolek & Saunder, 2008; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009; Wimmer &Lewis, 2010.

[9] e.g. Tasi, 2010; Tseng, 2010; Wen, 2010.

[10] Chen, 2010; Chien, 2010; Lu, 2010.

[11] Tseng, 2010; Yen, 2010.

performance introduced by E. Goffman, distinction proposed by P. Bourdieu, and surveillance developed by M. Foucault are useful frameworks to understand identity and social relations of youth culture constructed on Facebook. Proposed by Kellner (1995, 2009), transdisciplinary cultural studies further provide critical perspectives for decoding dominant ideologies of consumerism hidden in the contents of young people's profiles on Facebook and treating profiles and Facebook as artifacts. By comparing the cultural meaning constructed by young people based on their positional status, the interactions between agent and structure are scrutinized, and the debate of subculture and post-subculture is answered.

1-1 Research Objectives

The overarching objective of my research is to explore the practices of social norms and identity construction on Facebook among college students in Taiwan, which exists under the surveillance of unseen audiences in the context of cultural globalization and consumerism. I accomplish this objective through analysis of the following areas:

1. How do young people interpret, act, and form their cultural practices of interpersonal relationships and self-presentation on Facebook?

2. How do young people negotiate the surveillance of interpersonal relationships to maintain the balance between their friendships and identity construction?

3. Through which cultural consumption do college students demonstrate what types of

self-images online?

1-2 Theoretical Frameworks

Facebook, a popular youth culture website, has significant influences on the formation

of youth identity and their social relations. I will critically examine how youth construct their

status and identity through their self portrayals and social interactions with their peers under the

surveillance of unseen audiences on Facebook. To this end, conceptions of self-performance

introduced by E. Goffman, distinction proposed by P. Bourdieu, and surveillance contended by

M. Foucault are useful frameworks to understand identity and social relations of youth culture

constructed on Facebook.

Goffman

Goffman's conception of 'performance' is the primary metaphor through which he

interprets all social interaction. Individuals play different roles in various settings in order to

present themselves and manage their impressions/faces as identity construction; individuals also

conform to others' expectations within interactional rituals (Goffman, 1959, 1967).

The dominance of information and communication technology has led to increased

interpenetration between virtual life and real life, and Facebook offers a primary example of this phenomenon. Goffman's conceptions of self presentation and impression management are complementary aspects of identity construction both for face-to-face interactions and for online interactions on Facebook.

Performance, defined as "all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (Goffman, 1959, p.22), happens both in the "front region," where publicly visible social rituals are performed, and the "back stage," where these rituals are hidden (Goffman, 1959, p. 22, 112). "Continuous presence" in performance implies that the performer continues to act as if the audience were observing even though there is none present (Goffman, 1959, p. 81-82).

According to Goffman, identity as the social self is moving between the "front region" and the "back stage" area. Identity construction under this circumstance involves mostly the manipulation of physical settings and the "personal front" through which appearance, language, and manner are all manipulated in order to create a desired impression on others (Goffman, 1959, p. 24). Facebook is a multi-audience identity production site. The control that users have over privacy settings on their accounts enables them to partition their Facebook pages into various

"back" and "front" regions, thereby staging different identities for different audiences. Meanwhile, how young people appropriate their profile, both as physical settings and personal fronts, is a performance presented to others in the front stage of identity construction.

"Face-work" means "to designate the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face" (Goffman, 1967, p. 12). Goffman (1959) highlights strategies of impression management that prevail in social encounters and follow rules of interaction ritual. Interaction ritual, as rules regulating face-to-face interactions, serves as underlying codes that make social actions workable (Goffman, 1967). In Goffman's model, actors are self-regulating participants in social encounters who maintain ritual equilibrium and hence find cooperation in face work.

Facebook as a reality for actors, virtual or not, has common knowledge that intersubjectively prevails amongst Facebook users. An actor who lives in the Facebook world interacts with others smoothly only by following these hidden rules. Meanwhile, these hidden rules frame the ways an actor maintains his face or impression to others through selective application. The Facebook community works as a team in performance to achieve "dramaturgical cooperation" (Goffman, 1959, p. 85) to define each other's performances and to form a local community.

Bourdieu

What consists of the social process in Bourdieu's theory could be represented by his famous formula: [(habitus)(capital)]+field=practice (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 101). Bourdieu shows how distinction, which is embodied through an actor's habitus based on his/her social conditions, expresses the trajectory that power is manifested. To what extents and in which ways social class influences actors' behaviors and social space through habitus in the construction of identity is elucidated. These are important angles we shall analyze in order to explain how youth designates their identity and forms their social relations through Facebook.

Capital, as the set of actually usable resources and powers, is defined by the logic of each field; that is, among different fields, there are correspondent rules that regulate the value of each capital (1979/1984, p. 113-114). In order to achieve the dominant position within each field to exert power over the distribution of capital, individuals have to employ their capability related to habitus to display distinctions of their social position through their tastes.

Facebook, as an important field of a youth's social life, is a contested terrain where youth not only struggle for distinction but also construct their identity by appropriating symbols and resources through the website. Cultural proclivities constitute an integral part of our identities. Hence, the profile information of favorite movies, books, and music; photos that youth

upload; and groups youth join all indicate their tastes and the lifestyles that embody their identity

and distinction.

Structured by the volume and composition of capital, social space is the matrix

representing an individual's relative social position (Bourdieu, 1984, p.131). The trajectory of an

individual's past and potentiality in social space is not arbitrary but rather determined by the

structure of the actor's habitus (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 110). Those who are situated within closer

positions in social space share more commonalities in cultural preferences (Bourdieu, 1984, p.

114-125, 1998, p. 6-9). In other words, cultural proclivities play an important role in shaping

social boundaries from taste diffusion to cultural homophily, from boundary-formation to

meaning-making. By scrutinizing young people's cultural proclivities indicated on their profiles

and their Facebook friends comparatively, to what extent social class influences friendships and

the intersection of taste and social relations can be deciphered.

Bourdieu (1984, p. 170) defines habitus as a "structuring structure" and "structured

structure"; that is, habitus is structured from birth by a person's economic and social conditions

and then becomes the lens through which he or she perceives and structures the world.

Meanwhile, lifestyle is formed from habitus through taste. Taste is the propensity and capacity to

choose between a given set of options in a way that builds into lifestyle. By stating "a given set

of options," it implies that their tastes correspond to and legitimize what was economically possible for them in their life experience. Therefore, habitus, the internalized class conditions of an individual, is also disclosed by the individual lifestyles of youth who use Facebook as a tool in terms of maintaining their social relations and constructing their identities among peer groups.

Foucault

Foucault considers contemporary society as a society of surveillance and as a disciplinary society. Surveillance is a repressive and coercive process, as Foucault contends: "Our society is one not of spectacle, but of surveillance…the individual is carefully fabricated in it, according to a whole technique of forces and bodies" (Foucault, 1979, p. 217). Surveillance is a power "capable of making all visible, as long as it could itself remain invisible" (Foucault 1979, p. 214). Following this situation, an individual under surveillance is "seen, but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication" (Foucault 1979, p. 200).

Foucault emphasizes that discipline and potential punishment are important aspects of surveillance because the latter aims at the control and subjugation of behaviors. In fact, not only behaviors but also thoughts and communications are controlled by surveillance in contemporary society. Facebook, which represents a new communication of social networking, is easily an example of a panoptic gaze. The metaphor of the panopticon, developed by philosopher Jeremy

Bentham and then elucidated by Foucault (1979), is a theoretical prison structure where prisoners

can be observed from a central location at all times without their knowledge.

The true efficiency of the panopticon lay not in the potential for surveillance but in the

mechanism. Foucault explains that the mechanism of surveillance is workable and accessible for

everyone, as well as that the inspections are irregular and constant; therefore, it is for the public,

and the observed can also be observers. The mechanism Foucault depicts of surveillance

corresponds heavily to characteristics of Facebook, namely surveillance of identity-performance.

Surveillance of identity-performance on Facebook is related to discipline in the sense

that "discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of power that regards individuals

both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault, 1979, p. 170). Young people

construct their identity through performance not only by utilizing settings or photos in their

personal profiles, but also through public interactions with peers via wall posts. The internalized

panopticon of constant gaze by invisible others thus polices and establishes normative behaviors

about what is "correct" identity-performance regulated by dominant values. Through this gaze,

ideas are transmitted to individuals who are then punished if they choose not to follow those

norms because the ultimate goal and effect of discipline is "normalization" (Best & Kellner,

1991, p. 47; Foucault, 1979, p. 184).

Summary

Goffman, Bourdieu, and Foucault demonstrate how youth construct their distinct status and identity through self performance and social interactions with peers under the surveillance of unseen audiences. Goffman focuses on how youth perform their identity through utilizing settings and interactive resources on Facebook at the micro level, and from micro interactions he depicts this cultural world and its hidden rules. What Goffman leaves behind are social positions of heterogeneous subjects and domination of power both in the micro and macro levels. Cultural politics of the identity formation of youth given different social statuses can be revealed by Bourdieu's lens. On the one hand, how youth distinguish themselves and form social relations is indicated via their cultural capital on Facebook profiles and social groups. On the other hand, appropriating Facebook for various purposes embodies the power exerted from social class. While Bourdieu's political angle of identity formation on Facebook compensates for Goffman's lack, Facebook's politically social context at a macro level is absent in both approaches. How consumerism, communication technology, and the Internet function as surveillance mechanisms through which is accelerated on Facebook due to the website's political economy and privacy settings can be decoded by Foucault. Surveillances of identity-performance are critical when it comes to youth culture in contemporary society. By appropriating these three

theories, insightful perspectives of how youth culture and identity is constructed on Facebook shall be produced.

1-3 Literature Review

In this section, empirical studies of college students' cultural world on Facebook are examined. By defining cultural world of Facebook, five themes including general motivations and behavior, presentation of the self and identity, interpersonal relationships, cultural distinction, and surveillance are discussed. Social structural factors that influence college students' Facebook cultural world are addressed as well.

In each topic, relevant findings are emphasized and flaws I will address in my research are pointed out next. Most of the current research used quantitative methods to investigate general tendencies of college students' cultural world on Facebook. Disadvantages of quantitative studies are lack of thick descriptions of, first, why and how youth appropriate Facebook in which ways, and second, meanings of these ways to youth. Based on existing literature, my research design is developed.

1-3-1 General motivations and behavior

Most research reveals Facebook is a daily routine for students. The amount of time

students reported spending on Facebook on a given day varied greatly, and they appeared to use Facebook for short periods several times a day.

Most students join Facebook because of its association with university-level education. This is true both in Britain (Madge, Meek, Wellens, & Hooley, 2009) and the States (Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009). The dominant reason young people use Facebook is for social interaction, primarily with a pre-established network of friends. That is, young people employ Facebook to find out more about people in their offline communities, rather than initiate new connections (Brandtzæg, Lüders & Skjetne, 2010; Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield, 2006; Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009).

Motives for social interaction and passing time are supported by most research. For example, Sheldon (2008) conducted a survey of 172 students at a large research university to investigate the motives of Facebook use. In this study, motives of Facebook use were relationship maintenance and passing time. Madge, Meek, Wellens, and Hooley (2009) conducted an online survey of 213 first year undergraduates at a British university to explore how Facebook influences students' social integration into university life. Young people used Facebook both to retain current friendships from home and to make social links at university. Pempek, Yermolayeva and Calvert (2009) used diary-like measure, open-ended questions, and

survey on 92 private college students to address how much time they spent, why they invested

their time and how they interacted with each other on Facebook. Communicating with friends or

social interaction with peers were primary reasons, while having fun, taking a break from work,

and fighting boredom were the rest. Staying in touch with their friends was the same main

motivational factor for young people in Norway (Brandtzæg, Lüders & Skjetne, 2010).

How youth spent their time on Facebook is analyzed next. Pempek, Yermolayeva and

Calvert (2009) found that college students spent more time observing content on Facebook than

actually posting content. Online lurking was the most common action young people acted on

Facebook. In other words, young people prefer observing others rather on performing themselves

(posting information or even updating profiles). Using factor analysis of Facebook users' online

surveys, Joinson (2008) also found 'keeping in touch' actually comprises both social capital and

surveillance functions. Even when people were doing social investigation or social network

surfing, these implied both stalking people they know and don't know. Students in London took

stalking as a normal part of activities they did on Facebook, and even called it 'addictive' (Lewis

& West, 2009).

Madge, Meek, Wellens, and Hooley (2009) found students also took Facebook for

some sort of informal academic purpose every week, but still the use of Facebook was most

important for social reasons, not for formal teaching purposes. They thus articulated that Facebook at first was used by first year undergraduates for finding out about social events and activities. As the year progressed, however, it appeared to be increasingly used to develop more meaningful and intense online relationships and more mature forms of communication, thus becoming an integral part of university life and a student's daily routine.

Different results were demonstrated by Kim, Kim and Nam (2010). They conducted a survey of 170 students from a large western U.S. university in Hawaii and found that higher nonsocial motivations (for entertainment and pastime) may lead to greater time spent for Facebook use per week. This finding was supported by Lewis and West (2009) as well. For the group of students in their research, Facebook is best understood as a form of entertainment first, and as a means to a larger group of weak social contacts second.

1-3-2 Presentation of the self and identity

As a critical topic in youth cultural studies, presentation of the self and identity has caught researchers' attention and become a primary focus of Facebook research. Within this category, interviews and content analysis of youth's profiles are primary methods.

Authenticity of youth's identity performed on Facebook causes researchers' concern. For example, based on their self narratives, Boon and Sinclair (2009) pointed out that the

multiplicity, fluidity, and temporariness of identity raise doubts over individual authenticity because of the idealistic virtual representations of our real world selves in Facebook contain performativity and manipulation. Young people became self-conscious of their identity, digital or real, while presenting themselves. The need for integration and coherence for 'virtual identities' to play an appropriate part in higher education was urged in their research. Through accuracy criteria, ideal-self ratings, and observer ratings of young people (ages 17-22 years) in the U.S. and Germany, Back et al. (2010) conducted a quantitative study and supported the argument that people use online social network sites to communicate their personality in the real life rather than display idealized characteristics. In other words, young people are not using profiles on Facebook to promote an idealized virtual identity; instead, they are using Facebook as an efficient medium for expressing and communicating their personality in the offline world.

In another research conducted by Finn, Garner and Sawdon (2010), applying semi-structured focus group interviews, they found medical students separated their personal and professional identities on Facebook. In order to construct a professional image that is under scrutiny by others all the time, status updates they published on Facebook thereby alluded to school work to maintain a professional image. The fact that students struggled with identity negotiation from the perspective of another peer's identity was emphasized in their research.

How peers influence young people's self presentation was explored in Brandtzæg, Lüders and Skjetne (2010). Utilizing in-depth interviews, they found being part of a large network actually shapes one's self-presentation in a co-creative way because of the content and photos others published or commented on your wall. Young people care about looking good, positive, and authentic; at the same time they maintained their preferred images by untagging unpleasant photos.

Strategies that young people employ to maintain their presentation of the self are interesting to researchers. For example, applying content analysis on 63 college students' Facebook accounts in the northeastern United States, Zhao, Grasmuck, and Martin (2008) explored identity construction on Facebook. By analyzing students' profiles, they found different strategies were employed to construct 'popular,' 'well-rounded,' and 'thoughtful' as the hoped-for possible identities on Facebook. From the implicit to explicit level, strategies include self as a social actor that presents wall posts or pictures, self as a consumer that enumerates consumption preferences and cultural tastes, and first person self that narrates statements about one's self. They found youth predominantly claimed their identities implicitly rather than explicitly, and young people ''show rather than tell'' via visual photos and lists of cultural tastes. From photos that youth uploaded, and descriptions they published on profiles, group and

consumer identities were stressed over personally narrated ones. The identities constructed on Facebook are socially desirable or norm-confirming, and such 'digital selves' are real in the sense that they have real consequences for the lives of the individuals who constructed them. Chu and Choi (2010) found Chinese and American college students employed different self-presentation strategies on Facebook. The competence and supplication strategies were employed more often by Chinese students, while the ingratiation strategy was used more often by American students. They further explained the reasons as Chinese students being more likely to rely on strategies for self-enhancement with positive and favorable claims about themselves because they enthusiastically form relationships with strangers via SNSs. Conversely, American students tend to focus on the continuation of existing relationships and may be modest about their performance and show humor in self-presentation.

Conducting an in-depth qualitative analysis of the Facebook 'wall' activity of 909 undergraduate students in a U.K. university, Selwyn (2009) explored how young people performed their student identity in their wall postings. Utilizing Goffman's theory, the author argued that from students' perspective of role conflicts between their relationships with university work, teaching staff, academic conventions and expectations, Facebook serves as a 'back stage' area that youth resist and contest of the asymmetrical power relationships built into

the established offline positions of university, student and lecturer. Students' postings revealed a shared understanding of what the role of an undergraduate social scientist was in this research. Guided by a set norms of disruptive, challenging, and disengaged social identities and roles in university, students employed strategies such as the post-hoc critiquing of learning experiences and events, the exchange of logistical or factual information about teaching and assessment requirements, instances of supplication and moral support with regards to assessment or learning, and the promotion of oneself as academically incompetent and/or disengaged.

In regard to the influence of traditional markers on young people's identity, Pempek, Yermolayeva and Calvert (2009) found classic identity markers, such as religion, political ideology, and work, were selected less than media preferences, such as favorite books, music, and movies as identity markers for young people on Facebook. The majority of students indicated that posting photos helped to express who they are to other Facebook users. Multimedia resources thereby play an important role in forming youth's self performance. Doubt of the influence of traditional identity markers was demonstrated by Robards and Bennett (2011) as well. Utilizing ethnographic data collected from 32 Australian young people aged 18-27, they uncovered how young people's identities were constructed on Facebook. They found young people draw a narrative from the information presented on their profile to demonstrate structured

concepts of self-identity. While these identities can often be multiple, fluid and eclectic, they are also simultaneously coherent in these cases. Being reflexively-constructed accounts of identity, the authors argued that social network sites require individuals to piece together what they constitute as self-identity, and it is to be expected that this reflexive process will intensify the need for young people to develop a coherent sense of self in order to participate in digital culture. The main argument in this study was that the sense of belonging and identity no longer originates from a single category and is not fixed; rather, it belongs to multiple categories and in an individual-centered way. Therefore, individual-centered Facebook reflects how young people are required to negotiate an increasing complex terrain of identity that requires coherent, reflexively-constructed performances of self.

1-3-3 Interpersonal relationships

Interpersonal relationships is a significant dimension regarding how Facebook influences youth because interpersonal relationships not only affect young people's identity construction but also shape their life. Among current studies, social capital and friendship are the primary topics within this category. Methods used in research on social capital were quantitative questionnaires, while studies on friendship (Boon & Sinclair, 2009; boyd, 2006; Brandtzæg, Lüders & Skjetne, 2010; Lewis & West, 2009) were qualitative ones.

The positive effects of using Facebook to provide social capital supporting students' life satisfaction were found in research. For example, Ellison, Steinfield and Kampe (2007) conducted a survey of 286 college students of Michigan State University, with their research suggesting that intensive uses of Facebook did predict social capital accumulation, and it might provide greater benefits for users experiencing low self-esteem and low life satisfaction. Another research revealed that people who are involved in online relationships are those willing to communicate in real life, rather than the opposite; such results thus seem to justify the rich-get-richer hypothesis, which states that the internet primarily benefits extraverted individuals (Sheldon, 2008). Valenzuela, Park, and Kee (2009) conducted a random web survey of 2,603 college students across Texas and also found positive relationships between intensity of Facebook use and students' life satisfaction, social trust, civic engagement, and political participation.

As for the different strengths of social ties students maintain on Facebook, Ellison, Steinfield and Kampe (2007) found that using Facebook could maintain students' bridging social capital at college. Bridging social capital refers to external relations and weak ties, which is contrary to bonding social capital that consists of close relations, socially homogeneous groups, and strong ties. They found that White students were more likely to have bridging social capital

than non-White students.

When it comes to cross-cultural research on different types of social capital, however, results were different. For example, conducting an online survey with college-aged participants in the U.S. and China, Chu and Choi (2010) found American college students exercise a greater level of bonding social capital on SNSs than their Chinese counterparts. Cultural difference influences the formation and relative strength of ties of social capital is supported by Choi et al. (2008) as well. They found American students' SNS usage was more closely associated with bridging social capital through loosely-connected networks, whereas that of Korean students was more related to bonding social capital. The difference between individualistic values held by American students and collectivistic cultures valued by Korean students was the reason of their findings.

Another research project on social ties was carried out by Wimmer and Lewis (2010). Based on social ties documented on the Facebook pages of students at an American private college, they conducted a quantitative research on mechanisms of racial homogeneity. Racial homogeneity of young people's Facebook networks was influenced by balancing mechanisms such as the tendency to reciprocate friendships or to befriend the friends of friends, propinquity based on co-residence, and homophily regarding socioeconomic status, region of origin, and

shared cultural tastes. In their research, White students had more homogeneous Facebook friend networks than all other ethno-racial groups.

Utilizing qualitative interviews collects detailed materials of how young people are dealing with friendship issues on Facebook.

Brandtzæg, Lüders and Skjetne (2010) employed in-depth interviews to explore the interrelation among content sharing, sociability, and privacy for Facebook users in Norway. They found youth had become more sociable with more people than before using Facebook because of the social functions of the site itself and because, in many contexts, Internet-mediated communication is perceived as being safer or more transparent than face-to-face communication. However, they noted that young people had difficulties in defining "friends" on SNSs, and this argument was also supported by boyd (2006) and Lewis and West (2009).

Interviewing 16 undergraduates in London, Lewis and West (2009) explored the extent to which the nature of the Facebook site fosters particular kinds of social interaction, and how students seek to manage their Facebook "friendships." In their research, students mentioned Facebook as a supplemental communication tool. While Facebook kept them from missing social events and made it easier to start conversation topics, it raised issues of "de-friending" and "un-friending," and troublesome situations from the melding of their friendship groups. They

also found there was conflict between self-presentation and reciprocal exchange or friending. The research denoted that the architecture of Facebook worked to encourage a particular form of communication between 'friends' based on mainly weak and low-commitment ties, often gleaned from social browsing.

The same argument is also supported by Boon and Sinclair (2009). They found that Facebook, through one-to-many forms of communication, as well as empty as and phatic connection, actually created false communities of superficial relationships. Facebook as a cohort enhancer is thereby doubtful because of the limited control over what your friends send you, which could lead to difficult situations at one time or another. Therefore, loss of appropriate distance can lead to discomfort in friendships.

Current studies depict how youth construct their interpersonal relationships on Facebook, which are inevitably influenced by Facebook's architecture. Strategies youth employ to cope with the conflicts between friendships and self-presentation, and to handle troublesome situations of defining "friends" online, need to be deciphered further. In addition, why differently demographic groups form specific types of networks can only be revealed by further interviews.

1-3-4 Cultural distinction

Within this category, there are relatively fewer empirical studies. The methods these

studies used included quantitatively content analysis of students' profile information and interests. The focus of this study includes how cultural distinction is related to identity and social ties.

Zhao, Grasmuck, and Martin (2008) found young people constructed their identities on Facebook through enumerative lists of consumption preferences and cultural tastes. Users in their research were most likely to share interests and hobbies (73%) and offer some appreciated quotes (71%). A large majority of users also opted to include some of their music and movie favorites (65% of both), while somewhat fewer included favorite books (57%) and slightly less than half provided favorite TV shows (48%). By enumerating interests and favorite cultural tastes, young people claimed their identities implicitly.

Using the dataset collected from students of a private college in the Northeast U.S., Lewis, Kaufman, Wimmer, and Christakis (2008) analyzed culture preferences and how tastes are related to ties by quantitatively examining interests (favorite movies, music, and books) listed on students' Facebook profiles. They found the association between demographic similarity and cultural similarity differs tremendously by group and by taste. Females, for example, have more similarities across all tastes, while males only have more similarities in the movie preferences. Different ethnicities also have different preference types. They found White and Asian students

share only tastes in movies and in music; Latino students share only tastes in music; and mixed students constitute the only ethno-racial category that is highly similar for all observed preferences. Black students share only tastes in music but this similarity is much higher. They suggested future researchers to work on determining whether students select friends from their environment on the basis of taste similarity, or whether friendships are formed on some other criteria and only subsequently become conduits for peer influence. Wimmer and Lewis (2010) further found shared cultural tastes influenced racial homogeneity of young people's Facebook networks; that is, people who share the same cultural tastes tend to befriend each other.

Based on the research discussed above, it should be kept in mind that cultural preferences which users can choose on Facebook are provided by the consumer market and cultural industry. How consumerism shapes young people's identity and interpersonal relationships needs to be examined further. Second, the forces of cultural distinction are still missing in current studies. Third, more sophisticated dynamics of how young people express cultural distinction regarding their identity construction through wall postings and their narratives are worthy of further investigation.

1-3-5 Surveillance

Similar to the category of cultural distinction, current empirical studies that mainly

focus on surveillance are fewer than other topics discussed above as well. Most studies regarding social surveillance are related to self presentation, which was discussed above. In fact, more research regarding surveillance is theoretical (Andrejevic, 2006; Cohen, 2008; Fuchs, 2011).

Brandtzæg, Lüders and Skjetne (2010) employed in-depth interviews to explore the interrelation among content sharing, sociability, and privacy for Facebook users in Norway. They found that while young people were experiencing different types of social capital on Facebook, however, the mix of social circles caused their worries of social privacy because of the transparent sociability on Facebook. Put differently, social surveillance that results from the mix of social groups makes youth aware of their behavior and self-presentation on Facebook. While people feel excited by and are addicted to observing other users' life without revealing one's interest, Facebook friends in turn could become 'Big Brother' and control others through social surveillance. Youth thereby developed different strategies to ensure privacy. In addition to self-awareness, strategies of conformity that people share only a part of themselves without becoming too private and too persona were employed by young people.

Fuchs (2009) conducted a survey on the relationship of surveillance society and social network site usage by 674 students in Salzburg. He explored students' knowledge of economic and political surveillance regarding StudiVZ, Facebook, and Myspace. For surveillance

knowledge, he found that overall gender, class, and the urban/rural-differential are three influential factors, whereas gender, the type and extension of higher education, class, and usage frequency of social networking sites are factors that influence the degree of critical consciousness on surveillance. Compared to users of other two social network sites, critical information behavior on Facebook and knowledge about Facebook are rather small. The influence of the surveillance parameters remains limited because Facebook is not so much known, and not so much discussed in personal conversations and in the public in Salzburg.

1-3-6 Social structural factors

How social structural factors, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, shape differences in categories mentioned above is scrutinized as follows.

In terms of Facebook's demographic characteristics, race and socio-economic status actually denote users' choices between different social network sites.

For example, Hargittai (2007) found parental education, race, and ethnicity were significant predictors of choices among social network sites through analyzing the survey data collected from a freshman class at a Midwest college. White and Asian students as well as those whose parents had higher levels of education were overrepresented on Facebook while Hispanic students and those whose parents did not have a high school degree were more likely to use

MySpace. African American college students were not more likely to use Facebook or MySpace.

Boyd (2011a) also applied 'white flight' to depict how race and class shape American teens' (high school students) engagement with Facebook and MySpace. Through interviewing and observing teens across 17 states from 2004-2009, she found that choices between these two social network sites were taste markers. The network structures of teen friendship and the language that teens used to describe these sites were directly connected to race and class in American society.

Research on gender differences in Facebook usage has various results. According to the results, females are more likely than males to have an account (Kolek & Saunder, 2008; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009). While Kim, Kim and Nam (2010) found gender does not influence motivation and Facebook usage, Kolek and Saunder (2008) found women's profiles contained more photographs and more positive references to the university compared to those in men's profiles. Lewis et al. (2008) found women are more socially active and have a greater diversity of network resources; in addition, gender also has impacts on similarities of cultural preferences.

How race and ethnicity affect students' behavior on Facebook is revealed in many studies. Using the dataset of Facebook.com, Lewis et al. (2008) explored how race/ethnicity

influenced students' social relationships and sharing of cultural preferences. In their quantitative research, they found that Black students have the largest networks, and Asian students also have larger networks than White students do. All other ethno-racial groups have Facebook friend networks significantly more heterogeneous than those of White students. Meanwhile, Ellison, Steinfield and Kampe (2007) found that White students are more likely to have bridging social capital than non-White students.

Kim, Kim and Nam (2010) conducted a survey of 170 students from a large western U.S. university in Hawaii and found Caucasian respondents had significantly more Facebook friends than Asians. In a content analysis conducted by Kolek and Saunder (2008) students of color were much less likely than White students to have a photograph showing alcohol or a positive reference to alcohol or partying. Valenzuela, Park, and Kee (2009) found that minority students did not report using Facebook as often as their White counterparts did, while Kolek and Saunder (2008) found that there is no difference between White students and students of color to have an account.

As for socioeconomic status, Lewis et al. (2008) found socioeconomic status has an uniformly negative effect on network ethno-racial heterogeneity. Wimmer and Lewis (2010) also argue youth's friendships on Facebook are influenced by the intersection of race and social class.

In their research, racial homophily was explained by homophily based on socioeconomic status.

Therefore, socioeconomic status emerges as one of the important dimensions of social closure.

1-4 Context of Youth Culture Studies in Taiwan

In this section, the context of youth culture studies in Taiwan is elucidated first as the background of my research. Introducing to the brief development of youth culture studies in the West, I then articulate the trends of topics, methodologies, and interpretations of youth culture studies in Taiwan since the 1970s. Second, I outline a literature review of Facebook research in Taiwan. The same categories of Western literature review in the earlier section are applied to compare the current stage of research in Taiwan.

There has been a growing body of literature on youth cultures in the sociology of education since the 1950s. From the Chicago School[12] to Symbolic Interactionism[13], it wasn't until the CCCS was established by the University of Birmingham in 1964 that the perspective of youth culture studies was altered significantly and dramatically influenced the research in this field after the 1970s.

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[12] Chicago School stands at empirical positivism, viewing youth subcultures as deviant and anti-intellectual, such as Coleman(1961).

[13] Symbolic Interactionism emphasizes subjectivity and qualitative methods, exploring how students produce different cultures in order to adapt to the schooling system. It is more from the perspective of youths rather than adults. Hargreaves(1967) and Lacey(1970) are examples.

Cultural Studies inaugurated by CCCS maintains that "culture is ordinary" (Williams, 1989) and it is where the academic research should start. It not only erases the traditional distinctions between high culture and popular culture, but also deciphers the hidden power struggles between the domination and the subordination within popular culture through the conception of hegemony proposed by Gramsci (1971). From this perspective, youth culture is viewed in a different way. CCCS emphasizes how youths interpret, resist and reproduce the meanings of popular culture (e.g., Hall, 1980), and argues that students' resistance to the school realizes their subjectivities as well as cultural production (e.g., Willis, 1977). They concentrate both on the text and the youth. Through textual analysis, they examine texts of popular culture to identify, on the one hand, the way texts convey authors' intentions; on the other, how youths receive, interpret, and interact with those texts. Meanwhile, focusing on youths and the cultural world they create, the research inquires how youths construct meanings of popular culture in order to reveal the active relations of negotiation, resistance and reproduction with popular culture.

Youth culture studies began in Taiwan in the 1970s. In the past three or four decades, researchers have gained substantial achievements.

I began my analysis of youth cultural studies in Taiwan by developing categories to

examine research topics, methodologies and findings of related empirical research. In the following discussion, I will alternately use "youth," "students" or "adolescents" to refer to the same subjects of this study. My strategy of research was to first identify keywords, such as student culture, student subculture, youth culture, and youth subculture. Based on studies of those keywords, I gained further keywords of youth culture, including "popular culture," "comics," "novel," "popular music," "consumer culture," "internet," "online game," "hip hop" and so on. Following these keywords are searches to collect related literature.

This part is completed mainly based on research found through the Electronic Theses and Dissertations System and the Chinese Periodical Index in the National Central Library in Taiwan. I analyzed comprehensive reviews of the literature conducted empirically on youth culture.

In brief, the findings are as follows: (1) as far as the topics are concerned, they range from monistic to pluralistic; (2) in regard to the methodologies, qualitative approaches increasingly outnumber quantitative and emic etic approaches; (3) positive interpretive viewpoints gradually replace negative ones; (4) student cultures play a significant role in students' identification processes; (5) student cultures, tinted by foreign cultures, result in fluid and hybrid identities; and (6) student cultures are loci where students show their autonomy and

potential for cultural production.

1-4-1 Topics, perspectives, and methodologies

We can comprehend trends in student cultural studies by viewing research topics, perspectives, and methodologies synthetically. During the early stage of youth cultural studies, researchers stood for the etic perspective from adults. Student cultures also followed this line and were determined under dominant adult values. This research assumed that students are concerned only about studying. In other words, topics did not go beyond tasks of school and only concentrated on elements related to studies of school learning. Methodologies utilized categories of meanings and facts constructed in advance rather than from the viewpoints of students. Hence, results of early research are not authentic representations of student cultures.

More recent research provides perspectives translated from researchers to students. The emic approach of current youth cultural studies is to focus on the subjective meanings of student. This research recognizes student cultures that not only occur within the school but also come from the life experiences outside of schools— such as popular music, consumer culture, comic books, idols, street dance, skateboard culture, online games, and so on. Perspectives become pluralistic and multiple. Research methodologies are conducted through observation under natural environments, through interviews, and through ethnography, constructing a valid cultural

world that students encounter in their daily lives.

1-4-2 Interpretations

Interpretations are profoundly interrelated with the shift of research paradigms. As the etic approach of adult-centered perspectives turns to the emic approach of youth-centered ones, it recognizes the uniqueness of youth cultures and highlights the creation of cultural meanings. To adolescents, youth culture outside the boundary of school is the authentic world where they construct knowledge and invest feelings in their everyday lives. Within youth culture there exists values, norms, ideologies, and powers that dominative cultures intend to transmit. Deriving elements of culture mentioned above, youth transform these into actions that display their subjectivities, their reactions and interpretations of broader social structures, their schooling experiences, and their life conditions. The following are cultural clues revealed from recent youth cultural studies in Taiwan:

Youth culture plays a significant role in youth identity formation

Topics of student cultural studies today are variegated, coming from multiple sources such as comic books, popular music, idols, consumer culture, street dance, and so on. Activities represent different lifestyles and are an important component of the growing process. Popular cultures is an important socialized way to construct youth self identities.

Adolescence is a transition stage of personality in human beings. Within this stage, the most important goal of the individual is to establish self-identity reinforced by relations among peer groups. Taking a study on comic books, for example, Chang (2004a) contends that in the process of reading, students engage in the journey of the story through the identification of roles in the book, and this means a lot for them in the construction of self-identity. Researchers maintain that being fans of idols is a process of developing self-values, identification, and socialization among youth. Through imitating and identifying with idols worshiped by peer groups, adolescents conform to common norms shared by peer groups and receive affection connected with group members. Meanwhile, idols are "important others" for the youth, establishing goals in the future of adolescents. Consumption is also used to affirm self-identification. Cultures of street dance and skateboarding are performed in the collective form. Therefore, each group has its own ways of communication and style of dress that follows codes of identification constructed by youth. Within popular culture, students are influenced deeply by peer groups and divided into different social categories. Furthermore, by establishing connections with others, youth create feelings of identification with groups and reaffirm self-identity.

Youth culture, foreign influences, hybrid identities

It is clear that Taiwanese youth culture is colored intensely by foreign influences. Consumptions of comics is influenced by Japanese influences. Street dance, skateboard culture, and sports culture from NBA or MLB follow after American tastes. Taiwanese youth have plenty of opportunities to approach popular culture in other countries. Such foreign influences are heavily imported into Taiwan, indicating that mass media plays an active role in youth consumerism. International symbols have swept across the world of adolescents through various forms of communication. Consequently, culture-identity becomes the focus of this research.

In Taiwan, many scholars are worried about the recent phenomenon of youth's fanaticism for cultures from Japan, America or Korea. Take Japanese culture as an example. In Taiwan, products from Japan are popular en masse. However, the dominate class has ambiguous power relations with Japan. In addition, the political struggle of national identity tends to obscure local cultures (Chang, 2004a: 156). Therefore, it is worth studying youth identity in relation to youth exposure to Japanese comics, idols, and consumer culture. Accompanied by trends of cultural globalization and the effects of mass media, culture-identities of the youth become hybrid and fluid. Facing the impact of globalization, would culture-identity of youth in Taiwan confront the dilemma of "local-identity"? Do young people construct glocalized

culture-identities? Within what processes do they receive information and how do they interpret

meanings within those processes?

According to studies in Taiwan, there is the prevailing idea that Taiwanese youth are

confident in the strength of their local culture despite their idolization of Japanese culture. When

researching the Taiwanese fascination with Korean culture, studies find that only senior students

maintain a high level of consumption of cultural products but do not establish a national cultural

affinity with Korea. Popular cultures construct their status and form fluid and hybrid trends in

their culture identity. This condition means youth culture-identity has its own source and material,

and cannot be reproduced and indoctrinated arbitrarily by adults (Chang, 2004b).

Youth show their autonomy and creative potential through culture

Focusing on the findings in Taiwan, there is the common trend highlighting that the

creative potential can manifest through culture. Students from the middle class, for example, can

draw from roles in the books they read through which they can create a new story that projects

thoughts of themselves. Hence, resistant decoding of ideologies in comics is realized. This is

further exemplified by girls, who face gender biases transmitted in the novel they read but do not

agree with the presented role models. Rather, they reinterpret and transform power relations

between males and females in the story to reveal resistance toward values of patriarchy,

exhibiting uniqueness and autonomy through body. Students can consume specific symbols such as dress, popular commodities, and products that follow after their idols to emphasize self-determination, imaginary space, and symbolic meaning. In cultures of street dance, street basketball, and skateboarding, adolescents express themselves not only through their athletic skills but also through their choice of apparel.

1-5 Facebook research in Taiwan

In Taiwan, Facebook became popular in 2009, and therefore research on Facebook culture and usage emerged primarily in 2010. All relevant empirical studies reviewed are master's theses. There is one academic journal article about Facebook's influence on teenagers[14]; it is excluded, however, due to accessibility. Except for four studies that are online in full text (Chiang, 2010; Chien, 2010; Tseng, 2010; Yen, 2010), others are online-abstract-accessible only. Compared to the Western research, research on the cultural world of Facebook in Taiwan includes general motivations and behavior, and interpersonal relationships; topics of presentation of the self and identity, cultural distinction, and surveillance, however, are not studied as of yet. Social structural factors that influence young people's Facebook cultural world is addressed as

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[14] See Chou, C. (2009). The communication effects of Facebook on teenagers. *Journal of the Liberal Arts, 18*, 279-302.

well.

1-5-1 General motivations and behavior

Quantitative survey was the primary method applied in most research regarding general motivations and behavior. They found entertainment, especially games and psychological tests, was the primary reason young people joined Facebook (Chen, 2010; Chien, 2010; Lu, 2010; Tasi, 2010; Tseng, 2010; Wen, 2010). Interpersonal interaction later on came as another important motive for using Facebook (Chen, 2010; Chien, 2010; Hsieh, 2010; Lu, 2010; Tseng, 2010). Other reasons include social participation (Tasi, 2010), self- expression (Chen, 2010; Hsieh, 2010), and function features of Facebook (Chen, 2010; Tseng, 2010). Young people tend to participate passively on Facebook, rather than share contents positively (Lu, 2010).

1-5-2 Interpersonal relationships

There are three studies regarding interpersonal relationships on Facebook.

Applying questionnaires and in-depth interviews, Chien (2010) explored how males in early adulthood coped with loneliness via Facebook usage. Their motivations were social interaction and virtual company. Through applications of psychological tests, Facebook served as a place where males can catch a friend's attention without disclosing themselves directly. Through observing friends' profiles, they obtained the feeling of company, and participation in

friends' life. Males in early adulthood checked Facebook from time to time, and they primarily used interactive games, psychological tests, and the wall. Usage behavior was influenced by friend groups; that is, content they shared was based on audiences. Meanwhile, melding of friend groups provided males' self-performance with high attention from friends even though such multiple audiences restricted males' sharing content. Self-identity thereby was satisfied when images performed selectively by males were accepted by friends. Asynchronous and bantering interactions due to Facebook's architecture (e.g. wall postings and psychological test) actually conformed to male's friendship characteristics. Through using Facebook, young males positively experienced satisfaction with interactions, emotional maintenance, entertainment, information access, and self-performance when they felt lonely.

Chen (2010) observed and interviewed 36 students in the same class at a vocational college to explore online and offline interpersonal relationships influenced by using Facebook. He found that interactions on Facebook seemed to dissolve boundaries between different subgroups in this class, and therefore improve existing friendships and create new ones. Restricted by offline friendships among students, positive interpersonal relationships developed on Facebook were only partially reflected in reality.

Lu (2010) conducted a survey on 846 college students to explore relations among

extroversion, motives and behavior on Facebook, and found Facebook primarily benefited extraverted individuals.

1-5-3 social structural factors

There are two studies related to the social structure factor influencing how young people acted on Facebook. Yen (2010) found females were more likely to have Facebook accounts than males, and spent more time on Facebook than males. Tseng (2010) found males were more likely to be addicted to the internet, and to use general and community features, while females preferred games, real-time interaction, friending, and privacy features.

Regarding the level of education, Tseng (2010) found that people who had a higher level of education preferred real-time interaction, friending, and community and privacy features, while people who had a lower level of education were more likely to be addicted to the internet, and use games and general features.

In Taiwan, Facebook became popular and had rapid growth in members due to interactive games that facilitate social interactions amongst friend groups. Entertainment including interactive games and psychological tests is thereby the primary reason young people join Facebook, while keeping in touch with old friends is the principle one for Western youth. Difference in social context thereby evolves different usages and cultural worlds on Facebook

between Taiwan and the West. Current research on Facebook culture in Taiwan is in an initial

stage, and therefore studies on presentation of self and identity, cultural distinction, and

surveillance are not studied as of yet. Studies on interpersonal relationships and social structural

factors are insufficient as well.

1-6 Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 delineates the research design I applied in my project. Based in Taipei,

Taiwan, this study applied a multi-sited approach and a variety of methods including interviews,

online observations and visual analysis in order to explore how young people utilize multimedia

resources on Facebook to perform their identities and how Facebook affects their interpersonal

relationships and performs a type of cultural pedagogy. I outline the rationales for

methodological choices and reflections that arose during my research processes.

I organize the essence of my dissertation in the following two chapters, which are the

main concerns that lead college students' online practices—social norms regulating interpersonal

relationships and identity construction in the making. In each analytical chapter, I begin with

setting out the background of practices on Facebook relevant to the main topic of the chapter.

Three main theoretical concepts are interwoven in each chapter, including presentation of the self

introduced by Goffman, distinction proposed by Bourdieu, and surveillance contended by Foucault. Meanwhile, relevant theoretical concerns are discussed in each chapter as well.

Chapter 3 addresses the social norms regulating interpersonal relationships collectively shared by college students on Facebook. I examine how college students negotiate obligated sociality, un/certainty in keeping friendship and emotion expression in the mediated environment. The dramaturgical and cultural approach to interpret emotion expressions is applied in this chapter. I discuss the contradictory attitude toward and struggle for friendships online. The practices of managing the balance between publicity and privacy, collective sociality and individual identity on Facebook are analyzed as well.

Chapter 4 examines college students' identity construction worked individually and collectively on Facebook. I scrutinize how young people from two universities utilized their digital account to present what types of identities as a college student. The visual approach of photographic analysis is conducted to demonstrate how they distinguish their tastes and cultural consumption through which aesthetic practices. I suggest that online practices, both in which way they managed their digital identity and via what content they displayed in their digital trajectories of life, reflect their offline life experience and habitus resulting from their social positions.

Finally, I conclude my dissertation by addressing the major research contributions of this project and suggesting future directions for research.

Chapter 2 Research Design

In order to decipher how college students negotiate social norms of online interactions and perform their identity construction through self presentation and social interactions with peers under the surveillance of unseen audiences on Facebook, I conducted interviews, online observations and a visual approach of photographic analysis in my research. I elucidate my methodological approach and data in this chapter. I describe how I utilized the opportunities provided by the social network site Facebook while at the same time facing the challenges presented by the online environments. I also explain the struggles and reflections that emerged during my research processes. The rationales for methodological choices are discussed as well.

2-1 Field Sites

Based in Taipei, Taiwan, this study applied a multi-sited approach and a variety of methods including interviews, online observations and visual analysis in order to explore how young people utilize multimedia resources on Facebook to perform their identities and how Facebook affects their interpersonal relationships and performs a type of cultural pedagogy. Initially 36 students were recruited to participate in this project from two different universities: a public elite University A in central Taipei, a private University D in rural Taipei with relatively

inconvenient and isolated location. Of those, 34 stayed with the project throughout its entirety. In this section, I described the setting of my fields and narrate how I approached my fields and participants, in both mediated and unmediated environments.

2-1-1 Settings, time period and contacts

I selected these two institutions for two reasons. For analytical purposes, they offer similarities and differences that made for an interesting comparison to uncover social norms of online interactions shared by college students as a group, and to unveil dissimilarities of identity construction between students located in different social statuses of higher education institutions. The distribution of higher education intuitions' reputation and social status in Taiwan are unlike in the States. In Taiwan, public universities tend to enjoy higher prestige, recruit better students, receive more public funds and charge cheaper fees while private ones are inclined to receive lower reputation, enroll disadvantaged students, obtain fewer governmental money and charge double the public fees. There have been studies pointing to the correlation between university type and socio-economic status of enrolled students (e.g. Louh, 2002, 2004; Tien & Fu, 2009; Tien & Tien, 2008). In other words, students from better socio-economic statuses usually attend public universities while those from lower socio-economic statuses attend private ones.

For practical purposes, I had access and contacts at both institutions, and was familiar

with the ecology of one institution, which contributed to understanding context during the data collections and analyses.

The research period from March 2012 to January 2013, and September 2013 to September 2014 allowed me to conduct the field work for this project. The rationale for this timing was that it covered 4 entire academic semesters. During the academic calendar, data collection thus encompassed the main phases of undergraduate life, such as attending courses, preparing for assignments and group presentations, experiencing college activities, and returning from and breaking up for vacation periods. During the summer and winter vacations, data collection revealed how students spent their leisure time.

I recruited participants via the help of faculties in two universities. At University A, I recruited participants two ways, including presenting my research myself in some classes and introducing my research through the faculty in their classes. In the beginning of new semester in mid-February, I obtained permission from some faculties to recruit participants in their classes. I prepared a 5-minute oral script to introduce myself, and tell them why I was interested in what they do on Facebook, how the research process will be conducted, and what questions I might ask. I also let them know I would be happy to share my teaching and study experiences if they were interested. I also prepared a printed version with my contact information and my Facebook

account for the potential participants. Another three faculties introduced my research to their classes and those who were interested in the project left their email addresses and Facebook accounts on a sign-up sheet. Later I collected those sheets to start my first contact with participants. I shall come back to this part in the next paragraph. There were also volunteer participants from the class where I presented my research. They added me directly on Facebook. At University D, a faculty member announced my research project in his classes and had potential participants sign up at an administration staff meeting. She collected the lists and emailed their name, email addresses, and Facebook accounts.

I sent a Friend Request to each one on the sheets I collected and, to my surprise, received many prompt acceptance notices of my requests. In order to arrange which date to interview whom, I thought a group email with a BCC on the addresses could be the most convenient way. I therefore grouped my participants into two email groups according to the university. I received the first response after one to two days, and in total three participants replied to me in the first week. It made me a bit anxious. I wondered if they changed their mind because it had been a week without other responses, especially compared to their prompt acceptance of my Friend Request on Facebook. However, I did not want to appear pushy, so I decided to wait longer. The second week I received the email from Delores saying she was sorry

to read the message only now. Another 'sorry' email from Dorian arrived in my inbox during the third week. I decided to send the same message again, but this time on Facebook. I then realized it is much easier and efficient to contact them on Facebook because I always received prompt replies, just like last time I sent out my Friend Request. At the time I did not understand why, but it was good to learn, as this way made the following processes much smoother.

Later when I first met Ashleigh, she told me that she knows her friends do not check their emails. She checked it regularly because she has some 'over-age' friends from the Facebook group. They sent her information via email instead of Facebook. Her statement challenged my assumption that everyone, at least for those who have email address and have no problem using new technologies, uses email regularly as a communication tool. I knew college students are always on Facebook, but I did not know that email is outdated to them in terms of communication. I brought up the same question when meeting Dorian. He suggested that next time I can just use a public post tagging all participants or create a group and invite everyone to join, which are the common ways they usually communicate in large groups. I wondered if there might be some privacy concerns. Before I added my participants as Facebook friends, I intentionally changed my privacy setting regarding who can see my Friend List in order to keep the participants' confidentiality. In contrast to my online practice of privacy control, however, it

seemed to be no big deal to reveal their participation in my project.

I grouped participants into two separate Friend lists according to their universities, which contributed to the correspondent online environments of each. There were two purposes in doing so. First, I can easily access each participant's updates, including photos, statuses and likes, and profile. Second, I can grasp the similarities and differences of online practices both within and among these two groups. In each group, most of my participants were friends with each other, and thus many interaction practices and sharing practices of college events on Facebook were collectively performed and repeated. Switching between two online groups provided me with the sense of digital inhabitants of mediated environment among two social contexts. I thus considered my mediated fields on Facebook as two sites with boundaries of similar but still disparate social contexts, both in individuals' and institutions' dimensions.

2-1-2 Participants

My concern in this research is whether the debates on structural factors, mainly social class, still play significant roles to which extent and in which ways, if any, in shaping young people's identity construction. Identity performed on Facebook also involves the assumptions of whether cultural consumption in the online environment can be global-oriented and class-free due to the architecture of affordance sites. Much research has supported the fact that practices

which individuals perform on Facebook are affected by and interwoven with their offline social contexts. The offline social groups and social contexts thus have to be scrutinized. I therefore recruited participants from the same department of a public and a private university to examine the effect of socio-economic status on identity construction on the one hand and to be able to trace their offline social groups and social contexts on the other hand.

In total there were 34 participants in the project. Among them, 20 participants were recruited from University A, including 12 females and 8 males. Fourteen participants were recruited from University D, including 7 females and 7 males.

I assigned each interviewee a pseudonym under the consideration of gender, socio-economic status, and the university they were attending. Those who attended elite public university A received the names starting with the letter A. Those who attended private University D received the names starting with the letter D. The letters A and D also indicate the stratification of universities. The socio-economic status of each participant was referred to by their parents' occupation and educational level. Most students at University A came from better socio-economic backgrounds, except for Allan, Adam and April. Most students at University D came from lower socio-economic status except for Duncan, Dustin and Darcy. The first names of better socio-economic status were chosen from lists discussed in the U.S. online forum. The

other names were taken from the alphabetical lists of the most popular male and female names in the U.S. For a list of the participants, see Appendix I.

2-2 Methods and Data

There were various sources of data for the project, including semi-structured in-person interviews, online observation, and visual analysis of photographs. Using multiple data sources allowed me to benefit from their strengths and also minimize the effects of their weaknesses. I started collecting the data in March 2012 through September 2014, except for the time period of February 2013 to August 2013. The data contributing to the analysis of my dissertation consists of interviews and digital content produced by participants on Facebook.

2-2-1 Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants in person in order to learn about their perspectives on online practices, experience of college life, meanings of Facebook and facebooking, identity as a college student, future plans and their reflection on those dimensions.

I designed two types of interviews to achieve my research objectives: a background interview and a reflective interview. The aim of the background interview was to gather

demographic information and find out more about each student's personal narratives from their

day-to-day practices on Facebook. The demographic information was gathered in this interview,

if they were willing to divulge it. Based on the supplied demographic information and personal

narratives relevant to their Facebook practices, I located interviewees' social positions and

related to the way they performed their identity and interacted with their peers online.

I conducted reflection interviews at the end of the semesters. Interviews at the end of

the semester allowed participants to reflect upon the meanings of interactions online regarding

undergraduates' life. It also allowed me to address follow-up questions and issues that had arisen

over the course of the semester. While background interviews provide context and elucidate on

personal narratives of who I am, what made reflection interviews unique is that it allowed

interviewees to make sense of their Facebook activities and provided a reflexive analysis of

themselves.

Interviews took place at locations convenient to participants. I usually conducted

interviews with University A participants on campus, as there was some private space available

in their department building. Participants usually took the gap between their courses to be

interviewed. Interviews with University D participants were conducted in various spots due to

the location of the university. Some participants chose to be interviewed at their department

building, some chose the café in the library, and some chose the fast food restaurant outside campus. Still others actually chose University A's campus because the location was convenient for where they were after their classes. In other words, most participants at University D did not stay around campus when they did not have class. The main time they had company of their classmates was in class, which also influenced their online practices.

Each interview lasted about 60 to 90 minutes. Sometimes the interviews lasted longer when there was more than one participant. Most participants were interviewed for both background and reflective interviews. With the interviewee's permission, the interviews were all audio-recorded digitally for later transcription. The recordings were transcribed for analysis. I also took quick interview notes to document the special impression of interviewees and the notable topics during the interview to reconstruct the context at that moment (Marshall, 1981). The transcription sheet is shown in Appendix II. The language used in the interviews was Mandarin. I transcribed all interviews in Chinese first, to maintain the completeness of data without premature judgment of data analysis (Briggs, 1986; Seidman, 2006). Original description and coding were in Chinese. I then translated the sentences into English, sometimes slightly modified in order to make cultural relevance and contexts more understandable to English readers.

I also had informal private messages with some participants on Facebook and other instant messages via the app "LINE." I used private messages on Facebook to inquire further regarding their online practices when something new happened online that interested or confused me. Through the interactions on Facebook, I also included the way they interact with others on the mediated environment. Once I sent a private message to Amelia, she replied to me right away to let me know she would write me her thoughts when she got back home because she was at work. How they take Facebook seriously and react at all times again surprised me. For those private message initiated by participants, they were more related to participants' personal struggles in their academic choices, future paths, gender identity or relationships. This type of interaction was more like friendship or consultation. It happened to me that more participants from University D tended to have more questions of their future plans while those from University A liked to share their worries but did not search for the answers. This information served as another clue of individuals' offline worlds. I used those conversations that were relevant to the academic choices, future paths and online practices in my dissertation with their permission.

I intentionally use participants' words in my analysis to represent their perspectives and dynamics of interaction and power relations embedded in their online practices. The

interviews are the main data that led the focus of online observations and visual analysis, as well

as shaped the framework of the research results.

2-2-2 Online observations and data

I immersed myself in the mediated environment where participants performed their

identity construction and interpersonal interactions. Generally, I spent three to eight hours per

day online, depending on my interview schedule. Every day I browsed participants' updates on

Facebook at least in three time periods, based on the rhythm of college students' day-to-day life.

First, I observed their practices in terms of textual and photographic updates in the morning in

order to catch up what they posted the night before. I have learned from my participants, and also

by observation, that young people are very active on Facebook through until midnight because

this was often the time they were back to their living places. On the one hand, they easily have

access to the Internet, while on the other hand, they are also doing assignments throughout the

day. The second time period was in the afternoon after two due to their lunch break. Participants

either used their smart phone or spent the time at the computing center on campus during the

lunch break. They thus tended to be relatively active on Facebook during the lunch break. The

third time period was in the late evening. Participants usually were in front of their computer

after dinner time, and spent their time on Facebook until their bed time. This was their most

active time on Facebook. Also as a Facebook user, I browsed participants' updates from time to time on my smart phone wherever there was Wi-Fi.

I examined their profile data and status updates to understand how they perform their self presentation. From March 2012 to December 2012, I mainly examined their profile data and documented their profile and cover photos for the purposes of both interviews and later visual analysis. I also browsed their status updates during this time period to delve into the practices and main themes in their online social interactions and identity construction. Categories of the main practices of identity construction gradually emerged over time.

Together with the interview data, from September 2013 to September 2014, I then decided to focus on, first, the triangulation of the social norms and identity construction revealed from their interviews, and second, the visual analysis of group photographs they shared, as both there were rich cultural clues in their group photos and participants expressed heavy concerns about and interests in their and others' group photos. I will explain more details of visual analysis in the following section. Observation notes were made on their update practices observed during the day.

During my interviews, I also discussed their profiles with them and inquired into their thoughts on how they arrange and perceive their accounts. Participants also showed me their

accounts and at the same time explained to me how they use Facebook day-to-day if they were

willing to.

Facebook itself has extensive functions of archival both on every individual's profile

and in Friend List groups. I could access the observation data as long as my participants did not

delete or did not restrict me from seeing the content. I thus only manually captured the digital

content that was relevant to the interview data via the screen images produced by the program

Jing for in-depth analysis.

2-2-3 Visual analysis of photographs

I decided to conduct a visual approach of photographs due to the importance of images

played in participants' identity construction, which was disclosed during the interview and online

observation processes.

Visual research methods have gained more and more attention in social science.

"Pictorial turn," the paradigm shift coined by Mitchell (1995), has recognized that, on the one

hand, the "consensus that images should be analyzed in a different way from verbal signs," while

on the other, "the awareness of an increasing importance of the visual in contemporary societies"

(Baetens & Suediacourt, 2011, p.591). In order to establish "methodology depth and

long-existing classics in the field," some scholars have tried theorizing on the methodology.

Pauwels (2010, 2011), for example, proposes a framework built around three themes, including origin and nature visuals, research focus and design, and format and purpose. There are diverse methods covered by the visual approach. Despite the diversity of visual research methods, current journals (e.g. *Visual Studies*, *Journal of Visual Culture*), handbooks (e.g. Margolis & Pauwels, 2011; Heywood & Sandywell, 2012) and reviews of visual research methods focus mostly on the qualitative approach and are dominated by methods using photography (Rose, 2013, p.25).

Photographs are commonly used by college students on Facebook to manage their self presentation and are often regarded as a "visual autobiography" (e.g. Emmison & Smith, 2000) or "lifelog" (e.g. Selka, 2014). The use of self-generated photographs can be seen as a natural extension to the traditional verbal inquiries into the self-concept (Emmison & Smith, 2000, p.36), which reveals the personal memory, relationships, expressiveness of aesthetics and self-representation (Van House, 2011). Photographs have been studied as everyday objects in terms of codes of gender, class and power, as Van House (2011, p.126) argues, and as an aspect of consumer culture, leisure and identity. Through visual approaches, how individuals construct their identity construction on Facebook via cultural consumption and representation of certain values, aesthetics and ideologies, which are offered in the mediated environment, can be revealed.

How certain readings of culture are mobilized and legitimate through multiple sources thus can be scrutinized (Spencer, 2011).

Furthermore, the illuminated aspects of habitus can also be investigated and uncovered. Many researchers follow the method applied by Bourdieu (1984) in his famous research, in which he illustrates the effects of habitus by presenting the patterns of consumption, which contribute to lifestyles. By "uncovering patterns and regularities" instead of "exploring in detail why certain choices are made and others are not," Bourdieu explains "such patterns in relation to specific generative principles and the taste for necessity, which makes a virtue of that which people are realistically able to achieve" (Sweetman, 2009, p.497). As Bourdieu and Bourdieu (2004) suggest in their research, via the method of photographic analysis, the decisions about image content, aesthetics and display actually reflect and reproduce the class.

In my research, the visual analysis of photographs is to examine the symbolic meanings embedded in the photos college students consciously uploaded and displayed on Facebook to present themselves. Participants' profile photos and cover photos discussed in the interviews were further analyzed. I intentionally examined the group photos shared by participants to decipher the collective images of the two groups, which were constructed through their everyday college life via Facebook photos. Inspired by Bourdieu's theoretical concepts and

methods, the visual analysis was conducted as supplementary data to the interviews and online

observations in order to demonstrate the patterns of cultural consumption and taste among two

groups of participants that contribute to their identity construction performed on the mediated

environment on the basis of experiences lived offline.

My qualitative analysis of photos was guided by Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of

distinction and taste, the emergent themes from my interview and online observation data, and

the partial analytical components employed in Mendelson and Papacharissi's (2011) analysis of

American college students' Facebook photos. I have elaborated Bourdieu's theoretical concepts

both in chapter 1 and this section. The emergent themes from my interview and online

observation data included the "markers of peer groups" and "markers of identity making" among

two universities and "gatherings at restaurants." In Mendelson and Papacharissi's (2011)

research, they adopt Chalfen's five components of home mode imagery to analyze young

people's photo albums on Facebook from a visual anthropologist's perspective. These

components include "participants," "topic," "setting," "message form" and "code" (Chalfen,

1987; cited from Mendelson & Papacharissi, 2011, p.257). For my research purposes, I adopted

setting—"when and where a particular communication event takes place" (p.257), message

form—"activities and behaviors subjects were pursuing in the photos" (p.262), and code—"the

characteristics defining a particular message form or style of image construction and composition, focusing on aesthetics" (pp. 257, 264) in my analysis because the "participants" were defined as "group" and "topic" based on the emergent themes from my interview and online observation data.

2-2-4 Making sense in two sites

In order to equip myself with better understanding of young people's college life, I also immersed myself in the physical environments of two field sites. I worked as a part-time administrative assistant in the department office at University A from February 2012 to June 2013. I thus got the opportunities to observe how they interacted with peers and faculty in their daily life during my working hours in the office. I also attended some of their departmental events, such as the mid-term party, sporting events, and summer camp for high school students.

I intentionally spent some time before and after the interviews at University D in order to get the sense of the campus atmosphere. I also joined students' carpool of commute. Sometimes I took the routes with public transportation, as many of my participants did. I also joined their discussion groups of some courses from time to time. During my interview break, I stayed in their department office to observe how they interacted with peers and faculty in the day-to-day life.

Engaging in the two physical sites helped me to make sense of their college life and to situate my analysis of their online practices in a closer relation to their offline reality.

2-3 Positioning myself in my research

How my peers and I make sense of and the concerns we hold about our online practices are different from my participants. My academic training, my social identity in terms of my gender, age, position and corresponding perspective towards the social world, and my standpoints of ontology, epistemology and methodology all shape how I collect and interpret the research data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Only through constantly being aware of and reflecting on my social position in the research can improve my research quality. I have been a Facebook user since 2007 in order to keep connections with friends who were studying in the States at the time. This experience prepares me as a habitant on Facebook, meaning I am also a member of Facebook culture, but in another group with a different age and as an oversea graduate student. However, it was always challenging through the research process to maintain the attitude of strangeness (Neuman, 2006) and to switch perspective between insider and outsider (Mercer, 2007) in order to profoundly collect and interpret the data.

While sensitivity to the social relations during the processes of interviews and

interactions contributes to a better quality of research (Kvale, 2007), some of my interviews in the beginning were not that smooth due to the different criteria my participants and I held toward the relation between us in the research. I considered them as participants while they regarded me as a senior in school who also happened to be a Facebook friend. My politeness and formal attitude in our interactions did not make interviews smoother. My participants were bothered and acted a bit embarrassed. At the same time, I also felt a bit uneasy with their passionate and close way in treating a senior as a friend in school. The questions of "are we friends" and "can we be which type of friends" kept running in my head. The awkwardness disturbed the interview process and made me anxious. With the emotion of frustration and anxiety, I wondered how to handle the relationships with these college students. Before I found a satisfying answer, I took on a practical and reflective attitude to recognize and document the conflicts and reflect on the gain and loss in the research process to further advance my research ability (Luttrell, 2000).

2-4 Data Analysis and Chapters

Data analysis was an ongoing process and began along with the transcription of interviews, as well as digitalization of online observation notes and visual analysis. I initially crafted profiles for each student via the background interviews and their Facebook profile examinations as a

starting point of data management and analysis. Conducting data collection and preliminary data

analysis is helpful because it enables the researcher to focus and shape the study as it proceeds

through consistent reflection and attention to what the data is saying (Merriam, 1998).

Throughout the period of the research process, I wrote analytical and reflexive memos while

systematically coding the data. I performed constant comparisons, and recoded the raw data after

obtaining preliminary codes. How to meaningfully analyze the field data with theoretical and

practical sensitivity is the beginning of the challenge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Continuous

reflection on the data, the research process and my personal perspective of the research topic

allow me to generate possible themes, refine the data analysis and better direct my attention and

focus (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

In Chapter 3, I examine the social norms regulating college students' interactions and

interpersonal relationships in the mediated environment. I use interview data concerning why

they used Facebook and how they interacted with peers in their day-to-day practices and the

online observation data regarding how they managed their posts on the Wall in order to negotiate

the struggles between publicity, privacy and belonging. My analysis focuses on how college

students deal with the struggles and contradictions resulting from obligated sociality and an

individual's choices of privacy and identity construction in the mediated environment.

In Chapter 4, I analyze how college students perform self-presentation and impression management individually and collectively on Facebook in relation to their different social positions. I combine interview data about the practices college students conducted while they crafted and maintained their profile spaces with a visual analysis of the group photographs they displayed to the public on their Wall. Some theories from visual studies have been applied. The interview data I use also includes their unmediated college life experience and future plans, as well as reflections on their mediated practices on Facebook. My analysis substantially addresses through which cultural consumption different groups of college students demonstrated what types of self-images online.

Chapter 3 Social Norms

In this chapter, I address the social norms that regulate interpersonal relationships and are collectively shared by college students on Facebook. My objective is to analyze how college students interpret and negotiate obligated sociality, un/certainty in keeping friendship and emotion expression in the mediated environment. I lay out my participants' motivation for using Facebook as the context in which the social norms are collectively formed. The dramaturgical and cultural approach to interpret emotion expression is applied in this chapter. I discuss the contradictory attitude toward and struggle for friendships in the mediated environments. The practices of managing the balance between publicity and privacy, collective sociality and individual identity on Facebook are emphasized.

3-1 Behind the Motivation

In this section I examine the motivations for using Facebook among college students in Taiwan. These motivations are the social contexts of social norms maintaining interpersonal relationships on Facebook as I will enunciate later in section 3-2 of this chapter.

3-1-1 Changing way of communication

Facebook became popular in Taiwan in 2009. For most Taiwanese college students, the

first reason they logged onto Facebook is because of the games and apps, which is different from American students who created their profiles for the purpose of keeping social networks with old and current friends (Brandtzæg, Lüders & Skjetne, 2010; Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield, 2006; Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009). In the beginning, Facebook was mainly time-killing entertainment (Chen, 2010; Chien, 2010; Lu, 2010; Tasi, 2010; Tseng, 2010; Wen, 2010), and Taiwanese college students thus used Facebook more frequently only when they had too much time during their winter or summer breaks.

As Facebook has gained popularity among Taiwanese college students over the years, the motivation for logging onto Facebook for a younger generation has slightly changed due to the fact that the ways people used it in their everyday practices gradually have influenced and changed young people's campus life. This statement can be demonstrated by putting together the interview data from fourth-year participants and first-year participants. Most fourth-year interviewees shared the same experience that in their second year they started using Facebook often to check friends' profiles and release emotions. Later on they started creating discussion groups on Facebook for course assignments, which has become common and popular in college students' everyday life.

For the first-year interviewees, on the other hand, they emphasized the importance of

campus-related discussion groups as the main reason they have to use Facebook in college. As Albert said, "Facebook is getting more and more important for college students because many things are discussed there. You have to be there for assignments discussions." Adeline also added that "in college, you realize that they post important announcements in the Facebook groups, we discuss important affairs of our cohort and department there. Or stuff of extracurricular activities is also posted and discussed there."

The shifted focus of Facebook usage indicates that "the medium is the message" because it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action (McLuhan, 1997). As new social media sites change young people's social life, individuals' usages and engagements also reconfigure the meaning of the site in their day-to-day life. Young people appropriate communication tools for different purposes and in different ways. Email, for example, is never considered by young people to be an efficient way to communicate with their friends. As Doyle explained,

> With interactional functions on Facebook, it's easy to communicate with friends
>
> and to know the assignments, especially with those in other departments because
>
> we don't have so many common courses together. You can also send files. No one
>
> is using email, so I don't really check my email. You check your Facebook every

day, every hour, and can download files right away, anywhere. But you don't

check your email always, and you don't want to wait for other people to check

their email.

Moodle, another example, is not as convenient as Facebook to discuss group projects with

classmates from different departments in different classes. For Andrew,

Facebook is just like another version of Moodle, but no one is on Moodle, you

even need to log in for Moodle. Facebook as a platform people can easily discuss

and comment on group projects. It's hard to schedule the same time with group

members outside of department, we have different course schedules, but you have

many group projects with different members. They don't really call, I just stay on

Facebook always, in case they contact me for some questions or revisions, then

they know I do care about projects.

His quote implies that staying on Facebook is a default in their day-to-day college life. It is

assumed that everyone is "there." While many studies have discussed the disturbances caused by

context collapse on Facebook (e.g. boyd, 2006; Lewis & West, 2009), for my participants,

staying connected on Facebook with different groups of friends was regarded as the most

convenient and practical way in terms of study purposes. Moodle is only for "assignment

submission." "Even professors are not on Moodle," added by Araminta. Another reason to use

Facebook instead of Moodle on study matters was the feeling of connectivity. Albert said,

> It's easier for others to reach you if you are always on Facebook, I know it slows
>
> down your writing, you just chat with friends when they message you. But you
>
> can know what they are doing this moment, it feels like you are still with your
>
> friends when you are home…

The instantaneous-interaction functions provided by Facebook's architecture have become the

primary way of communication in order to connect with each other for many offline manners.

College students rely heavily on the communication via Facebook to manage their study work

and campus activities. At the same time, the synchronous dynamics of friends' updates further

provide them a feeling of "in the same context," and erase the physical distance in the offline

world. Inhabiting Facebook is thus a necessary way to build a smooth relationship with the core

elements of college life—study, campus activities and friends.

3-1-2 More separated peer groups, less connected belongings

Using Facebook to keep connections with old friends is common; however, to keep

connections with current friends who are physically around you means another thing.

Many interviewees expressed their nostalgia for the past when they felt closer to friends

in high school. College life makes them feel more distant from peers, compared to the life in high school. Dustin said,

> I feel that there are many small groups in my class in college, it's not like in high school you were with all classmates in one class. You studied together and experienced life together. In college, you don't know what's going on with other groups of your classmates, so I Facebook. I feel college students are more distant…

"Distant college-student" was echoed by Doyle, who said, "Friendships in college are not so united, we have so few time together, everyone has his own groups. People are not so united."

"Divided groups of friendships" were also mentioned by first-year interviewees. Arielle, for example, said, "Compared to high school, you don't see that person every day, you don't know what happens to other people." In order to "keep common chatting topics when you see each other," said Adeline, and "show your concerns," said Agatha, Facebook thus bridges the physical gap of friendship by providing a virtual space for connections. Hence, "you feel like you are still connected, you still have interactions with them," said Diamond.

What were emphasized from these quotes are the lack of unity and the importance of connectivity with classmates in their college life. Taiwanese college students, unlike high school

students, have different class schedules. On the other hand, there are more separated peer groups, which results in the sense of distance toward friendship. By checking Facebook, young people can know what is going on in other friends' life as well as obtain the connectivity discussed before. Accordingly, Facebook contributes to the sense of belonging to their cohort.

3-2 Social norms of maintaining interpersonal relationships

In this section, I examine how Taiwanese college students interpret and negotiate the social norms of maintaining interpersonal relationships in the mediated environment, under the condition that they mainly use Facebook for the purpose of schoolwork and to maintain their belonging

3-2-1 Obligated sociality: Pleasure and pressure

While Facebook provides a platform to facilitate sociality via interactive functions, for a college student, to manage interpersonal interactions is not as fun as many adults might think. In the following, I examine how participants interpret, negotiate with and struggle against the rule of obligated sociality on Facebook.

Technology has changed the way of communication, and further affected people's day-to-day life. Facebook has been used heavily by college students in Taiwan, especially for the

purposes of study-related tasks and extracurricular activities, as I have discussed above. Since

everyone is on Facebook, young people expect individuals are always reachable via Facebook.

They accordingly assume that individuals are responsive, especially for "the important things."

Desiree stated that she "always checks and replies to the notices of assignments and class-related

affairs" due to the fact that if someone does not respond, s/he damages his/her face. As Albert

explained, they regard those who do not respond as,

> …irresponsible and annoying, cos everyone knows that you should know that you
>
> have to respond, and we can see you have read it already.

Individuals are obligated to respond to the notices regarding their school work. Albert's quote

denotes the common rule and the obligate characteristic of social interaction. As Goffman (1967,

p.5) reveals in the beginning of his book, "Every person lives in world of social encounters,

involving him either in face-to-face or mediated contact with other participants." Once an

individual is in a social encounter, "the other participants will assume that he has more or less

willfully to take a stand" (ibid.). In order to maintain the "face," the positive social value during

a particular contact, individuals must follow a legitimate institutionalized line to accomplish this

interaction (ibid.). Responding to the notice is what other participants in this online interaction

assume and expect an individual to do.

The architecture of Facebook facilitates practices of collective surveillance. By making

people's behavior transparent and easily seen, the online environment thus prompts individuals

under higher pressure to conform even more to "continuous presence" (Goffman, 1959) in order

to perform what other participants expect. On the other hand, the internalized panopticon of

constant gaze by an invisible audience online contributes to disciplined individuals, which

accomplishes normalization of the individuals and legitimation of the norm (Foucault, 1979).

Furthermore, schoolwork and events were densely discussed on Facebook. Individuals

had no choice but to follow the rule as Annabelle described,

> I thought about not using Facebook. But later on everyone told me that there is
>
> lots information posted on it, if you don't follow or don't see that post, you might
>
> delay everyone's working schedule. I feel that nowadays everyone is used to
>
> updating information of or announcing team work on Facebook groups.
>
> Sometimes it's due tomorrow! It feels like if you don't check Facebook often, you
>
> might miss something. Sometimes I feel myself being controlled by it, annoying
>
> sometimes.

In order to maintain their sociality, individuals have to perform in conformity to other's

expectations within interactional rituals (Goffman, 1967). Obligated sociality as common

knowledge that intersubjectively prevails among young people, individuals thus have to obey so they can accomplish interactions smoothly. Following this context, students feel obligated to check their Facebook often, in case they miss information regarding their schoolwork.

Another reason to always stay tuned is related to belonging. Revealed by most female interviewees, they shared the same anxiety about missing their close friends' posts. As Adeline explained of the tension between her and her group friends,

Usually after midnight people post a lot. It happened to me that I didn't read her update because I went to bed early. Everyone in the group but me knew her story. My friends seem to think that everyone in the group should know what they have posted and read them. Then I feel the pressure of Facebook. Like, if I don't pay attention to your Wall, it means that I don't care about you. But, still, when it comes to the belonging of a group, you need to know what happened to everyone, otherwise you are an outsider…I am afraid of missing something, anything.

Anxiety is part of new connectivity as Turkle (2011, p.242) articulates in her research. The pressure resulting from using new technology to keep friendship is also common in the Japanese youth (Abe, 2014), and is confirmed by Chinese and Hong Kong college students as well when I had a chance to share my research in a class at Peking Normal University in China.

One struggle the Taiwanese college students face on Facebook is between their own privacy and belonging. For American teens in boyd's (2008, p.176) research, "the pressure to participate" is about signing up on social network sites. For my participants, the pressure results from surrendering their privacy concerns for the sake of belonging to their peer groups. Many young people were like Arielle when she said,

> In the beginning I thought the function of check-in was terrible, why do you reveal where you are at in public? But, if we go out together and everyone is using check-in without tagging you in the group, that's weirder. I mean, we do go out together, but you are excluded, you feel disappointed for sure. So even though I feel it is strange to expose your whereabouts to public, I still think they have to count me in.

Most participants did not alter their privacy settings because they thought "it's too complicated" or "I have nothing to hide from my friends." They applied another strategy to manage who can access what they consider as "private" on Facebook, as I will discuss in section 3-3-3. Similar to this struggle is the pressure of "remembering to include everyone/not forgetting anyone." Denise, who once forgot to tag friends in her group pictures, was doubted of "the sincerity of friendship." Audrey also revealed her "worries about forgetting to tag friends in a post" because "friends will

question if you really want to hang out together or not." Further, she was anxious about "the name ordering" that appeared on a post "because it might indicate the hierarchy of friendship." How they minded the tagging practices underlines the importance of both sociality and maintaining their obligations.

When individuals confront the choice between personal image and sociality, presenting a desirable image usually is central to young people's impression management. For Taiwanese college students, however, sociality concerns them much more. Annabelle's quote demonstrates this struggle finely.

…Sometimes I look unattractive in those group pictures, like, the volleyball game just ended, I looked just exhausted with hair disheveled…you probably could remove the tag but you definitely feel embarrassed. They tag you but you remove the tag, it's awkward! I at the most comment like 'can you guys not tag me in this type of photos, I look bad!' I don't remove tags though. Compared to looking ugly in friends' photos, I am more concerned about hurting friends' feelings. It's their right to tag you, you can't remove tags. You can only, like, another time I had to write a very formal, serious message in case I hurt my friend's feelings, I apologized to him seriously…

Her narration was echoed by Desiree, who also does not remove tags because "it is not polite to your friends," especially if the photo portrays the image that "we are a happy group together," added by Dianne. As for the politeness, Darell explained the reason is that "they are your friends, so they have the rights to tag you, you have to respect this." Unlike young people in Norway, who maintain their preferred images by untagging unpleasant photos on their Wall (Brandtzæg, Lüders, & Skjetne, 2010), Taiwanese college students, put their sociality on top of personal identity work and an individual's privacy concerns.

3-2-2 Un/certainty in keeping friendship

Based on the discussions above, through the struggles between collective sociality and an individual's choice of privacy and identity work, the importance of maintaining yourself in a peer-group is depicted. The phenomenon reveals how Taiwanese college students give priority to friendship. The significance of friendship cannot be overemphasized due to another norm—never unfriend anyone on Facebook. In the following, I discuss the normative rule of keeping friendship on Facebook and examine struggles and contradictions when young people confront and interpret the norm.

The quote from Dianne authentically expresses participants' attitude toward unfriending someone on Facebook.

I don't feel good to unfriend people, it is like, you are going to do something huge

to your friends, sort of, I don't know, I never thought about unfriending people.

The considerations of friending people are already complicated, as boyd (2008) shows in her

research on American teens. In her research, one reason teens collect friends is as a marker of

status. This situation, however, does not quite fit the college students in Taiwan. In her quote,

Dianne expressed her uncertainty and bad feelings when she was asked about unfriending. For

American teens, adding many friends might be a symbolic display of popularity (ibid.). On the

contrary, my participants actually revealed their doubt about the definition of friendship while

struggling to not unfriend people. As Darcy described,

Some FB friends are friends of friends that I don't really know, but I will not

unfriend them because it is even much more strange to unfriend someone. I don't

hold any grudge against you, but at the same time I don't know the point to keep

you there … I planned to unfollow those friends, but it is not polite…

Ashleigh also emphasized that "you should not arbitrarily unfriend people" even though the

friendship with "those redundant people on the friend list is tricky." On the one hand, young

people are bothered by adding acquaintances as "friends" who they meet only on occasion; on

the other hand, it is still "horrible" to unfriend those who are already on their friend lists. As

Andrew explained,

> The person will automatically appear on your suggested friend list. It will be so
>
> embarrassing if you run into that person someday on campus. I feel it is not polite
>
> to unfriend someone. People were kind to invite you to the group on Facebook,
>
> then if you unfriend them afterwards, it's a bit that, not okay.

In his quote, the unease came both from online and offline. Facebook's architecture, the online

suggested friend list, automatically reminds people "who is not your friend yet." Although the

original purpose might be to help people find their friends, it becomes troublesome if the

friendship was there before and now is cancelled. Besides, friendship online is attached to and

influential on offline daily life. What has happened online is reproduced and discussed offline

(Leander & McKim, 2003). Like the American teens in boyd's (2008) research and British

undergraduates in Lewis and West's (2009) research, participants feel it is discomforting and

socially inappropriate to delete people on their friend lists. The symbolic meaning of confirming

a friend request online concretizes their friendship with an acquaintance offline. Therefore, for

Taiwanese college students, the meaning of unfriending someone on Facebook no longer only

exists in the online space. In other words, the meaning penetrates from young people's Facebook

world to their day-to-day campus life. They have to manage the offline social consequences of

unfriending someone online.

For some interviewees, never unfriending anyone was always true even when they were abused by friends. Dorian, for example, was disliked and complained about publicly on Facebook by some of his friends. Obviously he was upset by this situation when he told the story. However, when it came to unfriending, he insisted,

Why unfriend? You have confirmed their friend requests, then why unfriend?

Unless it is too over, like, someone keeps sending you game invitation and

bombing you with nonsense updates. In principle you do not unfriend people, you

keep them as possible as you can…

The reasons he provided for unfriending someone seem confusing. It was only because he was deleted by his friends due to the same reason. However, the context was quite different, as I will discuss in the later section. Further, he was the only one among all participants who ever mentioned these trivialities. Usually if the same situation happened, you just "unfollowed" these friends, as Arthur and Dwayne both suggested.

Unfriending therefore means a formal breakup, and can only be justified after going through a long and unbearable process of friendship abuse. Ashleigh finally unfriended her classmates who had always been in the assigned group for an assignment project for the entire

four years. They tended to leave her to finish whole projects alone every time. She had complained many times and always posted some euphemistic posts in hopes they would take up their duties. One day they posted direct fights against her on Facebook. Afterwards, they also phoned her to complain that they are also busy. Only after these fights had she "felt legitimate" to unfriend these friends.

The rule of never unfriending a friend indicates the certainty of friendship on Facebook once you confirmed the friend request. At the same time, struggles for keeping those who are not really "friends" reflect the uncertainty of how to define friendship. The practices of unfriending are interpreted flexibly.

3-2-3 Cultural dimension of emotion expression on Facebook

Expressing emotions on Facebook is almost the most popular status update amongst participants. Some studies have demonstrated relevant results of the emotional function of Facebook usage (e.g. Ellison, Steinfield & Kampe, 2007; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009) or how emotion expression on social network sites is performed (e.g. Köhl & Götzenbrucker, 2014).

I have taken up the dramaturgical and cultural approach [15] to interpret emotion

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[15] In Turner and Stets'(2005) first book *Sociology of emotion*, they used the term "dramaturgical and cultural" to name this approach, while in their journal article, *Sociological theories of* human emotions published in 2006 they used the term "dramaturgical" theories instead. Later on in the co-edited Handbook of the sociology of emotion,

expressions managed by Taiwanese college students on Facebook for two reasons. First, my intentions are to reveal the meaning of social norms shared by a certain group, how these norms further regulate individuals' interactions, and how individuals negotiate and apply the norms in their day-to-day interaction practices on Facebook. Second, compared to other four theoretical approaches to the sociological analyses of emotion, classified by Turner and Stets (2005, 2006a, 2006b),[16] dramaturgical and cultural theories "emphasize the importance of culture in defining which emotions are to be experienced and expressed in situations," and reveal how "emotion culture constrains the actions of individuals on a stage in front of audiences, and yet individuals do have some degree of flexibility to engage in strategic actions" (Turner & Stets, 2006a, p.27).

In this section, I mainly apply the concepts of expression rule and emotion management proposed by Hochschild (1979) to analyze how college students manage their emotive experience posted on Facebook in the contexts of shared norms. The culture of emotions refers to feeling and expression rules and shared ideas about how to interpret emotions (Fields, Copp, & Kleinman, 2006, p.166). What people typically regard as "natural" in terms of emotion

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"cultural" theory was chosen as the chapter title. Bericat(2012) used "cultural" approach to refer to Turner and Stests (2005, 2006a)' classification in her article Emotion on Sociopedia.isa. I purposely use "dramaturgical and cultural" approach both to credit Turner and Stets' first contribution and to emphasize my analytic foci.

[16] Other four approaches include symbolic interactionist, interaction ritual theories, power and statues theories, exchange theories. More details of each approach can be found in Turner and Stets (2005, 2006a, 2006b) and Bericat (2012).

expression is actually shaped by social conventions and cultural norms. Expression rules focus

on the external demonstration of emotions, which function expressively and communicatively

(Bericat, 2012). In order to understand the "social ordering of emotive experience," Hochschlid

argues to analyze "secondary acts performed upon primary emotions" (ibid. p.552). What she

suggests is to examine "how social factors affect what people think and do about what they feel"

(ibid.). Goffman (1983) also admits that emotion is intrinsically involved in the interactions. In

other words, emotional appearance and corresponding expressive behaviors are served as clues

to accomplish an interaction. Hochschild's emotion management further extends Goffman's

situationism to focus on structure, people's capabilities to work on feelings, and the process or

techniques by which an interaction is achieved (ibid. p.556-557).

In the following sections, I begin with the phenomenon of no (direct) negative emotion

posts are welcome, and then examine the use of metaphor as an expression rule of negative

emotions. The latter is applied to overcome the former that Taiwanese college students confront

on the social network site—to express their negative emotions in an indirect way on Facebook.

How individuals apply, interpret, and are socialized into this rule is discussed in the end.

No (direct) negative emotion posts, why?

In the categories of emotion expressions, participants often mentioned "funny,"

"amusing" or "laughable" content as their preferred ones whereas "bad mood," "negative," and

"complaining" as the undesirable ones on Facebook. The former type of posts also receives more

Likes because "usually positive emotions engender more consonance among people," said Darcy.

Young people thus have no trouble posting their positive mood in a direct way on their Wall.

Why posting negative emotions were not welcome is worthy of further examination. Answers to

this question eventually reveal another social norm of interaction on Facebook—no (direct)

negative emotional posts, please. The reason direct is bracketed implies that this rule is tacitly

agreed among my participants.

Young people indicated their concerns about posting negative emotions on their Wall

and often consciously avoided behaving in this way due to the negative influences on other

people and their own images. Andrew explained his opinions on negative emotion:

I avoid sharing too negative stuff, everyone can see it after all. Maybe you can let

everyone know what you are worried about only once in a while cos it will burden

people… It is like, is there no positive energy in the world? And someone needs

to care about the person because the content is negative…it feels like you lack of

attention, are in need of concern from people.

The concern about burdening people with personal negative emotions might indicate a hidden

assumption that my participants bear in mind—emotions conveyed in the posts could influence

those who read them through texts. This assumption indeed was confirmed by the ethically

controversial research conducted by the Facebook team. The research suggested that an

emotional contagion occurs on social network sites outside of in-person interaction, through

text-based computer-mediated communication (Kramer, Gillory, & Hancock, 2014). Unlike what

Turkle (2011) argues in her book that people feel down when they see other people post

something nice/good about themselves, the Facebook research team argues that emotions are

contagious. Through manipulating the extent to which a group of people could see negative or

positive emotional expressions in their News Feed, they found out that exposure to emotions led

people to post content consistent with the exposure (Kramer, Gillory, & Hancock, ibid.). To

restate it differently, the emotions expressed by individuals via online social networks influences

their friends' moods.

For my participants, those who directly express negative emotion on Facebook are

usually regarded as people in need and probably receive no substantial assistance from their

peers. Furthermore, those people might put themselves in an embarrassing situation as Aurora

did:

…I think you probably get no help out of it [posting negative emotions], and other

people would feel annoyed…you will feel more lonely if you don't even receive any comfort from people in this situation…I don't know what they think about themselves…I post something more like encouraging each other to go through a difficult situation, or something delightful. Everyone can share the same feeling and would feel like, yes! We shall be like this! I think this positive energy is quite important.

Emotional contagion is also indicated in this quote. Aurora believed her positive emotion posts engendered energy among her friends. While the appearance of positivity could act as a technique for impression management (Goffman, 1959), this quote also reflects the impression people hold on those who post negative content—annoying and lonely. In order to maintain a desirable impression, avoiding negative emotions in posts is important.

Even though negative emotion is considered contagious and those who reveal their bad moods directly to the public are attributed negative images to "lose face" (Goffman, 1967), it doesn't necessarily mean individuals cannot reveal their negative emotions on Facebook. What matters is how you express the negative emotions via texts. Young people then apply "euphemistic" ways to manage their negative-emotion expressions on Facebook. In other words, metaphor is specifically served as an acceptable form for Taiwanese college students to express

negative emotions to the public in the mediated environment. I shall enunciate how metaphor is used by individuals on Facebook and for what purposes in the following sections.

Metaphor as expression rule of negative emotions

How individuals express what they feel in a social encounter depends on the type of social relationship connecting each other and, more importantly, the relevant norms and values. As Goffman suggests (1967, p.7), the line maintained by and for a person during contact with others tends to be of a legitimate institutionalized kind. For college students in my research, the legitimate way to reveal negative emotions to networked audiences on Facebook in public is through "metaphor." Expression rules are varied across social contexts. Hochschild's (1998, p.7) passage explains how cultural norms regulate our understanding of how people should display what they feel, which indicates the prescriptions of an emotion "bible, a set of prescriptions embedded in the received wisdom of culture."

In terms of online emotional culture, how cultural models influence emotional expression on social network sites is demonstrated by Köhl and Götzenbrucker (2014). In their cross-cultural analyses, they investigated the feeling rule of young people between Thai and Australia. Similar to the Thai interviewees in their research, Taiwanese college students also could not display their negative emotions to their friends in face-to-face situations; how they

display the negative emotions on social network sites, however, is different. While there are a

"rising number of people using Facebook as an emotional trash bin" (p.519) as Thai young

people "mostly write about bad feelings"(p.517), the expression rule of young people in Taiwan

reveals another picture—using indirect metaphor to signal their negative feelings. As Agatha

said,

> If I am in a bad mood, I post like, 'Then let it be this way' or 'The weather is a bit
>
> grey'. You don't reveal your feeling very clear, but your post seems to be a
>
> not-so-okay mood…It is like there is a channel to release your bad mood. It shall
>
> be like, everybody can see, closer friends then will check on you... but I will not
>
> respond in public. It is like, after you post it, someone sees the signal and cares
>
> about me then I feel much better. It's not easy to initiate the topic, and I don't like
>
> to tell others negative emotions unless they [close friends] come to ask me.

As Hochschlid (1979) argues, people can work on their feelings, trying to create within

themselves the appropriate responses to a situation. Our sense of appropriate responses reflects

socially determined cultural norms for how we are supposed to act in a situation. In other words,

many individuals' emotional experiences, including expressive gestures (Thoits, 1989, p.318),

are impacted by culture (Peterson, 2006). This quote also illustrates three purposes for which

individuals use metaphor as techniques to deal with the struggles between publicity, privacy and

belonging on Facebook due to Facebook's architecture and the cultural norms of emotion

expression shared by participants. These three purposes are not mutually excluded but interlinked

and overlapping/overlapped. Participants conveyed messages that imply these three purposes in

most cases as I will show in later discussions.

Socialization of expression rule

Before demonstrating three purposes of metaphor usage on Facebook, I shall discuss

how individuals are socialized into the expression rule. The social norms of interpersonal

interactions on Facebook regulate how individuals display their negative emotions to public. In

other words, expressive behaviors of emotion are socially constructed patterns and defined by

emotion culture of a group, and thus require socialization to be learned by individuals (Gordon,

1981). Through the socialization process, individuals have learned the norms and etiquette of

online communication shared among their peers. The example below illustrates how the

impulsive locus of the self is socialized into the institutional locus of the self in a mediated

environment (Turner, 1976).

Dorian tended to "always post his negative emotions on the Wall and delete those posts

right after an hour or so." Compared to his peers, Dorian was "immature enough" to act in this

way, commented his friend Darcy. He failed normative expectations of their emotion culture (Gordon, 1981). His spontaneous expressions of negative emotions on Facebook broke the expression rule in two ways: too often and being negative. He eventually learned the rule through his observation of other people's behavior and his peers' sanctions against his misconduct.

> Yeah, I got some rebuke [because of that]… Some people's post-bombs are annoying, so I realized that keep posting like that is like bombing others too much… some people unfriended me because of that, they suck!

Being unfriended by others is especially offensive given that never unfriending people is one of the social norms on Facebook. When I interviewed him for the second round, he "adjusted his posts" and "keeps those negative moods personal" or "just posts photos." The change between his two quotes illustrates that emotional expression is regulated by the norms representing feeling rules learned through socialization. Individuals accordingly acquire the culturally acceptable emotional vocabulary through repeating day-to-day interactions (Burkitt, 2002; Gordon, 1981).

Metaphor as symbol to catch publicity, keep privacy and manage belonging

How individuals express their emotions is shaped by both culture and human capacity to react and make sense of the feelings (Field, Copp, & Kleinman, 2006). Confronting the "No

(direct) negative emotion posts" rule of online interaction, young people co-construct the line—a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which they express their views of the situation and through this their evaluation of participants, especially themselves (Goffman, 1967, p.5), to make their day-to-day online interaction processes smoother. Metaphor is therefore like a symbol, formed in interactions, and is then utilized by individuals (Durkheim, 1995). As I mentioned before, participants used metaphor to express their negative emotions to deal with the struggles between publicity, privacy and belonging. As Adeline said,

It is like venting, like you throw something out there, and let other people see it. Feels like, like you know what happened to me, but I won't tell you what it was. It doesn't mean that I need everybody's concern. If my close friends ask me, then I can feel their attention. If you change the setting just to let certain friends see it, then it's too obvious.

I am not that type of person who brings up my bad mood in front of anyone easily. But if I put on an ambiguous update, on the one hand, I have somewhere to relieve; on the other hand, my close friends can care about me so I can get some support…it is hard to start talking about this type of topic, but once someone starts then I can talk about it. Putting up some texts on Facebook, just to let people

know something happened.

Emotional support is regarded as important social capital (e.g. Ellison, Steinfield & Kampe, 2007; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009). There has been research on acquiring social capital via Facebook, either through strong ties or weak ties (e.g. Boon & Sinclair, 2009; Chu & Choi, 2010). Most of these studies pointed out that users gain social capital through available interactional technologies conditioned by sites' architectures and affordances (Baym & boyd, 2012); however, sophisticated analyses of how users acquire social capital through what interactions have not been discussed. This quote further delineates how young people acquire emotional support in an indirect, euphemistic way in regards to interactions.

Applying euphemistic metaphor, meaning the normative and acceptable ways among participants to express negative emotions, to reach their hands out for help might be related to the concern about "losing face"(Goffman, 1967) due to negative images and the potential result of receiving no responses. Through modest publicity revealed by metaphor, individuals keep their distance from a direct connection to bad impression on the one hand, meaning a successful face work. On the other hand, they initiate an interaction process to invite people who might get the rule to read between the lines. Meanwhile, this might also indicate indirectness of their culture. Individuals are not supposed to reveal their intention directly and actively.

Metaphor is also a strategy to solve the problems caused by context collision. It functions both to keep privacy and to distinguish each other's status in their friendship. As Araminta said,

> I have posted ambiguous updates about bad mood, and some friends asked me what happened. It's hard to answer because you are asking me in such a public space. I put it that way because I don't want to make it public known.

The argument seems to be contradictory in the beginning. boyd (2014) and Marwick and boyd (2014b) discuss in their research why teens share so publicly and how they manage privacy issues. "Steganography," or "covered writing," is used as a privacy-protecting strategy (Marwick & boyd, 2014b, p.8). Managing privacy settings might be one way to control which audience can see what content in the collapsed context on Facebook. Many interviewees echoed Ava when she said, "You don't want to let teachers and parents or relatives see something because they are also there (on friend list)." But in reality, not so many participants really grouped their friend list to manage the privacy setting on Facebook. Therefore, by using metaphor, individuals take back the power over the personal stories and emotions they share in public.

Young people apply metaphor as another way to draw the boundary distinguishing each other's status in friendship. Using metaphorical posts to test who pays attention and cares about

him, Duncan said, "You don't know what's going on if you don't read it attentively. I purposely

write that way cos only those who pay attention to my posts know how to decipher them." In

order to decipher the message enclosed in the post, "prior knowledge" of their friendship is

required, said Annabelle. What she meant was the friendship level and corresponding tacit

knowledge an individual has. On the other hand, this kind of boundary work also creates

divisions between "insider" and "outsider." Dustin, who captioned his photos with poetry to

convey his negative emotions on his Wall, said,

> There is classification of friends, on Facebook everyone is your friend…humans
>
> are contradictory, you post something you wanna share, then people will ask you
>
> what happened. But, if you are not the right person, I will just politely say thank
>
> you for your concern.

"The right person" here implies the status of friendship among different peers. Only the same

group of friends can catch the hint hidden in each passage. As Diamond expressed, "a friend

posts just one vague phrase instantly, you probably don't know what she is talking about, but

only we group know it, can comment on it right away." Relying on emotion clues encoded as

metaphors in individuals' digital texts on Facebook, young people exercise interactional

strategies of day-to-day practices on social network sites and correspondently navigate,

determine and claim their own and others' social status in their friendship group (Clark, 1990).

In the everyday practices of interactions on Facebook, individuals have learned to read and tell what type of interaction this will be when they initiate a comment on a metaphor-like post. This enables individuals to "frame" the interaction appropriately (Goffman, 1974) so they know how to interpret what goes on in the context of what is really going on. Sometimes, "dramaturgical cooperation" (Goffman, 1959, p.85) is also necessary to avoid embarrassment.

For most individuals who share the same interactional order (Goffman, 1983), they read signals hidden in the post and perform appropriate interaction etiquette by asking nothing or sending their concerns online, which depends on each other's friendship classification offline. As Ashleigh explained,

> …once a junior seemed to complain about a professor, but we didn't know whom she referred to or what happened exactly. She will not respond even if you write her, she doesn't want to be asked by me. It's embarrassing to ask her in person, I usually pretend seeing nothing on News Feed if they are not my close friends.

Observing the emotional displays of others can offer essential information on the interactional dynamics expected in the particular situation (Goffman, 1959). Following the expression rule of negative emotions, individuals considered to be outsiders take another performance. In order to

maintain the equilibrium of interactions, ignorance is always the way to escape embarrassment

and keep each other's face (Goffman, 1967).

College students also use metaphor to avoid potential conflicts among friends to

maintain their friendship. In their posts about the anger by or conflict with their peers,

individuals "express in a euphemistic way" a metaphor as a buffer to manage their social

relationship in order to keep friends because they are "afraid that it might damage our

relationship," said Desiree.

Consistent with the culture of indirectness, young people avoid friction by using

metaphor in their posts to express the unpleasant opinions toward their friends. As Aurora said,

> I don't name the person, I write in an euphemistic way…I don't let other people
>
> realize whom I refer to. Like yesterday I posted 'think before you do'. If someone
>
> did something on impulse, s/he knows I am talking about him/her when s/he sees
>
> it…I don't want to confront that friend then I post this way.

While it looks like a destructive way to communicate, expressing negative emotion with

metaphor to the public, on the contrary, is considered to be a practical strategy to maintain

friendships for college students in Taiwan. The quote from Duncan unveils why, as he said,

> Everyone uses metaphoric words to vent on their anger. This is like, everyone

knows it but doesn't want to make a drama out of it. Actually this way they also

have a channel to communicate without directly fighting against each other. It is a

way to avoid conflict but still can communicate and release your negative

emotions.

Similar to Marwick and boyd (2014b), who discuss how teenagers use the conception of "drama"

to alter the dynamics of conflict and aggregation on social media, college students in my research

used metaphor as shared cultural knowledge in the context of public mediated environment to

manage their friendships.

Chapter 4 Identity Construction

This chapter examines college students' identity construction worked individually and collectively on Facebook. My objective is to analyze different types of college student identities performed by young people from two universities online. I lay out the relevant concerns my participants held in relation to their online self-presentation as the social contexts of their identity construction. The visual approach of photographic analysis is conducted to demonstrate how they distinguish their tastes and cultural consumption through which aesthetic practices. I suggest that online practices, both in which way they managed their digital identity and via what content they displayed their digital trajectories of life, reflect their offline life experience and habitus resulting from their social positions.

4-1 Context and Control

In this section, I examine the relevant concerns that individuals hold in mind when it comes to impression management on Facebook. These concerns are the social contexts of identity construction as I enunciate in section 4-2.

4-1-1 Being seen

While boyd (2008) discusses that American teens feel the pressure to write themselves

into being on social media, Taiwanese college students have a further desire to be seen. As Doyle

said, "Facebook is, like, you feel like everyone keeps an eye on me always. It's, like, I post

something just exactly to get friends' attention and hope they give me some responses. It's like a

positive reinforcement." Not only do those famous people on social media need attention

(Marwick & boyd, 2011), young people on Facebook also express that "visibility itself is not

enough" (Marwick, 2010, p.213). Put differently, to receive attention is intrinsic to their practices

online. As Devon explained, the attention from friends 'has become the force to post,' somehow

even has become 'vanity.'

For those who did not post actively on their Wall, it does not mean the desire to be seen

does not exist. Rather, it expressed exactly the concerns of "being seen" in relation to their face

(Goffman, 1967). Arielle, for example, said,

> I realize why I don't like to update my status. It is because I hope people could
>
> respond to my post. I so insist that whenever I say something I can get responses.
>
> But sometimes you just post nothing because you are afraid of being disappointed.
>
> It will be so disappointing if no one responds to you. It's like everyone doesn't
>
> pay attention to me.

Individuals tried catching attention online, and it was the same for those who seemed to be not so

engaged in the online practices. It concerned their pride, and as Annabelle added, she therefore thought that "if no one likes my update, I lose my face," and she would rather not update her status so often. All these concerns were about receiving the audience's attention. At the same time, it also indicated that they were volunteered for other people's surveillance, in order to be seen.

Participants were aware of the publicness of the online practices and surveillance of the unseen audience in the mediated environments. Many participants were like Duncan, who said, "They only present what they want everyone to see." They also knew that other people's posts were "edited." Before they posted their updates, individuals "always think how to rephrase, how to arrange" to "let people feel their sentences are nice," as Diamond said. They understood that "it's a public platform," and "everyone can see" your profile. In other words, participants did not reveal the "back stage" (Goffman, 1959) of themselves; instead, they deliberately keep their online images as other research has found (e.g. Awan & Gauntlett, 2013).

4-1-2 Authenticity

"You can choose the image you want others to see; you don't reveal the part you don't want others to see," said Arielle, who spoke for every participant's perception of others' digital identity on Facebook. The "edited self" (Marwick, 2010, p.15) seemed to be an accepted

common assumption of young people's self-presentation online. Participants understood that individuals manage their digital identity, to various extents, in the mediated environment. Still, "People can get to know each other, more or less, by browsing their profiles," said Aaron. In other words, individuals perceive a person's Facebook account as an authentic self, under some conditions.

To what extents an "edited self" is regarded authentic depends on certain dimensions of authenticity young people value online. How to define authenticity therefore is value-laden and context-based. As Grazian (2010, p.191) argues, "Authenticity connotes legitimacy and social value, a social construct with moral overtones." Given that authenticity is a socially constructed conception, "itself can never be authentic, but must always be performed, staged, fabricated, crafted, or otherwise imagined. The performance of authenticity always requires a close conformity to the expectations set by the context in which it is situated (p.192)." In other words, individuals perform authenticity according to the norms shared by peers in the online mediated contexts.

For Taiwanese college students, authenticity is examined through two components—real friendship interactions and real self-pictures. Individuals' self presentation on Facebook is collaboratively performed by networked audience as well. During the interaction

processes, how an individual interacts with others by leaving comments is revealed in the context of "socially mediated publicness" (Baym & boyd, 2012) due to the architecture and affordances of Facebook. Young people further distinguish authentic interactions by whether their friendship is "real." As Desiree explained, "All friends can see (your interactions) because it's a public place. If I randomly leave a comment and we are not close friends, I feel weird, and everyone will also doubt if you guys are so close." Individuals cannot perform a "fake" interaction because their friends do care about authentic friendship indicated from this interaction. They have their criteria to judge if the interaction and friendship is authentic or not. Ava said,

> We deduce their friendship from reality. Like, if someone who is irrelevant just leaves a comment, it is weird, is it true friendship? If they are really good friends, then it is true. That is, in reality, they are already good friends in our cohort or they hang out often.

To perform as "real friends" online, it depends on "their friendship practices, seen by others, offline," Denise added. The consistency between online and offline friendships was highly emphasized by participants. Posting friendly comments to pretend friendship and sociability can be unmasked by the mediated public, which is considered inauthentic. Performing an authentic self thus includes interactions based on real friendships.

Authenticity is also about being true to one's self, which is a self-reflective experience (Vannini & Franzese, 2008). An "edited self" is acceptable in terms of posting reflective texts representing another facet of an individual. People regard those edited expressions as part of a "real" self. Dustin, for example, held that Facebook reflects "your real thoughts behind the facial ones." He took himself for instance,

> Like my first impression on others is outgoing and sociable, this is my appearance, my friends see me this way. But inside, I am quiet and thoughtful. In school you don't have time to deeply think over what is going on around you because you just keep talking. But once you are home and think about everything and rethink it over again, that's your real thought, and you post it.

When individuals post something contrary to their impressions others, their friends still consider this part of their real self. As Annabelle explained how they view this situation, they understood that the person "in his heart has something to convey, maybe he cannot tell us when we are together, but this is him still." As Goffman recognizes that the self is the collection of performances taking place in and across different locations, young people regard these types of different facets online as part of authentic self. Those edited textual expressions online representing the inside part of individuals, which are in contrast to their outside appearances

offline, are socially acceptable as authentic among young people.

The controversial authenticity lay in self-photos. While desirable self-photos are important to individuals' identity construction, there are still certain rules regulating an authentic self. One is the consistency with your impression on others after the interactional processes. The self is attributed by participants after numerous completed interactions; individuals thus accordingly perform the impression that fits into others' expectation and is consistent with their face (Goffman, 1959). How Amelia chose her profile photo revealed how they consider an authentic self-photo. She said,

> [Pictures of myself] should be normal, maybe you have some secret selfie at home
>
> that, I think I look good in those pics. But my impression on others is quiet and
>
> serious, so my pictures shall be normal. If I suddenly post a picture of myself pout,
>
> that's too strange. People will wonder. It's not me.

She performed authenticity according to her impression of others as a serious and quiet girl. On the one hand, self-image is constructed interactively. After presenting oneself to the public, an individual internalizes other people's thoughts towards him/her. Identity construction to a certain extent is thus regulated collectively. On the other hand, offline face-to-face interactions contribute to another facet of authenticity. Friends get to know the self, and they also know how

you really look. This brings up another issue on the authenticity of an edited photo.

Another rule is the consistency between the physical look and online look. Photo-editing practices are well-known by young people; there is, however, still a fine line between "acceptable" and "overdone" photos of individuals. This was especially the case among female participants. Many female participants admitted their photos were edited but 'not too over' It seemed to be acceptable among their peer-groups as well. However, sometimes, there were also profile pictures they regarded as "fake" and "inauthentic." As Ava said,

> You almost can get to know the person if you browse his/her Wall. Usually the
>
> profile is not too cheating. Oh, does editing photos way too over count? Usually
>
> are girls. But it's always tricky girls' pictures. But, like your classmate, you really
>
> wonder if that is really her? You see her in school and she looks like that, but her
>
> photos turn out to be, so white the skin and eyes are so big…it's edited, it's fake.

Many female participants were aware of certain types of desirable appearances and accepted that others performed the similar representation in their photos, unless editing effects were "too much." They referred to words such as "fake" or "inauthentic" to describe those "edited self" portraits.

Authenticity as a cultural practice thus needs to be constructed "in a context of

collective involvement and social interaction" (Grazian, 2010, p. 199). These dimensions of authenticity are all related to the consistency between online and offline identity, emphasizing the value of a coherent self-presentation. Self-presentation online thus is constrained by the rule of "performance of authenticity," meaning that individuals' identity construction needs to "appear authentic while maintaining carefully constructed personae that fit within an acceptable image" (Marwick, 2008, p.18).

4-2 Difference in Identity Construction

In the context of being seen and authenticity, individuals performed different online practices of impression management due to the cognitive approach to identity construction as well as cultural consumption and taste, which were generated by their habitus.

4-2-1 College student in the making

Introduction

Youth identity that explores the relationship between self and society is the central concern of youth studies. The very question as to whether there is still as much influence of social background or identity more freely and individually achieved has aroused debates and has become a significant topic in youth studies.

Some scholars hold that identity formation is free from social class due to consumerism in the postmodern society (e.g. Bennett, 2011; Bennett & Kahn-Harris, 2004; Weinzierl & Muggleton, 2003). Individuals have their own choices to decorate and signify themselves with commodities and cultural symbols to express who they are and what they want to become. Therefore, lifestyle constructed by everyone is individual.

Some scholars (e.g. Tomlinson, 2003) argue that identity formation is under the influence of cultural globalization, meaning that the formative elements of identity have faced the dialectic forces of global and local factors, which contributes to either the dominant culture or hybrid culture. An important facilitator of cultural globalization is the development of technology. Some other scholars (e.g. boyd, 2008) investigate how technology development structures young people's lives and further influences their identity formation. Other more recent studies have come to the argument that young people's life experiences have reached the same direction due to neoliberalism becoming globally pervasive, which contributes to the uniform neoliberal identity (e.g. Yoon, 2014).

Some scholars, on the contrary, suggest that identity is situated, shaped, and exercised differently in terms of social contexts where individuals are located (e.g. Blackman, 2005; Williams, 2007). Archer (2007), for example, argues that through different categories of

reflexivity, which depends on the social context subjects have been though, subjects interpret their past, and decide and fulfill their future accordingly. During the process of identity formation, an individual's active agency is the main force determining who they are and what they want to become. Rather than passively accepting what social structure implants within them, individuals consciously construct their actions based on their reflexivity and the social context.

Emphasizing the power of social structure, many scholars have maintained that individuals' identity is mainly conditioned by their social class background (Bourdieu, 1984; Willis, 1977). People located in different social spaces possess various levels of resources in terms of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital. Individuals thus make sense of and negotiate the world differently; whether taking an action or not, they materialize their identity practices and life trajectories accordingly.

In this section, I examine identity construction regarding digital account management on Facebook of college students located in two different universities. Through the thoughts and online practices of impression management, individuals demonstrate different cognitive approaches to their identity construction, which are exercised by their habitus.

Common Image

The "not-having-too-much-fun" image can be found in both universities. Darell is the

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only one who mentioned the conscious concerns for his Wall posts due to his family "intervention." "I don't upload pictures of class because it looks like you are playing in class. My sisters might have concerns and blame me. I would explain that it's my classmates who are playing around not me. I am afraid that my sisters might misunderstand it because it looks like we are having fun in class." Annabelle expressed a similar concern for the image of having too much fun under her father's surveillance: "…When everyone tagged you in their photos, a three-day-event looks like a thirty-day one. My father will be upset because it looks like you are always having fun, which is not a good college student is supposed to be." Unlike the images desired by American college students (Farquhar, 2012; Mendelson & Papacharissi, 2011), Taiwanese college students conversely prefer performing the image of not having too much fun. Identities of the "college student" are culturally remarked upon, meaning that what is valued in this life stage is understood culturally by members in different societies. The meanings and emphases attributed to the identities as college students thus depend on cultural, social and economic aspects within each society (Spencer, 2011).

University A

In terms of how they regarded their Facebook profiles, most young people at University

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A had a say to their own image of how it should be while those at University D tend to be unsure about the images of their profiles, regardless of their awareness of surveillance and publicity. Overall, students at University A are aware of their self-images on Facebook by purposely managing their profiles, which embody their future orientations and identity as 'good' college students.

In order to maintain her image as a diligent student who has held fellowships in her cohort, Ashleigh, who used a Korean pop band as her cover photo and created a fan group on Facebook, actually hides what she usually did at home—following the news of her idol and posting related diaries on her Wall.

> I can't let my friends know that I hang around on FB checking my Korean pop
>
> band's info when I am home. I don't want them to think or feel that I am free and
>
> not doing assignments at home. They always see me working hard in school,
>
> sometimes I make those posts public but only every two or three days because
>
> then it is not too much. I think they also think it's okay, [I am] still a hard-working
>
> student.

Given the studious-student image that Ashleigh conveyed to her cohort, she managed her posts watchfully because of her awareness of other people's surveillance, whether it is true or not. She

was well-aware of what image she wanted to construct and show to her audience on Facebook. How individuals imagine their audience online affects how they edit and perform themselves (Marwick & boyd, 2011a). To her cohort, she chose not to reveal the facet that is not studious due to their ideas of being a college student, especially a studious one.

Another example is Aurora, who clearly stated how she regards herself and accordingly performed on Facebook.

> Facebook account is indeed an impression management, meaning that how you want others to see you. For me, I don't want myself [my image] online to be different from offline. My impression on others is like more diligent, like a leader. Therefore I don't post negative posts. I usually cheer my friends up, more inspiring, or expectations for myself, to work harder, to remind myself too.

In her quote, impression management, a term coined by Goffman (1959), is applied naturally to denote both her understanding of self-presentation online and her purposes of practices on her Wall. The consistency between online and offline images was also indicated. Using Goffman's phrase, the purpose of her performance is to provide the audience online with the impression that is consistent with the desired goals—acting as a leader which is coherent to her identity offline.

Amelia also performed her presentation in a clear and intentional way. She used her

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account to promote some social movements due to her interests in social issues since high school. She often shared the news of LGBT movements and human right protests in Taiwan. By "purposely and actively posting social movement news," she wanted "to influence people around," because "the department is not so concerned about social issues." She also participated in social movements from time to time, and believed that "it's more important to do something" than just saying you're doing it.

Furthermore, identity is not only what individuals refer to and identify with, but also from what individuals distinguish themselves. Drawing boundaries to make a difference reveals their awareness of identity construction as well. As Spencer (2011, p.110) argues, boundaries are those "markers of difference which delineate the contours of our sense of identity, between self and others, between us and them."

When participants were asked about what is inappropriate to appear on their Wall and why, Adeline was sensible to her parents' framework of how life should be led. She said, "The values my family hold is more rigid, I can feel that there is a certain boundary, within certain boundaries of social opinions, there is certain things you should not touch." Her thoughts on the inappropriate posts expressed her boundaries of identity construction online. She thought, those that "indicate pornographic and spoof-like posts, might not be appropriate, or cursing, or

nonsense jokes." Her identity construction signified her self-image as an "earnest person, who wants to live everyday fully but ordinary."

For Adam, he was mindful of his posts. In order to make sure the impression of his Wall on others was consistent with his personal image, he intentionally chose not to share some funny comics, as they were not "well-refined," which did not "conform to my image." He insisted that "being too casual is not okay" because that "you might lose face if some teachers see it." He thus only posted something "memorable" on his Wall, indicating the impression management he constructed.

In the process of narrating and crafting the Facebook profiles of their personal identities, individuals must utilize "culturally legitimate narrative resources" and "established definitions of goals and means," as Loseke (2007, p. 673) argues, to makes sense of their selves and others. At the same time, individuals also have to choose which types of identities are valued in their group, and, again, consider the audience to whom their identities are presented (p. 674-675). Participants at University A have presented their ideas of being a college student through online performance. Also, they have various forms of presentation performing as a "good" college student in their groups.

Still further, individuals' sense of identity is related to the communities they identify

with, whether concrete or imagined ones.

April identified herself as "better culture-cultivated" by drawing the boundary between communities of her University A and "others." On the one hand, she was sensible to the first impression her profile picture would convey to others. She regarded herself as "more gentle and quiet." She considered those who put a wry face as their profile pictures to be "not serious and not reliable." On the other hand, for her, University A denoted "better dispositions" and a "humane atmosphere" compared to both her groups of high school friends and people from other universities.

> …there were fewer people interested in Art exhibition in my high school. There were free tickets for Taipei Fine Art Museum at the time, no one but I and my friend took the ticket. How wasted, they can't appreciate! After all, we were selected to University A; probably we share the same cultural taste…people at University A have better manner…Others are crude in behaviors and language usage because I once met some people at College Sport, I think these will not happen to University A people…

The style in which different groups are imagined distinguishes them into different "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983), which contributes to the source of individuals' identity

construction. In her quote, the markers she assigned to her University Are cultured in contrast to those who are crude. Using University A as her signifier, the 'we' in her quote signaled herself and University A as being in the same category, as well as other people at University A and her in the same community. Her signifiers of "cultural capital" were functional as distinction to differ their location in the social space. By employing her capability to display distinctions of tastes and habitus, she identified herself in a better social position in terms of higher education institutions as well (Bourdieu, 1984). She accordingly managed her profile picture by providing a "gentle" presentation to construct her image online.

In terms of markers of identity, "participating in our departmental events" was the one at University A. The marker was also the cultural focus among peer groups. Albert, for example, identified himself as those who "participate in the departmental events." These groups of people "hold higher commitment to the department" and are "capable of study as well." The meaning of this marker was echoed by Aurora. She added that "almost those who are accepted to the graduate school are our group. We participate in the departmental events and have more opportunities and better interactions with professors." What they conveyed were the signifiers of being a college student who can "be sociable," "manage their time to the maximum" and "handle tasks" while they "achieve academic goals." Further, holding social capital with professors and

the symbolic social place that was close to the authority of the department were also indicated in

the marker. By referring to "participating in our departmental events" as their identity marker,

individuals demonstrated the social positions located within the field of college life and

distinguished the symbolic distance between themselves and others (Bourdieu, 1977).

Many participants at University A often posted reflections of themselves on their

birthday, as a symbolic marker of a new life stage, and the end of departmental activities. After

successfully organizing an event or participating in an event, they often posted updates or notes

to deliberately articulate how they make sense of their roles in the event, what they have learned

through the process, what support they got from their peers and/or professors, and what they

expect for themselves for the future. The trajectory of reflexive identity making can be revealed

commonly among their peer groups.

Ardith, for example, after the college badminton event, narrated her experience as a

player after four years on the team. "Without the protection of our seniors as before, I had to face

the true but fragile self and be responsible, no one to blame to, for the game this time…I was

never a starter before due to my skills, I have to accept it," she said. After describing in detail

how the game went and how she and her partner performed, she appreciated the encouragement

from their coach by saying that "it meant lots to me." Closing with the hope for the future, she

said, "I am really thankful to myself for insisting on this tiny but powerful dream, even though there have been many frustrations and tears for the past four years…the racket I am holding is so real, I wish I can grow stronger always. Let's make efforts and become mature together." This format of reflective posts was prevalent on their Wall.

University D

The awareness of difference between "we" and "others" was also demonstrated by Duncan at University D. He portrayed people in his university, specifically compared to those at University A, in an inferior way. He considered them "noisier in class, not attentive to teachers, not so professional, and more playful." He, however, distinguished himself right away from his cohort by saying, "I am not like them, I still made it to the class at 8am even though I got hangover." He continued,

> I think the difference is huge. The level of heterogeneity at University A is not as high as that at University D. They [people at University A] might share more similarity and common life experience, like attending the class. People you have interviewed, we are happened to be those people who attend the class. There are other groups not. But my stereotype is that no one at University A doesn't go to class.

His quote, first, together with how April described those who are not from her university, reveals how "homogeneity of Otherness" is applied in the process of identity construction to draw the boundary between "self" and the "other." Through the stereotype, other people "are reduced to a few, simple, essential characteristics" (Hall, 1997, p.257), which is fixed in the signifier of "university type." The difference, however, lay in the perception of a superior or inferior position between "We" and "Others." Second, identification of "attending class" was an important marker used among participants at University D. Again, using the boundary-drawing between those who attend class and those who do not in the cohort, participants identified as part of a desirable category. Besides, the marker signifies the cultural focus among their peer groups. Third and most importantly, participants in two different universities seem to demonstrate different socially produced cognitive approaches to their identity construction.

Participants at University D tended to consider their Facebook accounts as a spontaneous space for instant sharing of nothing special, but which is mostly for emotional relief and college life. The most common phrases among participants described their profiles as "sharing life," "ordinariness in your life," and "sharing fun."

As Doyle unwittingly mentioned, "All like trivial things in your life, trivial things in your college life, mainly about my life." They usually described their Facebook account as

"digital memories for their daily life," a type of "lifelogging" (Selka, 2014). Lifelogging is defined as "the undiscriminating collection of information concerning one's life and behavior" (O'Hara, Tuffield and Shadbot, 2014, p.1) or "the capture, storage and distribution of everyday experiences and information for objects and people" (Smart, Cascio, & Paffendorf, 2007, p.16). How interviewees described their Facebook accounts could be related to this conception. Through lifelogging practices, individuals use Facebook as a way of providing "current status information," "sharing unusual moments with others," "for self-expression," and as a kind of "backup memory" (Smart, Cascio, & Paffendorf, 2007, p.16). Dorian, for example, managed his account as his "own space, to record one stage after one stage of my life." He used his account as his diary, and always posted his selfies to "document the feeling of that moment." Darell usually posted tiny things in his daily life, like gifts for Mother's day or some troubles with his cell phone. Sometimes he also shared some news regarding social issues in education. Still, he described his account as a place to document "ordinary daily lives," and to "release my feelings," same as Dwayne said. Darcy had more travel abroad experiences compared to her cohort because of her family's interest. Her classmates envied her for her overseas travel experiences. While she had posted her life as an exchange student in Korea and on a working-holiday visa in the States, she regarded her account as a "place documenting where she has been to, what has happened to her, and how she has felt"— but "without a specific purpose just like a diary." Some

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students also demonstrated the delights of having their own creative thoughts in their day-to-day life. As Duncan described, "What I post is those tiny things. More specifically, those are trivial things in daily life, creativity in your daily life. Not so important, but for me it's important. Like, the rainy season and a dehumidifier…it's the feeling at that moment."

How they demonstrated their Facebook accounts as digital identities seemed to be "diffuse, contradictory or decentered," as they usually regarded those practices on Facebook as "ordinariness in daily life," even though there were special focuses "produced through symbolic work including struggles to make meaning" (Willis, 1990, p.12), like the attention to the news of educational social issues, abroad travel experiences, or creativity in the day-to-day life. In other words, some specific goals or orientations seemed to be missed, ignored or unaware in relation to their digital identity on Facebook, compared to how individuals at University A managed their accounts.

"Sharing fun" was another favorite phrase mentioned by participants at University D. Mostly they shared the evidence of hanging out with friends. Many individuals, like Delfina, liked to share the joy of sociality. She regarded her Facebook as the place to "share the joy of being together with my friends," serving as "records of where we have been to." Posts of pending time together "with friends at different restaurants for foods" were usually shared by

young people. Delores, who recently entered into a relationship, used her Facebook to "document the happy moments" with her boyfriend. She also used Facebook to share "the cheerful time" she had with coworkers in her part-time job. Still many people liked to share some funny videos or images especially spoof ones. Those jokes shared online were usually highly context-based, which was related to their day-to-day life. For example, as Darcy said, "How to tell who the richest people in this neighborhood are? The answer is those who have the most bunches of keys. You don't get it, right? It is because they are the landlords of student housings and they only show up once in a year to get their money." Many people are like Darcy, they liked to share those "funny moments that just happened" in their daily life, added by Diamond. Dianne, for instance, posted a picture of their group holding a paper-made microphone, pretending to sing in class. She explained that it was "spontaneously for fun," and "our group had fun doing that assignment in that class." In general, there was a tendency to demonstrate a "playful" and "entertaining" impression of their practices.

In terms of reflective trajectories of identity making, they posted relatively fewer reflective updates partly due to fewer departmental events. This was partly constrained by the social context of the higher education institution they were located in. They demonstrated another way of reflective trajectory of identity making by deleting their undesirable posts from

the past. Dorian, as I discussed in chapter 3, deleted those direct negative emotive posts because afterwards he "regarded the former self too immature." Devon, another example, recently deleted some posts from the past and explained why. He said, "I felt that I became another person online, it was not real myself. [Online] you can hide or change, sometimes I just post something right at the moment I want to. But later I regretted. That's not me." The instant sharing, without a purposeful plan of impression management, sometimes seems to be inappropriate afterwards, even though individuals were aware of the publicity and surveillance of those unseen audience members in the mediated environments when they posted. Considering what they expressed in the interviews, they tended to revise their trajectories on Facebook to fit into the images they want to be, even though they did not articulate about precisely which types of images. Through the reflexive editing practices, they kept their identity online in the making, in a diffuse way.

There were still a small number of students posting reflective updates once in a while. Their posting format often expressed their gratitude for those who helped them grow in an emotive manner. Dustin, for example, reflected on his study journey of a double major since the second year. He posted that by "looking back to the rocky journey of double-majoring in law, I don't know where I got the courage to do it." He reflected on his worry about whether he could get the hint of how to study the laws or not. He attributed his current ability to take structured notes thanks to the fact that he "fortunately met some lovely juniors in the law department to discuss

the ways of studying and taking notes," and he ended his post by expressing his gratitude to the luck of having good people and friends around.

While lifelogging might have the potential to reaffirm individuals' control of his or her own identity construction by evidence and comprehensiveness (O'Hara, Tuffield and Shadbot, 2014), individuals at University D's identity construction were more discursive in general and did not focus on a specific goal. Drawing from the interview data quoted above, how they performed their Facebook digital identities was more "spontaneously" related to "the moment." That's to say, the motivation they chose to post was not so "systematic" and "well-planned in advance." Further, they documented and shared "joyful times," "funny moment," "happiness of being with friends," and many "trivial things in day-to-day life." In other words, the content they chose to post was more life experience oriented, and feeling and emotions related. It did not mean they were not aware of the surveillance of the public and the practices of an edited self. Still, there were barely any specific purposes to individuals' Facebook accounts in order to convey certain images of themselves, to refer to certain frames of reference, or to achieve certain goals, like other participants at University A did.

Habitus and Homologies of Field

The different practices of identity making on Facebook among individuals at University

A and D can be understood in relation to their perception of identity in the offline world, which both indicate the different socially-produced cognitive approaches to their identity construction. Cognitive structures that are socially produced, exercised by habitus, and different from socio-economic status are argued by many scholars (Ball, Davies, David & Reay, 2002; DiMaggio, 1997; Lin & Chang, 2008; Lizardo, 2004). I will first illustrate the perception of identity construction among two groups in the offline world, and enunciate the relationship between the practices of identity construction online and offline by suggesting the habitus in the work and the principles of structural homologies argued by Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1985).

Participants at University D tended to have a lack of confidence in terms of their current and future life of being a college student at University D. In addition to Duncan, Diamond also doubted her capability in her profession. She claimed that "courses at University A are more theoretic," and therefore "people there have a better basis." She regarded that courses at University D are "more practical," meaning that "you get credits but learn nothing." Despite the fact that she had double-major and will attend a graduate school in her profession, she still didn't know what to do after graduation, and doubted her ability to finish graduate school. At the same time, she was worried because she lacked academic-oriented companionship for graduate school life in her current peer group. Another example is Darcy, who during the interviews kept

repeating her anxiety about the future. On the one hand, she emphasized her inferiority to "those

at University A" in terms of the competitiveness of her degree at University D. On the other hand,

she did not know what she wanted for her job and felt every opportunity was hard and uncertain.

Feeling inferiority was also echoed by Dorian and Denise; they both felt their instructors held too

high of an expectation for them. They said, "We are not those at elite universities of course."

Meanwhile, they also thought they could not compete in the job market with those who were

from public universities.

In other words, they recognized themselves as locating more "insufficient" and

"inferior" social positions in the field of higher education institutions. However, even if some

students wanted to pursue some goals, they still did not know "how to start" and "where to get

information" as Devon and Dianne expressed. Put differently, they seemed to be short of the

institutionalized cultural capital of a degree certificate, social capital in the form of information

channels, and embodied cultural capital as tacit knowledge to fulfill certain goals, which was

highly conditioned by the position they were at in the social space, as Bourdieu (1984) maintains.

In general, "doubts," "ambivalence," "uncertain" and "inferiority" pervaded expressions of

themselves and toward their future, which is similar to what Ball et al. (2002) and Lin and Chang

(2008) describe in their research—the cognitive structures of choice and perception displayed by

students from lower socio-economic status.

While academic orientation was relatively weak at University D, another female student, Ava at University A, on the contrary was worried about herself not being able to attend graduate school because "everyone in my group was accepted." She was sad and afraid of not making it in the first interview. It turned out that later she was also accepted to the same graduate school as one of her friends. Some individuals at University A also faced the uncertainty of their future. In contrast to the attitude revealed by participants at University D, they held more confidence in and expectation of themselves. Adam, for example, regarded going to graduate school after college as "normal." The reason he wanted to go to graduate school was because of his "capability," and the fact that he "loves study" while the reason he would not would be the financial concerns. He was accepted for a graduate school later in 2014, two years after our first interview. They also displayed the image of having many opportunities at hand. Some students expressed their future plans in another profession while they made use of their current major as a "back-up." April, for example, was on another track to become a journalist while she minored in Chinese to get the "backup" qualification of becoming a high school teacher. She prepared herself for the journalist career by "participating in a reporting competition," "being an intern journalist on campus," and "taking part-time reporting news cases introduced by a professor

whom I took a course with" and at the same time perceived that her current major would equip

her with the expertise in writing educational news in the future. Her quote indicates the useful

social capital connecting her to the job market, and cultural capital of the field she wanted to join

in the future.

The abundant volume of various capitals they held and future paths they planned can be

illustrated by Aurora, who was well aware of her impression management as a leader of her

Facebook account. She prepared her application for graduate school in the summer of the third

year due to some professors' "reminder of the date" and "assistance on her application proposal."

The expectation she received from a female professor contributed to "her identification with her

work." She said, "I knew I am going to graduate school anyways, just via different paths," and

she also had "continuous" plans after college and graduate school by revealing the information of

"exchange programs" and "funding opportunities" to go abroad, either after working a couple

years or in graduate school. Two years after our first interview, she was accepted for exchange

programs at her graduate school with the language test and application materials well-prepared in

advance. In general, perceptions of "possession," "confidence," "expectation," and a "continuous

plan" were indicated in relation to how they identified themselves and the future, which is again

similar to those students from a better socio-economic status in Ball et al. (2002) and Lin and

Chang (2008)'s research.

Different approaches of cognitive structures to individuals' identity construction are exercised by habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus, as a "structuring structure" and "structured structure," is structured by a person's economic and social conditions and then becomes the lens through which an individual perceives and structures the world (Bourdieu, 1984, p.170). Individuals at University A revealed their perception of their identity construction as deliberately managed and planned, which embodied their future orientations and identities as a confident college student possessing various capitals with expectation of themselves. The identity construction demonstrated by individuals at University A was in a similar manner both on Facebook and in the offline world possibly due to the fact that "the unifying principle of practices in different domains…is nothing other than the habitus" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.83). Meanwhile, individuals from University D regarded their perception of their identity construction as more discursive in many trivial things in their day-to-day life, without a sure image of their profiles, more spontaneously related to the playful moment and not so systematic and well-planned in advance on Facebook, and also held doubts, ambivalence, uncertainty and inferiority in themselves and toward their future in the offline world. Given the different identity constructions demonstrated above, it is individuals' "present and past positions in the social

structure" that individuals embody, giving them "many marks of social position" and "social distance" between different groups of people correlatively (Bourdieu, 1977, p.82). Those who are situated within closer positions in social space share more commonalities in shaping social boundaries, from boundary-formation to meaning-making (Bourdieu, 1984, 1994). Their logic of identity construction practice is conditioned by the status of each university in the field of higher education institutions. In other words, the trajectory of an individual's past and potential identity construction in a social space thus is determined by the volume and composition of capital inherited in their relative social position.

Facebook, as an important field of young people's social life, is a contested terrain where individuals not only struggle for distinctions but also perform their identity consistent with their offline world. In fact, the online environments actually are heavily interwoven with the offline world; the holders of positions in these two fields are homologous. That is to say, structural homologies between the field of Facebook and of college life can be analyzed in the same perspective. As Bourdieu argues, the locus of the practical realization of the articulation of fields is "the real principle of the structural homologies" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.83). In other words, individuals who "join the game" of identity construction on Facebook, where the structure of social space and the logic of practice are homologous to the one in the offline world, perform

their identity construction based on a "matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions" (ibid.)

conditioned by their offline social status. A Facebook profile as a form of digital body where

individuals perform themselves into being is also a "socially informed body" that embodies "the

system of inseparably cognitive and evaluative structures of a determinate state of the social

world" (ibid., p.124). This "socially informed body" demonstrates its tastes with all its senses,

including the sense of necessity, reality, beauty, common sense, tacit sense, the sense of humor,

and the sense of practicality as Bourdieu maintains. I then discuss individuals' relevant online

practices of taste in the next section.

4-2-2 Cultural consumption and taste

Introduction

Through consumption of cultural symbols, via multimedia sources on Facebook,

college students demonstrate how they interpret their daily life and how their identity

construction is collaborated with and distinguished from their peers. The relation between

consumer culture and identity construction has been long discussed.

Consumer culture indicates certain characteristics of society, including the circulation

of cultural commodities in the capitalism market, the different relationship between consumption

and production, and the specific meaning of cultural consumption for certain social groups

(Bourdieu, 1984; Bateille, 1998; Featherstone, 1991, p.13; Jameson, 1984, p.86; Kellner, 1990; Lury, 1996, p.1-3). Consumption nowadays has different meanings. Before, the practical functions of commodities were emphasized; people purchased them due to the need. The relationship between commodities and individuals did not necessarily involve identity or symbolic meanings. Until late capitalism society, the symbolic meaning of commodities had played a much more important role (Baudrillard, 2001). Cultural commodities become the medium conveying individuals' social place and more (Miles, 2000). Commodities thus have to become symbols to be consumed (Keller, 1990). In other words, commodities have symbolized. Meanwhile, individuals also construct their relations with society by the consumption of symbols.

Individuals construct their identity construction and distinguish themselves from others by consumption, meaning that through consumption, they consume their tastes, lifestyle, social status and cultural meaning (Bourdieu, 1984; Hebdige, 1988; McCracken, 1988; Veblen, 1899; Williams, 1982, p.53). Individuals express not only who they are but also who they want to become. Therefore, consumption means more than buying; rather, consumption implies how an individual, within broader social structure, interprets the relationship between him/her and society via consumer culture. Hence consumption has more than economic meaning. In other

words, consumption has to be analyzed through the angle of culture, which is highly related to people's day-to-day life experiences. Consumption thus becomes a symbol that people continue to display, receive and re-produce within communication and exchange systems (Baudrillard, 1998).

Young people have received values, norms and ideologies of consumer culture transmitted by mass media and cultural industry consciously or subconsciously (Kellner, 2001; Kidd, 2002). They accept, negotiate, and transform those values and norms into their own culture as references they interpret for their identity construction and the relationship they have with broader society (Fiske, 1989; Miles, 2000: 155; McRobbie, 2000; Willis, 1990). Willis (2003, p.406) suggests that cultural consumption through global media has penetrated national boarders and become part of globalization. It seems that individuals' identity construction has more to do with consumption instead of their social background. However, I suggest that the appropriation of cultural consumption is still conditioned by structural factors, including socio-economic status as Bourdieu (1984) argues. It seems that in contemporary society there are more choices for cultural consumption. Nevertheless, for individuals located in different social positions, the meanings, functions and risks of cultural consumption are different. The social and political roles of cultural consumption are not only to form a distinct pattern of social distinction for identity

construction, but also to secure and legitimize forms of power and control rooted ultimately in economic inequalities in the processes by which the making and maintaining of these distinctions occur. Taste thus never just concerns aesthetics. As Bourdieu (ibid., p.6) argues, "taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier." Individuals are classified by their classifications and classify others by theirs. Individuals' tastes further contribute to the collective maintenance of social difference.

In this section, I depict cultural consumption on Facebook of college students located in two different universities. Through the affordance of Facebook's architecture, especially the visual photographs, individuals demonstrate different online aesthetic practices denoting their tastes, which are rooted in their social position offline.

Music

Facebook, as an important field of young people's social life, is a contested terrain where young people not only struggle for distinctions but also perform their identity by appropriating symbols and resources via the website. In order to distinguish themselves from others, cultural consumption displayed on their profiles is the indication of taste to demonstrate their identity (Bourdieu, 1984). Further, how individuals narrate the reasons reveals why they chose which items to represent what type of tastes.

Take music and singers for example. Generally speaking, some participants at University A demonstrated the taste of "uniqueness" to signal the difference of their taste, while some participants at University D often expressed "many" and "popular" as their favorites. There were also few individuals who did not use Facebook actively and did not care about and share music on their accounts.

Albert, for instance, explained he liked the singer because the singer is "unlike others," and has "strong character" and "personal style." He said, "I know some people think he is weird, but he knows what he wants." Many students at University A used signifiers including "not just like others" and "personal style" to explain their choices. Ava chose her favorite singers because that their music is "indie" and has 'profound meanings with delicate lyrics, more than just romance like others.' April is another example. She referred to a song by her favorite band to express her identification of "for yourself." She liked the "artistic conception" of their lyrics to describe the life of "independence." Ashleigh liked a Korean group because they had achieved "popularity in Asia" and "built a school in Africa to help people" at such a young age. She further said, "Think about ourselves, who else can be like them?" Those who paid special attention to music and singers at University A tended to emphasize the symbolic meanings of their choices to denote their taste or difference as part of their identity construction.

Doyle loved a Japanese singer mostly because of her appearance. He appreciated the effort she put into her performances as well. He started putting on make-up, coloring his hair and decorating his nails to identify himself with the singer. He insisted that "this is me" in spite of some people on campus regarding his manners as a "gangster." Other people usually liked "nice songs," "popular singers," "hit songs," or just "too many to describe," when it came to the question of their favorite music. In terms of how they chose which music to be shown on their profiles, some people were like Darcy and in the beginning didn't know it would show on their profiles once they liked the page of a singer. They then just "let it be there." Some people were like Duncan, and they chose their favorite songs that happened to speak for their emotions at that moment.

Check-in

Individuals also manage their self presentation through the Wall posts. The Wall on Facebook can be seen as a space where cultural consumption and participation are manifested and multimedia resources supported by the architecture of the site that have played a significant role in the process of identity construction. One example is why individuals choose what type of places to check-in for what purposes. "Somewhere special, like thematic park, cultural and creative industry park" made more sense for Andrew. Amelia for sure checked in at social

movement events. For Delores, she especially checked in to "share the restaurants with good food but cheap prices with friends." Dorian, who often posted too many check-ins, checked in "every place on campus he first visited." Of course there were some students at University D who liked to check in at some cultural exhibitions, as Dianne did. Overall, however, the awareness of somewhere special was not commonly considered; instead, 'documenting the friendships' was the main purposes of check-ins at University D. Many students revealed where they were through the photographs they posted. More details will be discussed later with the analyses of photographs. Intentional demonstration of individuals' tastes indicates purposive impression management as Goffman (1959) argues and distinction practices as Bourdieu (1984) maintains. How individuals make sense of their practices, and the signifiers they refer to, portray different images of identity construction.

Photographs: Markers of peer groups

The markers of peer groups in two universities also indicate the contents of pictures they shared on their Wall. For University A, "participating in departmental events" was the cultural focus in student groups. During interviews, departmental activities were mentioned often in their day-to-day life. "Participating in departmental events" became a marker and signifier among interviewees at University A. In addition to photos of class, pictures of different

departmental activities were popular among the participants due to the social meanings of this marker, as I discussed in section 4-3-1. Departmental events included first-year camping, department and college sporting events, mid-term trips, mid-term parties, graduation parties, summer education-service teams for the disadvantaged, summer camp for high school and sports team (e.g. basketball, volleyball, badminton and table tennis) trainings. For example, a series of groups of people organizing meetings of various program preparations, on the way to a further destination of some events, in the processes of those events, celebrations of those successful events and some reflective moments during some events. In those photos, the locations were usually spread across different branches of campus and were often outside of campus across Taiwan due to the exchange, competition, or special events with other universities and schools. Put differently, they demonstrated mobility and various space as well.

For University D, "attending class" was the marker. Unlike those young people who "don't take pictures when they go to class" in Farquhar's (2012, p.453) research, or the absence of the academic side of the college experience from the college-based presentation of the self in Mendelson and Papacharissi's (2011, p.262) research, Taiwanese college students liked to post photos of their day-to-day experiences in class, which was both the case at University A and D. The difference was partly because the traffic inconvenience of University D. It usually took

twenty minutes by walk as the shortest distance or almost an hour by public transportation in general to reach the campus. Participants tended to post photos of their life on the way to class and back home. For example, there were many selfies of individuals sitting on a bus, waiting at a bus stop or going through a metro station. They liked to post photos of themselves in class or studying in other academic campus buildings, representing the image of a studious self. Some students who participated in their departmental activities also shared pictures of those events: first-year camping, college sporting events, and graduation parties. They sometimes traveled outside campus due to the first-year camping, college sporting events and the graduation party. Compared to University A, individuals at University D had fewer occasions of departmental events and therefore posted fewer photos regarding this dimension.

Photographs: Identity Markers, Topic, Setting, and Aesthetics

Overall, the most important photographs for college students are those focused on social relationships, which is also evidenced in Mendelson and Papacharissi's (2011) research. Photos may be seen as personal and every day, and at the same time also political and economic (Berger, 2006, p.216).

Pictures posted by participants at University A usually conveyed certain types of aesthetics. They often applied various filters to achieve certain effects. As Ava explained, they

preferred pictures letting people "feel fresh," meaning that without "boorishness" and being "authentic." Those post-production enhancement and manipulation of the image are all grounded in a web of empirical references and significations (Brown, 2011, p.210). In other words, being fresh and authentic was their aesthetic standard of photographs. Spectacular nature or city scenes indicating where they have travelled to, a group people purposely posing to express wit and friendships, and edited photos representing daily life or special objects were the most common themes of their cover photos. As Van House (2011, p.131) suggests, online images often are treated as expressions of the owners' aesthetics. In other words, individuals tend to ensure that the images are consistent with their own aesthetics.

"We edit the aura of picture also," said April. The edited aura that was desirable amongst participants at University A, as it is a "poetic atmosphere," "a frame of mind" or "an artistic conception" of pictures, Albert explained further. Their emphases on the aesthetic dimension and editing practices of photos reveal that photography is a socially constructed practice of picture making, and is more than just picture taking (Baetens, 2009). Photography is thus a reflexive process of thinking and re-describing the reality in their eyes (Brown, 2011). In order to achieve the abstract ideas of aura and setting, the Goffmanian term, which is capable of embedding "numerous social meanings, contexts and institutions" (Baetens, 2009, p.93-96), has

to be managed. In other words, cultural knowledge of what is desirable to present in the photos in order to represent the concept of being "artistic" is required. Cultural knowledge employed in those photos actually reflects a certain taste and lifestyle, which indicates the social space individuals are located in, as Bourdieu argues.

Hanging out with friends at various restaurants for many purposes was the highly common theme of photos. The importance of friends gathering together in a restaurant can be revealed by overwhelming photos and check-ins on their Wall. The occasions included birthday parties, holiday celebrations, senior-junior gatherings, private-meaning celebrations and just to catch up. The backgrounds of those restaurants appearing in their photos were often full of an exotic atmosphere with ingenious decoration, which implied some famous restaurants and with a certain price range. Coffee houses with a Western style were also popular. Posing as hipster-like, for example, with books or Western language symbols on the table, or holding a cup of coffee while in deep thought were often posted on their Walls. Photos consisting individuals with a plate of food at hand were specifically common among young people.

Awareness of how to present the food in the picture was clearly demonstrated with intentional arrangement against other objects or with the symbolic representation of how many friends were getting together. Photos of individuals interacting with food in some scripts were

also displayed. For example, individuals often purposely did not directly look at the camera, individuals exhibited the food with the certain backgrounds of restaurants, and individuals pretended to be eating the food to express deliciousness.

Photos of having support from or having fun with friends on other occasions were also very popular. Support can be materialized by commodities offered from friends, with the symbolic meanings of friendships, social contexts and also global consumerism. For example, coffee and delicate cakes, postcards or souvenirs from oversees, or information of academic signifiers of a graduate program and exchange program. The cultural symbols of global culture, friends around the world, and in touch with or being fluent in Western languages were conveyed in these photos to indicate a status signal and conspicuous consumption (Veblen, 1899) in their identity construction. Using expressive adornment thus is a decision based on aesthetics, style and personal taste (Spencer, 2011). Having fun with friends also included going on a trip. Landscapes and cityscapes without people in them were also posted to express the poetic atmosphere of the photos.

Sophisticated composition was also seen in their photos. For example, selective use of focus, foreground framing and silhouette were applied in their photos. Many smart phones with apps can already contribute to some sophisticated photos. Digital SLR cameras are still more

capable of achieving a specific composition of photos. Digital SLR cameras appeared many times in their photos, indicating economic capital and cultural taste. Many daily life pictures were constituted with certain situation arrangement, including story scripts, specific poses and humor, such as a series of group photos where only one person smiled nicely in the middle against the context of other friends acting inadvertently and ugly, black and white series of friends chatting on campus with smiles on their faces, silhouettes where a group of friends were jumping high against the sunset at the beach, friends seriously mimicking some pop movie posters, or posing with cute facial expressions or with a literate atmosphere.

By communicating these cultural identities through their group photographs shared on their Wall, individuals could perform the social construction of their cultural self with other participants in a collectively way. Through their photos, the presentation of how they were immersed in their college life at University A was articulated through visual expressions of identity making, which was a reflexive performance whereby they constructed who they were in relation to where they were and how they were with their peers.

Pictures posted by participants at University D could be interpreted as grounded aesthetics argued by Willis (1990). In contrast to the conspicuous consumption of leisure class as Veblen (1899) described in his book, "taste for necessity" (Bourdieu, 1984) could be understood

as another group of young people's cultural meaning making a play in everyday life. Facebook was used as the place to document those trivial things in their day-to-day life for participants at University D, and the ordinariness of culture (Williams, 1989) also reflects young people's creative activity, reflection and expression in their lives. During their processes of meaning-making, however, social and cultural activities continue to be patterned and limited by social structural factors, indicating that young people's specific memberships of different class and geographical groups still matter (Willis, 1990).

In addition to having fewer photos of departmental activities, participants at University D shared relatively fewer photos of friends hanging out due to the economic situation of many participants and their friends. As Devon mentioned, "it's not so easy to find some classmates to hang out after class, they need to go their part-time job right away." He felt that not so many classmates have free time and explained the reason is because of "their economic situation." He also felt that people in his class are not so rich, and even one or two 'had to drop out due to their finance.' He was not happy about the fact that people cannot get together often. Diamond also mentioned that those who don't show up in class usually are "at work." The fact that it is hard to get friends together can be echoed by Dorian. He complained about the harsh living condition in Taipei because the allowance from his father is "not enough." He thus usually "stayed at the

dorm after class" or "went back home" in another city "during the weekend."

Within those photos that friends hang out together at various restaurants for different purposes, they tended to emphasize friendships and the moment of joy. Photos that were filled with a group of people against a little background were usually common. Everyone in the photos was usually looking at the camera with the pose of a one-hand gesture representing "yeah." The hand poses were next to their face, in front of their face, next to their eyes or on other people's heads. As Delfina said, they like those photos of "we are a happy group together." Therefore, they gave priority to the feeling of collective happiness. People's happy face and laughing together with friends were the main message of their photos. Food was often situated more for supplement or background without purposeful arrangement in a photo. Half empty cups or plates on the table with a group of people were also common in photos. Some participants also took pictures of people holding a cup or a plate to show what they ordered in restaurants. Pictures of food alone were sometimes taken to show the specialty. The main focus of photos was still on people's facial expressions of joy. How they "consume" the time hanging out with friends at different restaurants denotes "meaning with respect to their backgrounds or to their current positions" (Willis, 1990, p.137). With limited finance and limited time to gather friends in various restaurants, the fun and happy moments with friendship on display was the most

important memory to be documented.

In their cover photos, symbols of consumerism and pop culture were often appropriated. Very often individuals displayed symbols or images of Western culture on their cover photos. For example, Dustin used Chanel and other French brandy commodities as his cover photo. Diamond loved to have her favorite NBA star as her cover photo. Darell always had some Western comic figures on his account. Japanese pop culture was also seen among some students. Doyle, for instance, always had his favorite Japanese singer as his cover photo. Dianne and Dorian sometimes also displayed Japanese comic figures and products. Promotions of some recent books or exhibitions were also the sources of their cover photos. Some students demonstrated photos they took, the topics usually including gatherings, natural scenes in their daily environments and selfies. Using gatherings as cover photos also appeared in those at University A, while using a selfie as a cover photo only appeared at University D.

Selfies also appeared often in those photos of having fun with friends during other different occasions, compared to those at University A. Dustin, Dorian and Doyle shared lots of their selfies for the purpose of daily-life record and also during the occasions of gathering. In their collage pictures of gathering with friends, there was very often a selfie of in the collage. In terms of having fun with friends, some pictures displayed their exaggerated behaviors with a

playful attitude or goofing around with friends. For example, people interacted with sculptures or characters in a funny script, or someone made a grimace with other people together in the picture. Few students had digital SLR camera, although photographs with special composition or skills were barely displayed. There were some snap shots, with filter effects from the apps on their smart phones, of corners of campus without people in them. More often were still the photos focusing on people's facial expressions and with people filling up the photo.

Beyond Cultural Consumption Online

Growing globalization no doubt influences individuals' cultural consumption practices. The cultural items and their incorporated world views and values are now at hand to enrich or modify individuals' lifestyles, as Gracia-Ruiz and Rodriguez-Lluesma (2010) describes. They contend that increasing globalization enhances "the possibilities for elaborating and propagating new lifestyles" (p.242). Nevertheless, consuming the abstract world-views and values to practicing lifestyles in reality might not be that easy as the authors contend.

While utilizing free cultural symbols to denote one's taste and lifestyle online, it does not necessarily mean that those who could apply these symbols are sharing equal opportunities to achieve their dream. Dustin, for example, was the only participant at University D who articulated how he arranged his photos for what purposes. He said,

I used Chanel symbol as my cover photo because there are two women in the

world that I admire, and one is Coco Chanel. She was brave enough to challenge

the men-dominant rules in the patriarchal society, and insisted on her dreams to

start her business with nothing and earned herself respect. It means that you have

to confront predicaments and keep going, and to make something big to your

generation. I expect myself to do something similar.

He liked to upload artistic photos with poetic captions on his Wall. He liked to go to cultural

events "to broaden humanistic literacy." Dustin was a double-major in law. He therefore was

interested in "how German society is" and "the roots of laws in Germany." He also wanted to

study in Germany after college, as Aurora planned. Aurora not only was well-aware of her

impressive management of her Facebook account but also managed her future path in advance,

as I discussed in section 4-2-1.

Through their online practices, it seemed that two interviewees, Dustin and Aurora,

both had certain cultural tastes and were well-aware of their identity construction. At the moment

I interviewed them, they expected themselves to study abroad in the near future. Two years later,

Aurora applied for the exchange program in the graduate school at University A whereas Dustin

has worked in a private educational organization for one and half year with his bachelor degrees.

Dustin realized that "graduate school is not for him" and emphasized the "limit of capability" when he reflected on his choice. He felt that "many people are better in study" than he was. He therefore decided to work after college. While he still held the dream to go abroad, what he had in mind revealed the similar habitus of identity construction with his peers—discursive, uncertain, and deficient in cultural and social capital. He said,

> I am learning German because I want to go study. Graduate school is not for me, so I want to be an exchange student, a college student. [Researcher: But you need to be an enrolled college student in Taiwan.] Oh yeah? Okay, then I can just be a tourist. I just want to have fun.

It seems that, with cultural globalization and capitalist consumerism facilitated by technology and global media, along with the money-free availability of digital resources on Facebook, individuals are exposed to many opportunities of symbolic consumption and are encouraged to perform their tastes online. The cultural heterogeneity through which social strata groups had once been differentiated, argued by Bourdieu (1984), seems to be eliminated due to consumption, choice or internet, as some scholars argue (e.g. Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Bennett, 2011; Bennett & Kahn-Harris, 2004; Giddens, 1999; Weinzierl & Muggleton, 2003). However, considering the effects resulting from individuals' habitus and the volume of different capital

they have, the conclusion cannot be made too quickly.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

In this chapter I address the major research contributions of this project and suggest future directions for research.

5-1 Major Contributions

This dissertation provides contributions to youth studies, in both theoretical and practical dimensions. First, I analyze the social norms regulating college students' interpersonal interactions on Facebook, including obligated sociality, un/certainty in keeping friendship and the rule of emotion expression. As new social media sites change young people's social life, individuals' usages and engagement also reciprocally reconfigure the meaning of the sites in their day-to-day life. Taiwanese college students mainly use Facebook for the purpose of schoolwork and maintaining belonging. In this context, I examine how they interpret and negotiate with the norms and emphasize struggles and contradictions when they confront the norms in relation to individuals' privacy and personal image.

I especially elaborate on the cultural dimension of emotion expression in the mediated environments. While many studies have shown that individuals gain social capital or emotional support from social network sites, I look into the dynamic processes of how they reach their

hands out for help and at the same time manage context collision and distinguishing friendship status. I argue that college students use metaphor as an expression rule of negative emotion on Facebook to deal with the struggles between publicity, privacy and belonging.

Second, I enunciate the orientations of identity construction among college students located in different social spaces. Building on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, structural homology and taste, I first analyze individuals' practices of online identity construction in terms of the image types with which they regard their digital profile. Second, I decipher their online cultural consumption focusing on a visual analysis of photographs they've shared collectively. I suggest that individuals demonstrate unifying and consistent practices of identity construction online and offline through different cognitive structures of identity construction, which are socially produced, exercised by habitus, and different from socio-economic status. I support my argument with abundant empirical examples, including textual and visual data. My argument contributes to the debates on identity in youth studies in the way that it provides the real-world evidence of the effects of socio-economic status on identity construction online and connects the logic of identity construction practices online to the ones offline.

Finally, my research depicts another picture of college students' Facebook practices. While most adults regard inhabiting Facebook as having fun and nothing serious, my research

reveals a potential cultural pedagogy of Facebook in higher-education practices in terms of obligated sociality and impression management. I suggest that young people face the pressure of their day-to-day practices on social network sites because it is not about fun; instead, it is about how to maintain their college student identity online regarding schoolwork, friendship, emotion expression, and self-image. Last but not least, my research provides a dialogue between Western and East Asian areas research on Facebook in relation to the cultural differences and cultural globalization.

5-2 Future Research

I suggest some future directions for research in three dimensions, including research subjects, methods and topics.

5-2-1 Research subjects

In my project, I have found the different principles of identity construction among students from public and private universities, which is highly related to the socio-economic status of students. In my empirical examples, it seems as if there were various focuses of online practices regarding identity construction due to individuals' gender and sexuality. Gender and sexuality were not systematically considered in my research design in the beginning. This study

would be complemented by research that identifies how social factors, including gender, sexuality and race in broader contexts, affect college students' online practices.

I have chosen my participants from the same department at a public and private university in order to examine the effect of socio-economic status on identity construction. The social norms of maintaining interpersonal relationships and desirable identity could be different due to different disciplines. I look forward to research that covers various disciplines to examine whether there are differences, in which ways and to what extent, in social norms and identity construction among students from different departments.

5-2-2 Research methods

This research project applied in-person interviews, online observation and a visual approach of photographic analysis to examine college students' day-to-day practices on Facebook. I did not conduct a thorough content analysis of their Wall posts and comments due to the time interests. In my research process, I have observed that there were specific topics and certain types of language usages on their Wall posts and comments. To look into individuals' posts and comments might explore and reveal some cultural themes in their online practices as well.

I have designed my visual analysis based on the themes that emerged from my

interview data and Bourdieu's theoretical concepts and methods. My method was also inspired

by an empirical study from visual anthropology. There have been growing bodies of visual

studies and many scholars have worked on the development of methodology. Photographs are

important data for analyzing young people's identity construction both online and offline.

Research methods applying different visual approaches to photographs might contribute to some

fruitful results and further insights in young people's online identity construction.

5-2-3 Research topics

I have found that the rule of emotion expression, especially for negative emotions,

plays an important role in online social interactions in my research. The cultural dimension of

emotion expression online has not been extensively investigated in terms of young people's

online practices. I believe that studies on social support and emotive practices online would gain

some insight if the cultural dimension of emotion expression could be emphasized.

Throughout my research, I have also found that socially constructed cognitive structure

is a rich analytical lens by which to interpret both online and offline practices of identity

construction. I believe this concept could be applied to research in the fields of sociology of

education in addition to youth studies.

APPENDIX I

List of participants

University A

(20 students)

Adeline	Aaron
Agatha	Adam
Amelia	Albert
Annabelle	Allan
April	Andrew
Araminta	Arthur
Ardith	Atticus
Arielle	Auden
Ashleigh	
Audrey	
Aurora	
Ava	

University B

(14 students)

Delfina	Darell
Delores	Devon
Denise	Dorian
Desiree	Doyle
Diamond	Duncan
Dianne	Dustin
Darcy	Dwayne

APPENDIX II

Transcription sheet

Date		Place	
Main Concern			
Note			
Background			
Reflection			

Theme/Time	Transcription	Comment

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