

**AN ANALYSIS ON CHINESE AMERICANS ASSIMILATION  
PORTRAYED BY THE CHARACTER WAVERLY JONG IN *THE JOY  
LUCK CLUB* NOVEL**

**FINAL PROJECT**

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**in English Literature**



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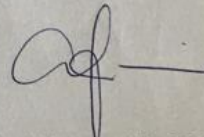
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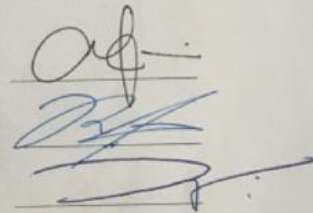
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### STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

Hereby, I honestly declare that the undergraduate final project I wrote does not contain the works or part of the works of other people, except those which were cited in the quotations and the references, as a scientific paper should. If my statement is not valid in the future, I absolutely agree to accept an academic sanction in the form of revocation of my paper and my degree obtained from that paper.

Semarang, August 25<sup>th</sup> 2023



Lina Alifatul Husna

## MOTO AND DEDICATION

“Giving up is easy, but in the end, you won’t get any results”

*Huang Renjun*



This final project is dedicated to my family for trusting me to choose my own life path, especially my parents who supported me in every way possible, my advisor who patiently guided me as I am today, my best friend for always be on my side in every single time I needed them the most, my classmates, and myself for working hard to reach my goals in finishing my study.

## ABSTRACT

**Husna Alifatul, Erika. 30801900016.** An Analysis on Chinese Americans Assimilation Portrayed by the Character Waverly Jong in *The Joy Luck Club* Novel. Final Project of Language and Communication Science. English Literature Program. Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang. Advisor: Afina Murtiningrum, S.S., M.M., M.A.

This study is to understand Chinese Americans' assimilation through a novel entitled *The Joy Luck Club*. This analysis uses Wei Bai's theory of assimilation. Assimilation is commonly viewed as boundary reduction caused by encounters between members of two or more societies or groups with different cultural backgrounds. This study also discusses the types of assimilation and the extent to which assimilation did based on the measurement of assimilation.

This analysis uses qualitative research that obtained with description, explanation, and interpretation the sentences, dialogues, and monologues. In this case, the type of qualitative research would be used to analyze Waverly Jong as the one of Chinese American characters in *The Joy Luck Club* novel.

This study found two (2) types of assimilation, namely Straight-Line Assimilation and Segmented Assimilation. In Straight-Line assimilation, there was Straight-Line assimilation in Chinese values such as divorce and Straight-Line assimilation in Chinese norms such as cohabitation. In addition, in Segmented assimilation there are Segmented assimilation in the value of education such as going to the same schools with natives, and Segmented assimilation in value of hard work when the characters participated in chess tournaments.

Meanwhile, in the measurement of assimilation the study found Interracial Marriage, because the characters who was Chinese married a Caucassin man, which means that the characters was perfectly assimilated.

**Keywords: Straight-Line Assimilation, Segmented Assimilation, Interracial Marriage.**

## INTISARI

**Husna Alifatul, Erika. 30801900016.** Analisis Asimilasi Orang Tionghoa-Amerika yang Digambarkan Oleh Karakter Waverly Jong dalam Novel *The Joy Luck Club*. Skripsi Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Bahasa dan Ilmu Komunikasi. Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang. Pembimbing: Afina Murtiningrum, S.S., M.M., M.A.

Penelitian ini adalah untuk memahami asimilasi orang Tionghoa-Amerika melalui sebuah novel yang berjudul *The Joy Luck Club*. Analisis ini menggunakan teori asimilasi dari Wei Bai. Asimilasi umumnya dipandang sebagai pengurangan batas yang disebabkan oleh pertemuan antara anggota dua atau lebih masyarakat atau kelompok dengan latar belakang budaya yang berbeda. Penelitian ini juga membahas jenis-jenis asimilasi dan sejauh mana asimilasi yang terjadi berdasarkan pengukuran asimilasi.

Analisis ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif yang berisi deskripsi, penjelasan, dan interpretasi kalimat-kalimat, narasi, dan dialog. Dalam hal ini, jenis penelitian kualitatif akan digunakan untuk menganalisis Waverly Jong sebagai salah satu karakter Tionghoa Amerika dalam novel *The Joy Luck Club*.

Penelitian ini menemukan 2 (dua) jenis asimilasi, yaitu Asimilasi Garis Lurus dan Asimilasi Tersegmentasi. Pada asimilasi Garis Lurus, terdapat asimilasi Garis Lurus pada nilai Tionghoa seperti perceraian dan asimilasi Garis Lurus pada norma Tionghoa seperti kumpul kebo. Selain itu, pada asimilasi Segmen terdapat asimilasi Segmen pada nilai pendidikan seperti bersekolah di sekolah yang sama dengan pribumi, dan asimilasi Segmen pada nilai kerja keras ketika tokoh mengikuti turnamen catur.

Sedangkan dalam pengukuran asimilasi penelitian ini menemukan Perkawinan Antar Ras, karena tokoh yang merupakan orang Tionghoa menikah dengan pria bule, yang berarti tokoh tersebut telah berasimilasi secara sempurna.

**Kata kunci: Kata kunci: Asimilasi Garis Lurus, Asimilasi Tersegmentasi, Perkawinan Antar Ras.**

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For the foremost, I would like to send my highest gratitude towards the Almighty Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* for blessing me with knowledge, strength, and ability to finish this final project. Secondly, *shalawat* and *salam* are always delivered towards our prophet Muhammad *Shallallaahu 'Alaihi wa Sallam* the Great model who guided us Muslims from the darkness into the right path of Islam.

This final project is a form of fulfilling the requirements in *obtaining Sarjana Sastra* Degree in English Literature Study Program of Sultan Agung Islamic University. This final project would never have finished without the support, encouragement, and guidance from several people. Therefore, I would like to send my deepest gratitude and appreciation to those people below;

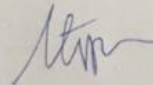
1. Trimanah, S.Sos., M.Si., as the Dean of Faculty of Language and Communication Science.
2. Dr. Didik Murwantono, S.S., M.Hum as the Head of English Literature Study Program.
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to finish this final project.

Semarang, August 25<sup>th</sup> 2023

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Erika Alifatul Husna', written in a cursive style.

Erika Alifatul Husna

## TABLE OF CONTENT

COVER .....	i
PAGE OF VALIDATION .....	ii
PAGE OF APPROVAL .....	iii
STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY .....	iv
MOTO AND DEDICATION .....	v
ABSTRACT .....	vi
INTISARI .....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENT .....	xi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION .....	1
A. Background of the Study .....	1
B. Problem Formulation .....	4
C. Limitations of the Study .....	4
D. Objectives of the Study .....	4
E. Significance of the Study .....	4
F. Organization of the Study .....	5
CHAPTER II REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE .....	6
A. Synopsis The Joy Luck Club '1989' .....	6
B. Related Literature .....	7
B.1. Assimilation .....	7
B.2. Types of Assimilation .....	9
B.3. Measurement of Assimilation in Chinese Immigrants .....	15

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHOD .....	18
A. Type of Research .....	18
B. Data Organizing .....	19
B.1. Data Collecting Method .....	19
B.2. Types of the Data .....	20
C. Analyzing the Data .....	21
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....	22
A. Types of Assimilation Practiced by Waverly's Character in <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> Novel by Amy Tan .....	22
A.1. Straight-Line Assimilation .....	23
A.2. Segmented Assimilation .....	27
B. Measurement of Assimilation Depicted by Waverly Jong in <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> Novel .....	32
B.1. Interracial Marriage .....	32
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS .....	35
A. Conclusion .....	35
B. Suggestions .....	36
REFERENCES .....	37

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Humans have been migrating or moving from their homes since ancient times. It is considered a human characteristic because by migrating from their place of origin, people believe they find a better life and food (Bai 3). Migration is a very complex phenomenon. Therefore, people have various reasons to migrate as the world changes. Today, people migrate to get new jobs, better education, and expect a better fate in a new place (Bai 3). The World Development Report in 2023 reported about 184 million people (2.3 percent of the population), including 37 million refugees who live outside their country of nationality. Some 43 percent of the population live in low and middle-income countries (24).

Since ancient times, the United States has been a frequent destination for immigrants because it is perceived as the land of economic opportunity. During the late 1800s, many people decided to leave their homes and immigrate to the United States. Immigrants entered the United States with almost 24 million immigrants between 1880 and 1920 (Dasgupta 6). The majority of immigrants from Northern and Western Europe to this country at the beginning 1870s were the main countries that immigrants traveled to before the American Civil War (Bai 3). Nevertheless, at the beginning of the California Gold Rush in 1849 and 1882, when their immigration was prohibited by federal law, many Chinese people traveled to the United States (Bai 15).

During the 1850s, Chinese immigrants migrated to the United States and became the first Asians to do so (Fletcher et al 3). Chinese immigrants hope that they can improve their lives in the new place. Therefore, they worked on constructing the Pacific Railroad in the United States (Bai 15). The new environment certainly has diversity, such as politics, economics, and especially cultures which of course can affect the lives of immigrants socially. These differences can create social inequalities, especially for minorities. Therefore, minorities must go through some ways such as the assimilation process to be well received by the native population.

Assimilation is commonly viewed as a process of boundary reduction caused by encounters between members of two or more societies or groups with different cultural backgrounds (Baumann 9). In some studies on cultural assimilation, the second generation has a complex role, as norms and values are acquired through various socialization processes within the community. Second-generation migrants are more likely to adapt to the more liberal norms and values of their destination country than their parents who migrated themselves (Kalmijn & Kraaykamp 698). The socialization process of the second generation varies. Their jobs, networks, values, and different opportunity structures help them assimilate.

Based on Bai, assimilation has five (5) types, there are Straight Line Assimilation, Segmented Assimilation, Neoclassical Economic Assimilation, Social Capital and Network Assimilation, and Chinese Assimilation (5). Furthermore, immigrants are considered to have successfully assimilated if they

have achieved four measurements, namely Residential Assimilation, Socioeconomic Assimilation, Language, and Interracial Marriage.

Chinese immigrants assimilated their native culture with the American culture with the aim so that they can be accepted by American society and not be discriminated against. They assimilate cultures, behaviors, and norms to have a better life in their new environment. The assimilation process carried out by the Chinese can be found in many literary works, one of them being in the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan.

*The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan tells about the lives of four Chinese immigrants and their daughters living in America. The novel is divided into four chapters. Each chapter in the novel explains the story of the lives of four different characters in each generation. In this novel, there was a clash of cultures between Chinese and American cultures that occurs in the characters' daily lives, especially in “*The Rules of Game*” and “*Four Directions*” which tell the story of Waverly Jong's life. Waverly Jong was the daughter of Lindo Jong. In this novel, Waverly and Lindo Jong have differences, Lindo Jong is still thick with Chinese culture and norms, and Waverly's life has become a bit different from Chinese culture and norms.

Based on the story and the assimilation process carried out by the Chinese, Waverly does some types of assimilation and she has achieved a measurement of assimilation. From the story background, this study focuses on the type of assimilation practiced by Waverly and the extent to which assimilation is depicted

by Waverly's characters based on the measurement of assimilation in *The Joy Luck Club* '1989' by Amy Tan.

## **B. Problem Formulation**

Based on the background of the problems above, the focus of this study is in two parts:

- 1 What types of assimilation are depicted by Waverly in the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan?
- 2 How is the extent of assimilation depicted by Waverly based on the measurement of assimilation in the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan?

## **C. Limitations of the Study**

This study only focuses on the types of assimilation and the extent to which assimilation works in the lives of Waverly in the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan.

## **D. Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this study is to find out;

1. Types of assimilation are depicted by Waverly in the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan.
2. The extent of assimilation depicted by Waverly based on the measurement of assimilation in the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan.



### **E. Significance of the Study**

The study focuses on explaining the types of assimilation and the extent to which assimilation is depicted by Waverly based on the measurement of assimilation in the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan. Moreover, the results of the study have theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the results of the study has benefits to improve knowledge of the readers about the types of assimilation and the extent of assimilation depicted by Waverly based on assimilation measurements in *The Joy Luck Club* novel by Amy Tan. Meanwhile, practically the results of the study can serve as reference material and a guide for future researchers who want to research the types of assimilation and the level of assimilation based on assimilation measurements.

### **F. Organization of the Study**

This study is divided into five (5) chapters, chapter one of this study consists of the general introduction which includes; the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the limitation of the study, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, and the organization of the study. The chapter two consists of reviews of related literature which includes; a synopsis and review of theory in previous research. Chapter three consists of the research method which includes; the types of research include; data collecting method, and data organization include; types of data and analyzing the data. Chapter four consists of findings and discussion which includes; types of assimilation such as Straight-Line assimilation in Chinese values, Straight-Line assimilation in Chinese norms, Segmented assimilation in the value of education, Segmented

assimilation in the value of hard work, and measurement of assimilation which is Interracial Marriage. Chapter five consists of conclusions and suggestions.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### A. Synopsis *The Joy Luck Club*

The chapters "*Twenty-Six Malignant Gates*" and "*American Translation*" in *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan consist of 8 sub-chapters, including "*The Rules of Game*" and "*Four Directions*" which tell the story of Life by Waverly Jong. Waverly Jong is a second-generation Chinese immigrant who is the daughter of Lindo Jong. They lived in a region in San Francisco, United States, precisely in Chinatown called Waverly Place Street. She has two brothers named Vincent and Winston who love to play chess.

One day, at the Baptist Church Christmas party, Waverly's brother, Vincent, receives a gift that contains a chess set. Waverly's two brothers are happy, then they spend Christmas week playing chess. Waverly, who sees her siblings playing chess every day, is intrigued and wants to try it. At first, Vincent refuses Waverly's wishes, but Waverly has an idea to exchange her Christmas gift Live Savers instead for the winner. Vincent and Winston agree to teach Waverly to play chess. Midway through the game, there is a bit of a debate about the rules of the game. Then, Vincent suggests Waverly to reading "*The American Rules*". The book contains the rules of playing American-style chess. Waverly is very interested in the strategies in the book. Then, she learns it diligently. Since then, Waverly has always participated in chess tournaments and always win the

competition. One day, Waverly and her mother go to the market. At the market, her mother always talks about Waverly's achievements, which makes Waverly embarrassed. Waverly gets mad with her mother. Then, her mother says that she wouldn't care about Waverly anymore. From then on, Waverly has trust issues with her mother until she grows up.

One day, Waverly confides in her friend, Marlene, about her relationship with the Caucasian man who is going to marry her. She was confused about how to tell her mother that she was getting married to Richard. Waverly is worried that her relationship with Richard is the same as when she was married to Marvin Chen, her ex-husband. At that time, her mom didn't like Marvin, and she threw her shoes at them and that was just the beginning. Then, they decided to elope. Waverly certainly doesn't want that to happen to her relationship with Richard. Later, Waverly has a way for her mother to have a chance to realize that Waverly and Rich are already living together, and Waverly invites her mother back to her apartment. However, her mother does not want to give any response to that. Waverly feels that her mother doesn't care about her because when she talks about her relationship with Rich, her mother seems not to hear her, and always changes the subject. At the end of the story, Waverly is about to marry Rich, but her mother suggests that she postpone it until October so that they can honeymoon in China in the cooler season.

## **B. Related Literature**

### **B.1. Assimilation**

Cultural differences in social life are commonplace. But sometimes it can trigger divisions in society. Therefore, there needs to be a process that can minimize this, one of which is the assimilation process. According to Baumann, assimilation is commonly viewed as the process of boundary reduction caused by encounters between members of two or more societies or groups with different cultural backgrounds. They eliminated either their native culture or the culture of the country they live in (9)

The process of assimilation usually starts with small changes in daily life. Usually, assimilation occurs in the lives of immigrants in a foreign country (Bai 10). Thus, immigrants usually start changing their culture with tiny changes, like habits, behaviors, and others.

According to Dasgupta, the process of a minority group or culture becoming more like a dominant group or adopting its values, behaviors, and beliefs is known as cultural assimilation (1). Based on the statement, assimilation occurs when a minority group or a member of society becomes indistinguishable from the dominant members. The minority adopts the dominant culture so that their original identity is lost and their culture is merged.

Assimilation is a complex and multidimensional process of convergence that occurs at various levels of the socioeconomic, relational, and religious (Drouhot & Nee 3). Immigrants assimilate their culture into their

lives such as marriage and friendship, work, and their beliefs, so they are considered to have integrated into the local community.

Based on some of the definitions of assimilation above, it can be concluded that the assimilation is:

- a. Assimilation can occur from differences in cultural background.
- b. Assimilation usually occurs in immigrants' lives.
- c. Assimilation starts from small changes, like habits, behaviors, and values.
- d. Assimilation completely occurs when the minority becomes indistinguishable from the dominant.
- e. Assimilation is usually applied in immigrants' lives such as socioeconomic, relations (marriage and friendship), and religion.

## **B.2. Types of Assimilation**

According to Bai, there are five (5) types of assimilation including; Straight-Line Assimilation, Neoclassical Economic Assimilation, Segmented Assimilation, Social Capital and Network Assimilation, and Chinese Assimilation (6). An explanation of each type explained below.

### **B.2.1. Straight-Line Assimilation**

According to Bai, Straight-Line assimilation theory occurs when immigrants adopt the norms, values, behaviors, and characteristics of the majority and become indistinguishable from the dominant over time (6).

The immigrants were Americanized. They will be assimilated into the dominant society culture and language and their original culture is a melting pot. Therefore, this type of assimilation is also described as a “melting pot”. For example, the immigrants adopt and use the language of the dominant country rather than their original language in their daily lives.

### **B.2.2. Neoclassical Economic Assimilation**

This type of assimilation views the micro and macro forces shaping immigration and the assimilation process. The immigrants make rational choices by calculating their costs and expecting the benefits of migrating (Bai 8). They realized that migration has high costs financial, psychological, and social. Before they immigrate, they studied and saw the potential for hope of a better life in their new country. Therefore, when they immigrate to a new country, they will make a decision that works legally as a native.

According to Bai, this neoclassical economic theory can lead to labor supply and demand imbalances in countries around the world, as immigrants view large countries as having more potential than smaller countries that are perceived as proper in facilities (8). The immigrants think that if they work at a low wage, they will live under the constant fear of deportation.

### **B.2.3. Segmented Assimilation**

This type of assimilation focuses on second-generation immigrants (Bai 9). In some studies on cultural assimilation, the second generation has a complex role, as norms and values are acquired through various socialization processes within the community. Second-generation migrants are more likely to adapt to the more liberal norms and values of their destination country than their parents who migrated themselves (Kalmijn & Kraaykamp 698). The socialization process of the second generation varies. Their jobs, networks, values, and different opportunity structures help them assimilate.

Segmented assimilation emphasizes the process of immigrants becoming equal to Americans (Bai 10). This process is determined by individual-level factors, such as economy, education, English proficiency, place of birth, age at arrival, and length of stay in the United States. Other determining factors include racial status, family socioeconomic background, and place of residence (Zhou 984).

According to Bai, the second generation combines positive attitudes from their original culture like the value of education and hard work with the cultural elements found in the “American Dream” (10). American Dream is defined as a dream of a land where every man's life should be better, richer, and more fulfilling, with opportunities for each according to his capacity or accomplishment (High 1). The second generation of immigrants has the value of hard work, which is realized by having a higher education and having a job which equals to the natives.

#### **B.2.4. Social Capital Theory and Network Assimilation**

The second-generation immigrants diffused throughout a community-casual friends, distant relatives, and even friends who have been to the native country (Bai 12). In this type of assimilation, societies grow, and the cost of migration is reduced because of friendship and relatives. Therefore, the immigrants can enter strategies, job prospects, temporary housing upon arrival, and psychological support in the new society so they become like the natives.

#### **B.2.5. Chinese Assimilation**

The Chinese came to the United States in the 1840s, then to the mainland West Coast starting in the early 1850s as workers in gold mines and on the cross-country railroad. They were the first Asians to come to the United States and were the first Asian immigrants (Fletcher et.al 2). The new environment certainly has diversity, such as politics, economics, and especially cultures which of course can affect the lives of their socially. Based on Fletcher et.al, as soon as Asians arrived in this nation, bigotry and violence against them started, giving Asian Americans the impression that they were unwelcome foreigners (5). Therefore, the Chinese must go through some ways such as the assimilation process to be well-received by the American society.

According to Bai, Chinese immigrants who migrated to the United States began in North America (35). The major points of entrance for these immigrants were Philadelphia, Baltimore, Maryland, and Charleston. In



the 2010 census, the population of Chinese immigrants in the United States grew faster. Ninety percent (90%) of all Chinese Americans live in several major cities, such as New York, Texas, Washington, California, Illinois, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and the Chinatowns which are placed in San Francisco and New York City (Bai 37).

The Chinese are among the most successful immigrants in American society because they have a strategy to enable ethnic members to survive. They invest more in their children's education and career development therefore the second generation and beyond can have a better life. They have high educational achievements and decent employment among all ethnics group (Bai 13). Therefore, the second generation of Chinese immigrants are fluent in bilingual and prefer to speak in English (Lee & Kye 112).

Another factor that help Chinese immigrants assimilated quickly was the majority and minority paradigm, which holds that whites, the dominant group, will have greater socioeconomic status than minority groups, but this does not apply to Asian Americans (Lee & Kye 114). Therefore, with this high socioeconomic status, they can raise their level of life so that they can be accepted by American Society properly. However, according to Lee, Asian Americans are still less likely than whites to be self-employed in middle and high-paying industries, even though their second and third-generation self-employment rates are comparable to those of whites (115).

Chinese immigrants also conduct interracial marriages in the United States, especially with whites. People who have lived in the United States for a long time and are proficient in English, and generational status can influence the increase in interracial marriage. In 2012, sixty-six percent (66%) of white men reported that they have married or would marry an Asian. Therefore, it was perceived as a signal of the breakdown or blurring of ethnic boundaries and is interpreted as evidence of Asian-American assimilation because one of the different cultural backgrounds has been merged. (Lee & Kye 115).

#### **B.2.6. Chinese Traditional Culture**

According to Wu, Chinese traditional culture has some common characteristics, including; family and collective responsibility and value of education and achievement (6).

The value of the family is the fundamental unit of the society (Wu 7). Therefore Chinese traditional culture prioritize family relationships, because the Chinese has beliefs in Confucianism, which focuses on harmony (Yang 1215). Parents will do anything for their children to show their loyalty. In addition, they will accompany their children to adulthood. Their children will live together until they get married because Chinese culture tends to discourage or prevent divorce, cohabitation, infidelity, and failure to fulfill family responsibilities through social influence and control (Xu 40).

In traditional Chinese culture, respect for elders is highly emphasized. Therefore, in China marriage is the union of two families (Xu 40). That means in this case, parents still care about their children in marriage. According to Hung, in traditional Chinese marriage, the Chinese believe that marriage is lifelong referring to the mother's teaching, and they consider that the divorce is abnormal and pathological (7). In addition, in traditional Chinese marriage, the Chinese also believe that divorced families are regarded as 'deficient', 'broken', and 'problematic' (Hung 8). Therefore, they still pay attention to their children's lives so divorce does not occur.

Hard work and education are critical values are parents' special attention to their children to teach socially desirable and culturally approved behaviour (Wu 11).

### **B.3. Measurement of Assimilation in Chinese Immigrants**

The assimilation process has four (4) measurements, they are Residential Assimilation, Socioeconomic Assimilation, Language, and Interracial Marriage (Bai 57). An explanation of each measurement will be explained below.

#### **B.3.1. Residential Assimilation**

Residential assimilation can happen to first-generation Chinese immigrants, as they live in ethnic enclaves, with a high degree of distinctiveness in language, customs, or race, and the differences are not easily removed (Bai 58). Therefore, Chinese immigrants segregated

themselves by living in predominantly white neighborhoods to gain language acquisition, upward mobility, and marriage. Washington, Boston, Houston, Chicago, Seattle, New York, Dallas, and Denver all have sizable Immigrants populations followed by San Francisco and San Jose which have Chinatowns (Bai 61). Chinese immigrants moving to better neighborhoods with the aim can raise their socioeconomic status, especially in major cities.

### **B.3.2. Socioeconomic Assimilation**

First-generation Chinese immigrants emphasized education in their children, hoping to achieve upward mobility and economic success (Bai 62). They send their children to American Public Schools so that their children can learn new skills and social values equal to Americans. By providing a proper education for their children, their socio-economic status from being laborers can improve to being economically successful. According to the census in 2015, One and a half of Asian Americans have attended college and seven out of ten of them went to high school (Bai 62). Based on these data, it can be concluded that Chinese immigrants are successful in terms of socio-economic assimilation in America.

### **B.3.3. Language**

The second generation who have studied in standard American Public Schools will automatically learn English. Hence, the assimilation process between different ethnicities can be done well (Bai 68). The second generation in their lives combines their '*mother tongue*' with English. So

that, they can easily get along with the natives and they can be assimilated quickly. According to Bai, bilingualism in the second generation can also have a beneficial impact on academic performance, because it can increase mental development, intelligence, and motivation (69).

#### **B.3.4. Interracial Marriage**

Interracial marriage between Chinese immigrants and Americans become a trend over time, but scholars have found that the rate of interracial marriage among Asian Americans has declined in the past decade. Interethnic marriages are commonly between Asians born in America among immigrants in the United States (Lee & Kye 117). Interracial marriages are the ultimate benchmark for Chinese immigrants. A person is said to be perfectly assimilated when he or she marries someone with a different cultural background (Bai 79). It was perceived as a signal of the breakdown or blurring of ethnic boundaries and is interpreted as evidence of Asian-American assimilation (Lee & Kye 115) because if they do an interracial marriage, usually one of the different cultural backgrounds can merge. The Chinese will be accustomed to living with a pattern of behavior from Western Culture.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

Research methods were a way to systematically solve research problems by conducting scientific research to describe and analyze methods, while highlighting their limitations and resources (Patel 48). This chapter consisted of various types of research and data organization, including data collection methods, types of data, and data analysis. The discussion of each part was presented below.

#### **A. Type of Research**

The type of the study was qualitative research. According to Williams, qualitative research was a holistic approach that involved discovering social phenomena investigated from the perspective of participants. The aim of qualitative research was to describe, explain, and interpret the collected data. This approach allowed the researchers to explore and gain a better understanding of the complexity of a phenomenon (66). As per Hancock, qualitative research focused on description and interpretation, often leading to the development of new concepts or theories, or an evaluation of organizational processes (6).

According to the statements, qualitative research was not obtained through statistics or quantitative methods. This type of research generally worked by studying human behavior, such as observing body language, attitudes, opinions, feelings, and more of the individuals involved (Patel 49).

According to Williams, to collect data in qualitative research, the researchers usually conducted direct or participant observation, interviews,

archival records or documents, physical artifacts, and audio-visual materials (68). The researchers needed to directly identify and analyze the objects in the process of collecting data. Based on the type of research, the study was conducted by reading, collecting, classifying, evaluating, and drawing conclusions based on the data analysis.

## **B. Data Organizing**

### **B.1. Data Collecting Method**

This study used a type of qualitative research, where the focus of the study's results was on describing and interpreting the phenomena that appeared in the object. Therefore, the data for this study were gathered in various ways. The steps in data collection were explained in the sections below.

#### **B.1.1. Reading the Novel**

The first step for the data collection method in this study was reading the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan intensively and carefully, paying close attention to each sentence. The aim was to understand the characters and plots in each chapter, allowing for the analysis of various aspects based on the comprehension of the plots and characters.

#### **B.1.2. Identifying the Data**

After reading and understanding the plots and characters, various issues were identified through narrations, dialogues between characters, and monologues. The data were then identified based on the theory used,

which aimed to address the problem formulation. Subsequently, the data that had been identified based on the problem formulation was coded.

### **B.1.3. Classifying the Data**

In this step, the collected data were then classified based on the two problem formulations. The data were organized into a table containing several columns including quotes, forms, pages, type, reference, and comments, which were referred to as an appendix. The purpose of this data classification was to facilitate the analysis of the issues in the novel that addressed the two problem formulations.

### **B.1.4. Reducing the Data**

The final step in this data collection method was to reduce the data.

The selected data was then refined, ensuring that only the data capable of effectively addressing the problem formulations was retained.

## **B.2. Types of the Data**

Data had two types: primary data and secondary data. Primary data were original data that had been directly collected from the source firsthand. Secondary data were data obtained from research that had already been completed by someone (Bhome 48). This study utilized both primary and secondary data, including:

- a. The primary data used in this study was the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan, which served as the original first hand source.
- b. The secondary data used in this study included journals, articles, and government statistical data related to the topic under investigation.



### **C. Analyzing the Data**

This study uses qualitative research by reading and identifying the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan, then classifying the data into a table called an appendix and analyzing the data with related theories. Then, evaluating the data is used to solve the two problem formulations. The data used are primary and secondary data, there is the novel *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan, journals, articles, and government statistics that are related to assimilation theories.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, there are two points discussed to solve the problem formulation in this study. The first is the types of assimilation practiced by Waverly Jong in *The Joy Luck Club* '1989' novel by Amy Tan, and the second is the extent to which assimilation is depicted by Waverly based on the measurement of Chinese assimilation. The two problem formulations are answered using the assimilation theory of Wei Bai which discusses the types of assimilation and the measurement of Chinese assimilation. An explanation of each point will be explained below.

#### **A. Types of Assimilation Practiced by Waverly's Character in *The Joy Luck Club* Novel by Amy Tan**

In this chapter, the study used data in the form of novel quotes taken from the chapters "*Twenty-Six Malignant Gates*" and "*American Translation*" which consists of eight (8) sub-chapters, including "*The Rules of the Game*" and "*Four Direction*" in *The Joy Luck Club* novel by Amy Tan. Both sub-chapters focus on the life story of a second-generation Chinese immigrant who living in America, named Waverly Jong. In both sub-chapters, the types of assimilation and assimilation measurements are analyzed using Wei Bai's Chinese Assimilation theory. After analyzing used Wei Bai's assimilation theory, the study found two (2) types of assimilation practiced by Waverly, consisted of five (5) Straight-Line Assimilation and five (5) Segmented Assimilation.

### A.1. Straight-Line Assimilation

According to Bai, Straight-Line assimilation theory occurs when immigrants adopt the majority's norms, values, behaviors, and characteristics and become indistinguishable from the dominant over time (6). Based on the statement, the immigrants replace their original culture with local culture. In other words, they were Americanized. In *The Joy Luck Club* novel, Waverly practices Straight-Line assimilation in her life. The explanation will be explained in the points below.

#### A.1.1. Straight-Line Assimilation in Chinese Values

According to Hung, in traditional Chinese marriage, the Chinese believe that marriage is lifelong, referring to the mother's teaching, and they consider that the divorce is abnormal and pathological (7). In traditional Chinese marriage, the Chinese also believe that divorced families are regarded as 'deficient', 'broken', and 'problematic' (Hung 8). In *The Joy Luck Club* novel, Waverly Jong does the Straight-Line assimilation in Chinese values. It can be seen from some of the quotes;

“You don't know my mother”, I said. “She never thinks anybody is good enough for anything” **“So, elope with the guy,”** said Marlene. “That's what I did with Marvin. **“Marvin was my first husband,** my high school sweetheart” (*The Joy Luck Club* 183).

This dialogue tells about Waverly talking to her friend, Marlene about her relationship. In the next sentence, Waverly tells that she was once married to her high school sweetheart, Marvin Chen. This is in contrast with the Chinese values. In Chinese, a man or woman who is married cannot divorce until the end of his or her life. The Chinese adhere to the idea that marriage is lifelong. It can be concluded that Waverly has eliminated Chinese cultural values because she has divorced Marvin Chen, her ex-husband. Other than the quote, Waverly's divorce from her ex-husband Marvin Chen is also explained in the narrative;

“And so I watched her, seeing her reaction to changes in my apartment from the pristine habitat **I maintained after the divorce** when all of a sudden I had too much time to keep my life to this present chaos, a home full of life and love.”

*(The Joy Luck Club 185).*

This monologue tells about Waverly who waited for her mother's reaction when she invited her to her apartment for the first time after her divorce from her ex-husband. The narration shows that Waverly, a Chinese-American, has eliminated the traditional Chinese marriage values. She chooses to divorce for her happy life with her daughter. She ignores the marriage as lifelong. It can be concluded that she assimilated Chinese values.

### A.1.2. Straight-Line Assimilation in Chinese Norms

Chinese culture tends to discourage or prevent divorce, cohabitation, infidelity, and failure to fulfill family responsibilities through social influence and control (Xu 40). In Chinese traditional culture, children will live with their parents until they get married.

In addition to values, in *The Joy Luck Club* novel, Waverly also does the Straight-Line assimilation in Chinese cultural norms. It can be found in the quote “But now, how could my mother not notice that we are living together, that this was serious and would not go away even if she didn’t talk about it? She had to say something.” (*The Joy Luck Club* 185). The monologue tells about Waverly who is still trying to get her mother's attention while in her apartment. Waverly hopes that her mother will mention her relationship with her new boyfriend, Richard, whom she is about to marry. In the quote, Waverly lives in the same house as Richard, it can be known from the sentence “...**that we are living together**, that this was serious and would not go away even if she didn’t talk about it...” (*The Joy Luck Club* 185). Waverly lives in the same apartment as Richard, which starkly contrasts Chinese norms, because Chinese tends to discourage cohabitation and upholds the norms (Xu 40). Based on the explanation above, it can be known that Waverly assimilated Chinese norms.

In addition to this quote, there are other quotes that also show that Waverly assimilated Chinese norms “My mother was quiet. She was looking toward my open closet, bulging with racks of shoes, ties, my dresses, and **Rich’s suits**”. (*The Joy Luck Club* 186). The monologue tells about Waverly inviting her mother to look around her apartment. She never gives up on getting her mom's attention. When looking at her closet which is full of Rich's shirts, she hopes that her mother will open up a conversation about their relationship. It can be seen from the sentence “...my open closet, bulging with racks of shoes, ties, my dresses, and **Rich’s suits**”. (*The Joy Luck Club* 186). Based on the quote, it can be known that they are living in the same apartment. Living together with the opposite gender is in contrast with the Chinese traditional norms which uphold norms and politeness. It can be concluded that Waverly does Straight-line assimilation in Chinese norms.

Other than the quote, Waverly's cohabitation with Richard is also explained in the narrative “**I gestured to all the signs of Rich lying about.** She looked around the room toward the hall, and finally, she said, "You have a career, you are busy. **You want to live like a mess what I can Say?**” (*The Joy Luck Club* 186).

In the dialogue, Waverly tries to show Richard's existence to her mother. Then, her mother responded with sternness.

Waverly's mother does not like Waverly's current life, and it can be seen from the quote “**You want to live like a mess what I can Say?**” (*The Joy Luck Club* 186). Since the fight that happened to them when Waverly was young, the mother-daughter relationship has been less than harmonious. Her mother does not seem to care about Waverly's life, even into adulthood. Moreover, when her mother saw that Waverly was now living with the Caucasian man she was going to marry, her mother looked disappointed, because Waverly had been living in a mess. What Waverly has done is not in accordance with traditional Chinese cultural norms, which reject cohabitation and uphold norms and politeness (Xu 40). In this case, it can be concluded that she assimilated Chinese cultural norms.

## **A.2. Segmented Assimilation**

Besides Straight-Line assimilation, this study also found the Segmented assimilation done by Waverly in *The Joy Luck Club* novel. Segmented assimilation is when second-generation immigrants combine positive attitudes from their original culture like the value of education and hard work with the cultural elements found in the “American Dream” (10). The American Dream is defined as a dream of a land where every man's life should be better, richer, and more fulfilling, with opportunities for each according to his capacity or accomplishment (High 1). Based on the statement, second-generation immigrants have the value of hard work, which is realized by having a higher education and having a job that is

equal to the natives. In *The Joy Luck Club* novel, Waverly practices Segmented assimilation in her life. The explanation will be explained in the points below.

#### **A.2.1. Segmented Assimilation in Value of Education**

In *The Joy Luck Club* novel, Waverly does Segmented Assimilation in the value of education. It can be found in the quote;

“A bobby pin was wedged between her lips. She wetted her palm and smoothed the hair above my ear, then pushed the pin in so that it nicked sharply against my scalp.

“Who say this word?” she asked a trace of knowing how wicked I was being. I shrugged my shoulders and said,

**“Some boy in my class said Chinese people do Chinese torture”**. (*The Joy Luck Club* 91).

The dialogue tells about when Waverly was a child who was talking to her mother while getting ready for school. Waverly asks her mother about Chinese torture as told by some of her classmates. Based on the sentence; **“Some boy in my class said Chinese people do Chinese torture”** (*The Joy Luck Club* 91), it can be known that Waverly went to the same school as the Americans. Waverly does the Segmented assimilation in the value of education because she adjusts herself to be equal to the natives.

#### **A.2.2. Segmented Assimilation in the Value of Hard Work**



In addition, Waverly also does Segmented assimilation in the value of hard work. It can be found in the quote;

“This **American Rules**”, she concluded at last. “Every time people come out from a foreign country must know the rules. You do not know, the judge says, too bad, go back. They not telling you why so you can use their way to go forward. They say, “Don’t know why, you find out yourself. But they know all the time. Better you take it, find out why yourself”. I found out about all the whys later. **I read the rules** and looked up all the big words in a dictionary. (*The Joy Luck Club* 94).

The quote above tell about Waverly's childhood life with her brother who loves to play chess. While playing chess with Vincent, there was a bit of a debate between them over the rules of the game. Then, Vincent suggests Waverly to reading “*The American Rules*”, which contains the rules of playing American-style chess. The mother tells about the American Rules which govern the children’s chess set require Waverly to find out how to master those rules herself: going to a new country requires learning a whole set of new rules. Then Waverly studied the rules and applied them to the chess game. It can be concluded that Waverly does Segmented assimilation because she combines the

positive value of hard work with The American Rules. She hopes that she can achieve her own version of success in America.

Other than the quote, the study also found the Segmented assimilation in the value of hard work in the narration;

**“My mother placed my first trophy next to a new plastic chess set** that the neighborhood Tao society had given to me. As she wiped each piece with a soft cloth, she said, “Next time win more, lose less ” **“At the next tournament, I won again,** but it was my mother who wore the triumphant grin” (*The Joy Luck Club* 96).

The monologue above tells about Waverly's victory in the chess tournament. The quote explains Waverly's persistence in playing chess, therefore she can win her first race and always win the next race. Therefore, it can be concluded that Waverly does Segmented assimilation in the value of hard work because she combines the positive value of hard work with the American rules of the game, therefore she can win the chess tournament.

Other than the quote, Waverly’s hard work is also found in the quote below;

**“I attended more tournaments,** each one farther away from home. **I won all games,** in all divisions The Chinese bakery downstairs from our flat displayed my **growing collection of trophies** in its window, amidst the

dust-covered cakes that were never picked up. The day after **I won an important regional tournament**, the window encased fresh sheet cake with whipped cream frosting and red script saying “Congratulations, Waverly Jong, **Chinatown Chess Champion**” (*The Joy Luck Club* 96).

The monologue explains the results of Waverly’s hard work which can bring her from winning chess tournaments to regional tournaments. The American Rules which she read and studied, could lead her to become a champion at various levels of chess tournaments. Based on the explanation, Waverly does the Segmented Assimilation in the value of hard work, because she combines the value of hard work and the American Rules, therefore she succeeds in becoming a famous chess player. In addition to the narrative, Waverly's success can also be seen in the quote;

“By my ninth birthday, I was a national chess champion. I was still some 429 points away from grand-master status, **but I was touted as the Great American Hope, a child prodigy and a girl to hoot. They ran a photo of me in Life magazine** next to a quote in which Bobby Fischer said, “There will never be a woman grand master”. “Your move, Bobby,” said the caption. (*The Joy Luck Club* 96).

The quote tells about Waverly who has become a national chess player. In the quote, Waverly is referred to as the "Great American Hope" and she is a child prodigy and a girl to be proud of, because of her chess skills. It shows that she achieved her dream of becoming a famous chess player because of her hard work.

Based on the explanations above, this study found two types of assimilation portrayed by Waverly, there are Straight-Line Assimilation and Segmented Assimilation. Waverly does Straight-Line assimilation in Chinese values, such as divorce with her ex-husband, and in Chinese norms such as cohabitation with her boyfriend. Meanwhile, Waverly does Segmented assimilation in the value of education, such as going to the same schools as the natives, and in the value of hard work such as when she combines the value of hard work and the American Rules when she plays and participates in chess tournaments until she won a regional tournament and became a famous chess player.

#### **B. Measurement of Assimilation Depicted by Waverly Jong in The Joy Luck Club Novel**

The assimilation process has four (4) measurements, they are Residential Assimilation, Socioeconomic Assimilation, Language, and Interracial Marriage (Bai 57). An explanation of the measurement depicted by Waverly will be explained below.

### **B.1. Interracial Marriage**

Interracial marriages are the ultimate benchmark for Chinese immigrants. A person is said to be perfectly assimilated when he or she marries someone with a different cultural background (Bai 79). It was perceived as a signal of the breakdown or blurring of ethnic boundaries and is interpreted as evidence of Asian-American assimilation (Lee & Kye 115) because if they do an interracial marriage, usually one of the different cultural backgrounds can merge. The Chinese will be accustomed to living with a pattern of behavior from Western Culture.

In *The Joy Luck Club* novel, there are some quotes that contain interracial marriage depicted by Waverly Jong; “After our miserable lunch, I gave up the idea that there would ever be a good time to tell the news: **that Rich Schields and I were getting married.**” (*The Joy Luck Club* 184). The dialogue explains about Waverly who was worried about her marriage to Richard, a Caucasian man. She was worried that if she told her mother about her relationship with Rich, it would cause problems like her first marriage. From the dialog, it can be concluded that Waverly does the ultimate step in the assimilation of immigrants. Waverly who is Chinese has a desire to marry a Caucasian man.

In addition, interracial marriage is also found in the dialogue “That’s what I did with Marvin. **Marvin was my first Husband**, my high school sweetheart.” (*The Joy Luck Club* 184). This dialogue explains Waverly who told her friend, Marlene, about her **marriage** with her first husband, Marvin

Chen. Then, Waverly eloped with Marvin because her mother didn't like if she would marry a Caucasian man. From the dialog, it can be concluded that Waverly does the ultimate step in the assimilation of immigrants, namely interracial marriage.

From the explanations above, the study has found one measurement, which is interracial marriage. The novel only explained one measurement which is that Waverly, who is Chinese, is getting married to a Caucasian man, it means that she was perfectly assimilated because the interracial marriage is the ultimate step of measurement of assimilation.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The final chapter of this study consists of conclusions and suggestions. The discussion of each part is presented below.

#### A. Conclusion

The study found two (2) types of assimilation depicted by Waverly Jong in *The Joy Luck Club* novel, including Straight-Line Assimilation and Segmented Assimilation. The Straight-Line Assimilation is Waverly has divorced her ex-husband, Marvin. This is Straight-Line assimilation because, in the value of traditional Chinese culture, marriage is lifelong. In addition, Waverly has adopted American norms and disregarded her native culture. Waverly practiced cohabitation with her boyfriend, which is not the norm in traditional Chinese culture. Chinese norms uphold norms and politeness. Meanwhile, Segmented Assimilation in the value of hard work. Waverly combines the positive values of hard work with the American rules when she learns to play chess, therefore she can achieve success in a chess tournament. She became a famous chess player in the region. In addition, Waverly also attends the same school as natives. This includes Segmented Assimilation because, in this case, Waverly is trying to equalize herself with the natives, so that she can speak English well.

In the novel, Waverly passed the interracial marriage measurement, because Waverly who is Chinese has been married to her ex-husband, an American man named Marvin, then they eloped. At the end of the story, Waverly

is told to be married to an American man named Richard. This shows that Waverly has done the ultimate step of assimilation because she did Interracial Marriage.

### **B. Suggestions**

Based on the conclusion above, the contents of *The Joy Luck Club* novel by Amy Tan are very interesting for those who like learning about foreign cultures, especially Chinese or American culture. This study was analyzed using Wei Bai's Assimilation theory. Future studies, it is expected to analyze this novel from other aspects, such as cultural acculturation, culture shock, and other theories related to cultural clashes between Chinese Americans.



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