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An important question for the acculturation of adolescents from immigrant families is whether they retain ethnic labels that refer to their national origin (e.g., Mexican, Chinese) or move toward the adoption of labels that are dominant in American society (e.g., Latino, Asian American, American). Approximately 380 adolescents from Asian and Latin American immigrant families selected ethnic labels each year during the four years of high school. Results indicated no normative developmental trend either toward or away from the inclusion of pan-ethnic or American terms in adolescents' ethnic labels. Significant numbers of adolescents changed their ethnic labels from year to year, however, and these changes were linked with changes in adolescents' closeness with their parents, strength of ethnic identification, and proficiency in their families' heritage languages.

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Given the social importance and functional significance of ethnicity in American society, children are virtually required to figure out the ethnic and social categories into which they are placed. This task can be particularly complicated for children and adolescents from immigrant families who are less familiar with the ethnic categories and labels that are used in the United States. An important question for the acculturation of adolescents from immigrant families, therefore, is whether they retain ethnic labels that refer to their national origin (e.g., Mexican, Chinese) or move toward the adoption of labels that are dominant in American society (e.g., Latino, Asian American, American). Given that immigrant families comprise the large majority of those with Asian and Latin American backgrounds and that these are the two fastest rising ethnic groups in the United States, the answer to this question will have implications for the nature of ethnic categories and ethnic identity in the broader society.

Ethnic Labeling among Immigrants

An important aspect of identity development during the adolescent years is the process by which teenagers explore how they fit into existing social categories and groups (Ruble, Alvarez, Bachman, Cameron, Fuligni, García Coll, & Rhee, 2004). Ethnicity is a meaningful and salient social category within the United States, differentiating people across an array of social, economic, and behavioral indicators. Children and adolescents learn about the significance of ethnicity both through their own social experiences and the frequent need to identify their ethnic group membership on official forms and surveys. This learning process presents an interesting challenge for adolescents from immigrant families, who may be unfamiliar with the ethnic labels

and categories that are distinctive to the United States. For example, "Latino" and "Hispanic" are pan-ethnic labels that are commonly used to refer to individuals of Latin American origin in the United States but which are absent in Latin American societies (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Similarly, although the terms "Asian" and "White" may not be entirely new to immigrants, their social significance is particularly American because they place adolescents within the major ethnic and racial categories used by the government and most social institutions (i.e., Black, White, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American). Another convention unique to the United States is to use the term "American" by itself or to pair national or pan-ethnic labels with the term "American" in order to create hyphenated labels such as "Mexican-American" and "Asian-American."

A few cross-sectional studies have indicated that adolescents from immigrant families, particularly adolescents who were born outside of the United States themselves, are somewhat resistant to adopt pan-ethnic and American ethnic labels and instead prefer to retain labels that refer to their national origin. A survey of eighth and ninth grade students in Florida and Southern California reported a greater tendency to chose national origin labels such as "Mexican" and "Chinese" among the first generation (i.e., foreign born) adolescents as compared to their second generation (i.e., American born) peers, who were more likely to use pan-ethnic and American or hyphenated-American labels (Rumbaut, 1994). Ethnographic studies have suggested that some foreign-born adolescents, such as black immigrants from the West Indies and immigrants from Mexico, seek to retain their national origin labels as a way to avoid the negative stereotypes associated with labels such as Black, Hispanic, or Latino (Matute Bianchi, 1991; Waters, 1999). The pattern of first generation adolescents preferring national origin labels and second generation adolescents choosing pan-ethnic, American, and hyphenated-American

labels has been observed in other samples (Buriel & Cardoza, 1993; Doan & Stephan, 2006), including ninth grade students who participated in the first wave of the longitudinal study that is reported in the present paper (author identifier removed).

Generational differences such as these are often mistakenly interpreted as meaning that spending more time in the United States will produce changes within immigrants themselves. But generational differences may not translate into changes within individuals across time and development, due to the numerous confounding factors associated with generational status such as birthplace and the unique historical context within which each generation entered the country (Fuligni, 2001). It is important to determine whether ethnic labels become more Americanized within children from immigrant families across time and development in order to determine whether indeed more time in the United States leads to an assimilation of the society's dominant ethnic categories. As a key time of ethnic identity formation, the adolescent years are an important developmental period to study this process.

Longitudinal examinations of changes in ethnic labeling are rare and there are competing predictions about what might be observed. On the one hand, the adolescent period could be a period of significant change in ethnic labeling among those from immigrant families as they become more aware of the existence and the social significance of the ethnic categories used in American society (Doan & Stephan, 2006). The continual need in secondary school to complete official forms that require identification with a pan-ethnic group such as Asian or Hispanic, a general desire to belong to and fit in with normative groups and social categories, and an increasing awareness of the ethnic landscape of American society could lead those from immigrant families to adopt pan-ethnic, American, or hyphenated-American ethnic labels as they progress through high school. Like most adolescents in the United States, children from

immigrant families engage in the normative process of emotionally distancing themselves somewhat from their parents during adolescence (Fuligni, 1998), and this process could weaken adolescents' connection to their families' national origin and result in a movement toward other ethnic labels.

On the other hand, there may be stability in the ethnic labels chosen by adolescents from immigrant families over the high school years. Some observers have suggested that birthplace is a primary criterion by which individuals may determine their ethnic categories (Rumbaut, 1994). First generation, foreign-born adolescents may therefore retain the national origin labels that they have been shown to prefer in previous cross-sectional studies because they believe that they will always be primarily "Mexican" or "Chinese" because of their birth in Mexico or China. Similarly, second generation adolescents may feel unable to adopt such a national origin label because they were not born in those countries. Instead, the second generation may identify with labels such as Latino or Asian American throughout the adolescent years because they were born in the United States. Yet another possibility is that adolescents from immigrant families move toward the incorporation of national original labels even more, as their process of identity development leads them to explore their family's national and cultural origins more closely.

The Current Study

We sought to test these competing hypotheses in a longitudinal study of adolescents from Asian and Latin American immigrant families who were followed yearly during the four years of high school. First, we examined whether there was a normative change toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American (either hyphenated or alone) terms in ethnic labels as adolescents progressed through the high school years. Second, we assessed whether changes in the use of pan-ethnic and American terms varied according to the adolescents' ethnic background,

generation, and gender. It is possible that adolescents from Asian immigrant families would be more likely to move in the direction of the adoption of pan-ethnic or American terms. Because of the greater economic integration of their parents and their own academic success at school, adolescents from Asian immigrant families may identify with American society more quickly than those from Latin American immigrant families (Portes & Zhou, 1993). In addition, individual Asian immigrant groups are relatively smaller in size than those from Latin America, which may lead toward greater aggregation across specific ethnic groups into a larger, pan-ethnic identification. Indeed, in perhaps the only longitudinal examination of changes in ethnic labeling, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) reported that adolescents from Chinese immigrant families were more likely to move toward the adoption of a pan-ethnic label between middle school and the end of high school, whereas those from Mexican immigrant families moved away from pan-ethnic labels and toward the national origin label of "Mexican."

In terms of generational status, it is possible that there would be greater change among the foreign-born adolescents because they start out with the endorsement of the national origin label, thereby giving them more room to move toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms as they spend more time in the United States. Second generation adolescents, by virtue of being born in the United States, may feel that they have fewer ethnic options available to them and must conform to the ethnic categories that are dominant in American society. Second generation adolescents may simply feel that national origin labels such as "Chinese" or "Mexican" are not available for their choosing because they might not see themselves as exclusively Chinese or exclusively Mexican. Finally, it is difficult to predict whether there would be gender differences in the changes in adolescents' choice of ethnic labels. Our earlier analyses of ninth grade students who participated in the longitudinal study reported in the present

paper revealed no gender differences in adolescents' choice of their most descriptive ethnic labels, and gender differences were inconsistent in the Portes and Rumbaut (2001) study discussed above. Nevertheless, we explored potential gender differences given some previous evidence suggesting that girls in ethnic minority families were more likely to be socialized by their parents in their ethnic and cultural background (Bowman & Howard, 1985), which could lead to a lower likelihood of girls moving toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms in their ethnic labels.

In addition to examining variations in changes *between* adolescents, we analyzed changes *within* adolescents over time as a function of simultaneous changes in their family cohesion, strength of ethnic identity, and proficiency in their families' heritage languages (e.g., Chinese, Spanish). Such analyses allowed us to get closer to the processes by which changes in ethnic labeling take place within adolescents by looking at how these changes are associated with changes in other significant aspects of their social and psychological development. In terms of family cohesion, adolescence is a period of fluctuation in parent-child relationships, and it is possible that as adolescents become more emotionally distant from their parents, their ties to their families' national and cultural origins may weaken. As a result, the adolescents may move away from ethnic labels that incorporate their national origin and toward labels that include pan-ethnic or American terms.

The strength of adolescents' ethnic identity refers to the extent to which adolescents identify with and feel attached to their ethnic group (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Phinney, 1990). A popular model of the strength or importance of ethnic identity is that outlined by Phinney (1989), in which she highlights two components: ethnic identity search and ethnic identity affirmation. Search refers to the extent to which adolescents spend time and

effort exploring their ethnicity, whereas affirmation is the extent to which adolescents feel positive about and attached to their particular ethnic group. Two predictions could be made about the links between the strength of adolescents' ethnic identity and their choice of ethnic labels. On the one hand, an increase in the strength of adolescents' ethnic identity – both in terms of their ethnic search and their ethnic affirmation – could result in a greater adoption of pan-ethnic and American ethnic terms. This is because a stronger ethnic identity, particularly higher levels of ethnic search, would reflect a greater exploration of ethnic identity in the context of an American society that uses these terms to demarcate the dominant ethnic categories. In addition, greater ethnic search and affirmation could result in a perception of common fate among members of different Asian or Latin American ethnicities, resulting in greater pan-ethnic identification (Lien, Conway, & Wong, 2003).

On the other hand, increased ethnic affirmation and search could result in retention of national labels, because the identity exploration of adolescents from immigrant families would require them to consider their national heritage. In addition, it could simply be harder to maintain a national label in American society, thereby requiring the identity work that would be reflected in higher levels of ethnic affirmation and search. In support of the latter hypothesis, earlier analyses of ninth grade students who participated in the first wave of the longitudinal study that is reported in the present paper suggested that ethnic identity was stronger among adolescents who primarily chose a national origin label (author identifier removed).

Our expectation for the links between changes in adolescents' proficiency in their heritage language and their ethnic labels was straightforward. Given the meaning of language use and proficiency for ethnic and cultural identity that has been observed previously among immigrant families and adolescents (e.g., Phinney, Romero, Nava, & Huang, 2001), declines in

adolescents' heritage language proficiency across the high school years was expected to be associated with a movement away from the national origin label and toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms.

Method

Sample

Beginning in ninth grade and continuing yearly through twelfth grade, students from three public high schools in the Los Angeles area were recruited for participation in a longitudinal study. The schools were chosen to reflect the communities from which their students are drawn and they varied in terms of ethnic composition, socioeconomic status, and overall level of achievement. The first school was populated predominantly by students who came from families with Latin American and Asian backgrounds with lower-middle to middle-class educational and occupational statuses. This school tended to be in the lower-middle to middle range of the achievement distribution of schools within the state of California (California Department of Education, 2006). The second school possessed average levels of achievement and consisted mainly of students from Latin American and European backgrounds whose families had lower-middle to middle-class backgrounds. Finally, the third school mainly consisted of students from families with Asian and European backgrounds who were middle to upper-middle class in terms of parental education and occupation. The third school tended to have above average achievement levels. No single ethnicity dominated any of these schools; rather, the two largest ethnic groups each comprised 30-50% of the total population in each school (California Department of Education, 2006).

In two of the schools the entire ninth grade was invited to participate during the first year of the study. At these schools, the same process continued in subsequent years, with all students

in the correct grade being invited to participate. In the third school, approximately half of the ninth graders were invited to participate because the large size of the school did not make it feasible to recruit all of the students. In this school, only students who had participated in ninth grade were followed in subsequent years. At all three schools, students who had participated in early years but were no longer enrolled in the school were contacted and invited to participate by mail in subsequent years.

The sample used in the present analyses was the 384 participants from Asian and Latin American immigrant families who had participated in the study for at least two of the four years of the study, where an immigrant family was defined as one in which at least one parent was foreign born. The sample was evenly split by sex (187 male and 197 female). The majority of the 228 participants from Asian immigrant families were from Chinese backgrounds (76.8%), and the majority of the 156 participants from Latin American immigrant families had Mexican backgrounds (86.5%). Of the Asian participants, 78 were of the first generation (i.e., the students were foreign-born themselves) and 150 were of the second generation (i.e., the students were born in the United States). Of the participants from Latin America families, 35 were of the first generation and 121 were of the second generation.

Adolescents from the two immigrant groups differed in terms of parental education, such that the Asian immigrant parents were more likely to have graduated from high school and attend some college than the parents from Latin America, $F(1, 371) = 28.58$, $p < .001$. There were no differences in parental education according to the adolescents' generational status, $F(1, 371) = .89$, n.s., and the relationship between ethnicity and education did not vary according to generational status, $F(1, 371) = .07$, n.s.

Procedure

Students who returned parent consent forms and provided their own assent to participate completed a questionnaire during class time each spring. This questionnaire included demographic items as well as information on strength of ethnic identity and closeness to parents. Each year except for eleventh grade, participants also completed a questionnaire at home which included items about heritage language proficiency. These questionnaires were collected in the students' classes two weeks later. In the eleventh grade, the language items were included with the other measures during the in-class questionnaire. Consent forms and study materials were available to students and their parents in English, Chinese, and Spanish and fewer than 8 participants chose to complete the questionnaires in a language other than English during any single year.

Measures

Participants completed the following measures each year of the study.

Ethnic labeling. Adolescents were presented with an alphabetical list of ethnic labels that is shown in Appendix A. The list was developed based upon discussions with ethnically diverse adolescents, discussions with Mexican and Chinese undergraduate research staff members who attended high school in the Los Angeles area, as well as prior research on the type of labels used by adolescents from these different groups (e.g., Rumbaut, 1994; Matute-Bianchi, 1991). Adolescents were asked to indicate all of the labels that they felt applied to them, and to add any others that applied to them but that were not on the list (e.g., mixed-race labels, other ethnic labels). Additionally, students were asked to indicate the single ethnic label that they believed best described them. Adolescents were allowed to report more than one label for this last

question about the best descriptive label if they felt that it was most accurate for their own ethnic identity, but this was done by less than 3% of the sample during any given year.

Each year, labels were coded as to whether a pan-ethnic term (e.g., Asian, Latino) was included (0=no, 1=yes) as well as whether American, either by itself or hyphenated, (e.g., American, Mexican-American) was included (0=no, 1=yes) in the label. Within this classification scheme, a participant could have indicated a label that was both pan-ethnic and American (i.e., Asian-American) and labels were not distinguished according to whether or not they were hyphenated. Initial analyses examined changes in (a) whether *any* of the different labels chosen by the adolescent fell into the categories above, and (b) whether the *most descriptive* label chosen by the adolescent fell into the categories above. Results were the same for both sets of analyses; therefore the current paper presents results for only the analyses of the *most descriptive* label. Of the 3% of adolescents who reported multiple most-descriptive labels, all but two reported labels that could both be classified into the same categories described above. The two participants who listed multiple most descriptive labels that fell into different categories (e.g., pan-ethnic and national origin) were not included in the present analyses. The specific labels chosen by adolescents as most descriptive each year are presented in Table 1.

Closeness to parents. Adolescents completed a subset of the Family Adaptation and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES) II inventory separately for each parent (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979). Questions were the same for mothers and fathers and participants responded to each on a five-point scale (1 = "Almost never," 5 = "Almost always"). The measure for each parent included ten items such as "My mother [father] and I do things together," "My mother [father] and I are supportive of each other during difficult times," and "My mother [father] and I feel very close to each other." An average was computed for each participant across both

parents. Internal consistencies were similarly high for both ethnic groups across the four years of the study (αs = .87 - .92). Scores were recoded on a 0 to 4 scale for the analyses presented in this paper.

Strength of ethnic identity. Adolescents completed two subscales of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992) in reference to the most descriptive ethnic label that they chose each year. The Affirmation and Belonging subscale consists of seven items and assesses ethnic pride, feeling good and happy about one's ethnicity, and feelings of belonging and attachment to one's ethnic group. Sample items include "I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to," "I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group," and, "I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background." The Ethnic Identity Search subscale consists of five items and measures individuals' exploration of and commitment to their ethnic group. Sample items include "I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs," "I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group," and, "In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group." Participants responded to each item on a five-point scale (1 = "Strongly disagree," 5 = "Strongly agree"). Internal consistencies were similarly high for both ethnic groups across the four years of the study for both measures (Affirmation: αs = .89 - .91; Search: αs = .68 - .78). Scores were recoded on a 0 to 4 scale for the analyses presented in this paper.

Heritage language proficiency. Using a standard approach to measuring language proficiency in large-scale questionnaire studies that prohibit the direct testing of language proficiency (e.g., Phinney et al., 2001; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), adolescents were asked to report all of the languages that were spoken in their home. For any non-English language spoken

in the home (e.g., Chinese, Spanish), participants were asked to rate how well they speak, understand, read, and write that language. Participants responded to each item on a five-point scale (1 = "Not very well," 5 = "Very well"), and responses to these multiple items of proficiency were averaged. Participants received a 0 on this scale if they indicated that no non-English languages are spoken in their home, resulting in a scale that ranged from 0 to 5. Internal consistencies were similarly high for both ethnic groups across the four years of the study (αs = .86 - .89).

Results

Participation Analyses

Initial analyses were conducted to examine differences between adolescents according to the degree of their participation in the study. Although this sample could include those who participated only two years, most participated all four years of the study (M = 3.52 years, SD = .67). Because participants entered the study at different years, a variable was created to indicate the percentage of possible years each participant took part in the study. For example, a participant who began the study in ninth grade had four possible years whereas a participant who began the study in tenth grade only had three possible years. On average, participants took part in the study in 94% (SD = .14) of their possible years. There were no differences in the degree of participation as a function of gender, ethnicity, or generation. To determine if there were differences in any of the time varying variables (i.e., ethnic labeling, closeness to parents, strength of ethnic identity, and heritage language proficiency) as a function of participation, Hierarchical Linear Models (HLM; Bryk & Raudenbusch, 1992) were estimated using the following equations:

$$\text{Ethnic labeling, etc.}_{ij} = b_{0j} + e_{ij} \qquad [1]$$

$$b_{0j} = c_{00} + c_{01}\ (\text{Participation}) + u_{0j} \quad [2]$$

where Equation 1 represents adolescents' scores on the time varying variables (i.e., ethnic labeling, closeness to parents, etc.) across the years of their participation in the study, and Equation 2 represents the prediction of the adolescents' average scores across their years of participation as a function of their degree of participation (i.e., the percent of possible years that they took part in the study). There were no differences in any of the variables in the study based on degree of participation except for heritage language proficiency, where adolescents who participated in more years of the study had lower average levels of heritage language proficiency (b = -1.40, $p < .01$).

Normative Changes in Ethnic Labeling

The first goal of this study was to examine change over time in adolescents' inclusion of a pan-ethnic or an American term in their self-identification. Separate HLM models were estimated for (1) inclusion of a pan-ethnic term and (2) inclusion of an American term, and the statistical model that was estimated for both was as follows:

$$\text{Pan-ethnic/American term}_{ij} = b_{0j} + b_{1j}\ (\text{Year}) + e_{ij} \quad [3]$$

$$b_{0j} = c_{00} + c_{01}\ (\text{Gender}) + c_{02}\ (\text{Ethnicity}) + c_{03}\ (\text{Generation}) + u_{0j} \quad [4]$$

$$b_{1j} = c_{10} + c_{11}\ (\text{Gender}) + c_{12}\ (\text{Ethnicity}) + c_{13}\ (\text{Generation}) + u_{1j} \quad [5]$$

As shown in Equation 3, adolescents' inclusion of a pan-ethnic or American term (0=no, 1=yes) on a particular year (i) for a particular individual (j) was modeled as a function of the average amount of inclusion of the term by the individual (b_{0j}) and the year of the study (b_{1j}). Year was coded such that year 1 = 0, year 2 = 1, year 3 = 2, and year 4 =3. Equations 4 and 5 show how both the average amount of inclusion and the effect of the year of the study were modeled as a

function of the adolescents' gender, ethnicity, and generational status. The level two variables were effects coded such that gender was coded as males = -1 and females = 1, ethnicity was coded as Latino = -1 and Chinese =1, and generation was coded as first generation = -1 and second generation = 1.

Results indicated no normative developmental changes in adolescents' inclusion of either a pan-ethnic or an American term in their ethnic labels. On average, second generation adolescents were more likely to choose pan-ethnic and American terms, and adolescents from Asian backgrounds were more likely to include the term American in their ethnic label (see Table 2). But as shown in Table 2 and Figures 1 and 2, there were no significant changes in ethnic labeling over time (pan-ethnic: b = -.01, n.s.; American: b = .01, n.s.), and the amount of change did not significantly vary across adolescents' gender, ethnicity, and generation.

Within-Person Changes in Ethnic Labeling

Amount of within-person change. Although there was not a normative trend regarding the inclusion of a pan-ethnic or American term in adolescents' ethnic labels over time, there was a substantial amount of change in any direction (i.e., toward or away from inclusion of a pan-ethnic or American term) within individuals over time. As shown in Figure 3, between 23.3% and 29.2 % of the sample changed whether or not they included a pan-ethnic term in their label at each grade interval, and between 19.3% and 27.7% of the sample changed whether or not they included an American term in their label. Taken together, between 37.2% and 46.0% of the sample changed their label in terms of whether or not they included a pan-ethnic or American term from year to year. Likelihood of changing whether or not an American term was included in the label varied according to both ethnicity and generation across the first grade interval, between ninth and tenth grade (ethnicity: $\chi^2(1, N = 274) = 4.59$, $p < .05$; generation: $\chi^2(1, N =$

274) = 5.93, $p < .05$) such that first generation and Latino adolescents were more likely to change. There were no other ethnic or generation differences in likelihood of changing whether a pan-ethnic or American term was included in adolescents' most descriptive label.

Given the degree of changes in ethnic labeling within adolescents across time, an additional set of HLM models was estimated to determine whether changes in adolescents' inclusion of a pan-ethnic or American term from year to year were associated with concurrent changes in their closeness with parents, strength of ethnic identity, and heritage language proficiency. As before, separate HLM models were estimated for (1) inclusion of a pan-ethnic term and (2) inclusion of an American term. In addition, separate models were estimated for each of the predictor variables (closeness with parents, strength of identity, and heritage language proficiency). Given that there was a maximum of four time points per person, and that some participants had only two or three time points, we did not have enough power and degrees of freedom to estimate all of the predictors simultaneously. The general form of the model used for these analyses was as follows:

$$\text{Pan-ethnic/American Term}_{ij} = b_{0j} + b_{1j}\,(\text{Predictor}) + e_{ij} \qquad [6]$$

$$b_{0j} = c_{00} + c_{01}\,(\text{Gender}) + c_{02}\,(\text{Ethnicity}) + c_{03}\,(\text{Generation}) + u_{0j} \qquad [7]$$

$$b_{1j} = c_{10} + c_{11}\,(\text{Gender}) + c_{12}\,(\text{Ethnicity}) + c_{13}\,(\text{Generation}) + u_{1j} \qquad [8]$$

Equation 6 shows how adolescents' selection of a pan-ethnic or an American term (0=no, 1=yes) on a particular year (i) for a particular individual (j) was modeled as a function of the average amount of inclusion of the term by the individual (b_{0j}) and the specific predictor variable ($b_{1j;}$ i.e., closeness with parents, strength of ethnic identity, or heritage language proficiency). Closeness with parents and strength of identity were coded from 0 to 4 and heritage language proficiency

was coded from 0 to 5. Equations 7 and 8 show how the average amount of inclusion of the term and the effect of the predictor variable were modeled as a function of gender, ethnicity, and generational status, which were coded in the same manner as before.

Closeness with parents. As shown in Table 3, decreases in closeness with parents over time were associated with an increased likelihood of adolescents including a pan-ethnic term in their ethnic labels (b = -.05, p < .05). This association, however, was moderated by generation such that it was found only among first generation adolescents (first generation: b = -12, p < .01; second generation: b = .02, n.s.). There was no association between changes in closeness with parents and changes in the inclusion of an American term in adolescents' ethnic label (b = -.05, n.s.).

Strength of ethnic identity. Separate analyses were run using ethnic search and ethnic affirmation. As shown in Tables 4 and 5, decreases in search and affirmation were each associated with an increased likelihood of adolescents including a pan-ethnic term in their ethnic labels (search: b = -.03, p < .05; affirmation: b = -.05, p < .01). Similarly, decreases in search and affirmation were each associated with an increased likelihood of including an American term in one's label (search: b = -.04, p < .01; affirmation: b = -.05, p < .01). None of these associations varied according to adolescents' gender, ethnicity, or generation.

Heritage language proficiency. As shown in Table 6, decreases in heritage language proficiency were associated with an increased likelihood of including American in one's most descriptive label (b = -.03, p < .05). This association did not vary according to gender, ethnicity, or generation. A different pattern was found for the association between changes in heritage language proficiency and changes in the inclusion of a pan-ethnic term. Although there was no relationship for the sample as a whole, the association varied according to adolescents' gender

and ethnicity. Declines in heritage language proficiency were associated with increases in the likelihood of including a pan-ethnic term in the ethnic labels of boys (b = -.04, p < .05) and adolescents from Asian backgrounds (b = -.05, p < .001). The same association did not exist for girls (b =.00, n.s.) and adolescents from Latin American backgrounds (b =.01, n.s.)

Parental Education

A final set of analyses was conducted using parental education as an additional predictor in Equations 4, 5, 7, and 8 in order to determine whether it was associated with any of the patterns reported above, and whether it might explain any observed ethnic or generational differences. Parental education was a significant predictor in only two of the analyses: among adolescents with more highly educated parents, the negative association between changes in ethnic search and the changes in inclusion of a pan-ethnic term was greater (b = -.02, p < .05), and the negative association between changes in heritage language proficiency and the inclusion of an American term was reduced (b = .02, p < .05). In no case, however, did the inclusion of parental education change any of the results regarding ethnicity or generation reported above.

Discussion

Adolescents from immigrant families showed no normative trend toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms in their ethnic labels across the high school years. Instead, relatively equal percentages of students used these terms at each grade. Generational changes remained stable during high school, with second generation students being more likely to use pan-ethnic and American terms than first generation students, testifying to the continued importance of birthplace in adolescents' choice of ethnic labels (Rumbaut, 1994). Even after spending more years in American society, many foreign born adolescents likely feel unwilling or unable to adopt the ethnic labels common to the United States because they were born in other

countries, such as Mexico or China. Second generation adolescents, in turn, may feel unable to consider themselves solely "Mexican" or "Chinese" because they were not born in those countries. Ethnic differences also remained stable across time. The trend for adolescents from Asian immigrant families to more likely use an American term in their ethnic label may be a due to a greater identification with American society resulting from their higher level of academic success and their families' relatively easier economic integration as compared to those from Latin American backgrounds (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

The lack of normative change toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms demonstrates how differences across different generations do not necessarily mean that more time in the United States will produce changes within immigrants themselves (Fuligni, 2001). At least during the high school years, adolescents from immigrant families as a whole do not show changes that would imply acculturation or assimilation to the dominant ethnic categories and labels used in American society. It is possible that the stability may be a function of the relative constancy of the social environments of the students during high school. The contexts of the adolescents' lives show little change between the ninth and twelfth grades as they attend the same schools with generally the same peers and teachers. Instead, normative changes in ethnic labeling may be more likely to occur at periods of social transition, such as the move out of high school and into young adulthood. As young adults gain new experiences through work or education, they may become more deeply aware of their ethnic background (Phinney, 2003). Practically speaking, young adults often use their newly found independence and their college and work experiences to immerse themselves in diverse perspectives, student or professional organizations, and coursework to explore and learn more about their identity (Tatum, 1997). The change itself from a high school context to a college or work context can motivate a redefinition

of one's identity. For instance, Ethier and Deaux (1994) found that Latin American college students "remoor" or renegotiate their ethnic identity upon entering college, primarily due to adaptation to the new context. It would be important in future work to follow adolescents from immigrant families during such a significant period of developmental transition, although it is unlikely that generational differences would ever disappear completely as studies of adults have found consistent generational differences in ethnic labeling (Lien et al., 2003; Masuoka, 2006).

Although there was great stability in the numbers of adolescents who chose different ethnic labels during high school, there were significant changes within adolescents themselves from year to year. Approximately one-third to one-half of the adolescents in the sample changed their label in terms of whether or not they included a pan-ethnic or American term at each grade interval. Therefore, rather than a period of great stability, the high school years are a time of fluctuation in the ethnic labels that adolescents use to describe themselves. The fluctuation is not in any one direction. Rather, adolescents from immigrant families appear to be trying on different ethnic labels each year, and similar numbers of students move toward and away from the use of a pan-ethnic or American term. Such fluctuation would be consistent with the portrayal of the adolescent years as a key period in the developmental of ethnic identity, which usually involves a process of search and exploration of one's cultural background and place in American society (Phinney, 1990).

Rather than being random fluctuation, however, the changes in ethnic labels within adolescents themselves were significantly associated with changes in other significant aspects of the adolescents' psychological and social development. When adolescents' closeness with their immigrant parents declined, they were more likely to move toward the inclusion of a pan-ethnic term in their ethnic label. The trend was especially pronounced for foreign-born adolescents.

Greater emotional distance between adolescents and their parents may weaken adolescents' ties to their families' national and cultural origins because of less frequent or effective cultural socialization by their parents, or because the adolescents do not identify as strongly with their immigrant parents. It is important to note that the association between closeness with parents and the inclusion of a pan-ethnic term was observed *within* adolescents themselves, thereby ruling out potential confounding factors associated with traditional correlations observed between adolescents. Rather, the association observed in this study suggests that these two social processes – family closeness and ethnic labeling – are closely linked to one another among adolescents from immigrant families.

Changes in the strength of adolescents' ethnic identity also predicted changes in their ethnic labeling, with declines in ethnic search and affirmation being associated with a movement toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms. The link was consistent across adolescents, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, and generational status. The process of ethnic identity development, although it takes place in a social context in which pan-ethnic and American terms are dominant, likely requires adolescents from immigrant families to consider their national heritage. Retaining a national origin label such as "Mexican" or "Chinese" may also require more identity work and effort, which would be reflected in higher levels of ethnic search and affirmation. Moving toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms, in contrast, could partially be a result of simply accepting the ethnic categories that American society places adolescents into through school forms and other official documents that allow for identification with only pan-ethnic or hyphenated-American labels. Accepting these labels, therefore, may require lower levels of ethnic search and affirmation. Yet the link between a stronger ethnic identity and the retention of national origin labels also may be a function of the

adolescents still being at a stage when they are living with parents and are embedded within the family context. It is possible that ethnic search and affirmation could be associated with the adoption of other ethnic labels, such as those that include pan-ethnic and American terms, at different periods of life such as the transition to adulthood when children begin to move away from the family context. Future work should explore whether the link between the strength of ethnic identity and the labels that adolescents choose to describe themselves does indeed vary depending upon the developmental and social context in which ethnic identity exploration takes place.

Finally, changes in adolescents' heritage language proficiency was associated with changes in their ethnic labels such that declines in proficiency were associated with movement toward the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms. Language use and proficiency have been shown to be linked to the strength of adolescents' ethnic identity in previous research (Phinney et al., 2001). The ability to speak their families' heritage language, such as Spanish or Chinese, likely enables adolescents to explore their families' cultural and national heritage more deeply through communication with family members and consumption of non-English information sources and media. Adolescents from immigrant families also may feel that they cannot call themselves "Mexican" or "Chinese" if they cannot speak the language very well. Continued research should more thoroughly explore the meaning of language use and ability for ethnic labeling and identity through the use of qualitative methods such as in-depth personal interviews and focus groups.

Interestingly, the link between changes in heritage language ability and changes in the inclusion of a pan-ethnic label varied such that it was stronger for adolescents from Asian immigrant families. This may be because there was less environmental support for the retention

of Asian languages within the Los Angeles area, where Latin American immigrants and Spanish dominate. The ethnic labeling of those from Asian immigrant families may be more dependent upon their perceptions of their language ability because it is harder to maintain such ability and there are fewer social and environment supports for their national identity when that ability weakens over time. Adolescents from Latin American immigrant families, in contrast, may have several other supports for the maintenance of a national identity given the predominantly Latin American context of the area.

The ethnic context of adolescents' neighborhoods and schools should make a difference in the labels that they use to describe themselves. Adolescents who participated in this study all lived in contexts in which there are substantial numbers of adolescents from similar immigrant and ethnic backgrounds, thereby potentially leading toward lower rates of the inclusion of pan-ethnic and American terms in ethnic labels. For example, having sufficient numbers of peers with immigrant Chinese backgrounds likely makes it easier for adolescents to retain the label of "Chinese." The present study was unable to determine whether variation in the ethnic and immigrant concentration across schools and neighborhoods would make a difference in adolescents' ethnic labels, but it is possible that higher levels of pan-ethnic and American labeling would be observed among immigrants in contexts with few other co-ethnics. Given the increased dispersal of immigrants to non-traditional receiving locations in the United States, this would be an important topic for future research.

Additional studies also can examine the role of other psychological and social factors in adolescents' choice of ethnic labels. Experience with discrimination has been suggested to play a role in the ethnic identification of adolescents from immigrant families, yet the direction of the effect is unclear. Waters (1994) reported that adolescents who did not identify with their

parents' West Indian cultural background and instead identified with labels such as Black and African American tended to report more frequent experiences with discrimination. In contrast, Portes & Rumbaut (2001) found that adolescents from immigrant families who identified with their parents' national origin reported the highest levels of discrimination. In addition to examining discrimination, closer analyses of adolescents' friendships, attitudes toward American society, and involvement in cultural activities and organizations would be important to examine.

In summary, although ethnic labeling showed no normative trend of acculturation or assimilation, the high school years represent a period of fluctuation in the labels that adolescents from immigrant families use to describe themselves. These fluctuations appear to be tied to other significant aspects of their psychological and social development, and future research should expand both the developmental periods and potential predictors being assessed in order to better understand a process that should have a significant impact upon the nature of ethnic and racial categories in American society in the years to come.

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Appendix A

Ethnic Labels Presented to Adolescents for Selection

African-American	Samoan
American	Spanish
Asian	Spanish-American
Asian-American	Thai
Black	Taiwanese
Brazilian	Taiwanese-American
Cambodian	Vietnamese
Central-American	Vietnamese-American
Chicano/a	White
Chinese	Australian*
Chinese-American	Asian Indian*
European-American	Cantonese*
El Salvadoran	Burmese*
Filipino/a	Peruvian*
Guatemalan	Uruguayan*
Hispanic	Indonesian*
Hispanic-American	Puerto Rican*
Indian	
Iranian	
Japanese	
Japanese-American	

Korean

Korean-American

Latino/a

Latino-American

Mexican

Mexican-American

Middle Eastern

Native American

Nicaraguan

Nicaraguan-American

Pacific Islander

Pakistani

Persian

Salvadoran-American

Note. Labels were presented to adolescents in alphabetical order, without their categorization.

* Indicates labels that were not given to students as options but were written in by the students from Asian and Latin American immigrant families as labels that describe them but were not on the list.

Table 1

Frequencies of most descriptive labels

	Latino				Asian			
Label	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth
American	1.7	3.6	1.6	3.9	1.1	2.0		2.5
Asian					7.9	5.9	11.6	4.5
Asian American					23.7	20.0	23.6	18.3
Asian Indian							.5	
Australian					.6			
Brazilian	1.7	1.4	.8	1.6				
Burmese								.5
Cantonese						.5		
Central American		.7	.8					
Chicano	2.6	3.6	6.3	3.1				
Chinese					16.4	20.0	14.6	14.9
Chinese American					19.8	22.0	17.6	26.7
Filipino					3.4	3.9	3.5	3.5
Guatemalan	3.4	3.6	3.2	4.7				
Hispanic	4.3	13.7	9.5	12.4				
Hispanic American	12.8	5.0	4.8	4.7				

Honduran	.9							
Indonesian								.5
Japanese					1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0
Japanese American					3.4	3.4	2.5	2.5
Korean					2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5
Korean American					4.5	3.9	5.5	5.0
Latino	10.3	13.7	8.7	10.1				
Latino American	5.1	5.0	4.8	3.9				
Mexican	18.8	21.6	23.0	16.3				
Mexican American	33.3	25.9	31.0	35.7				
Nicaraguan American	.9		.8	.8				
Pacific Islander								.5
Peruvian		.7	.8					
Puerto Rican	.9							
Salvadoran	.9	.7	3.2	1.6				
Salvadoran American	.9	.7	.8	1.6				
Spanish	.9							

Taiwanese		2.3	2.0	4.0	2.0
Taiwanese American		2.3	2.0	2.0	3.5
Thai		1.1	.5	.5	.5
Uruguayan	.9				
Vietnamese		3.4	5.4	3.5	3.5
Vietnamese American		6.8	5.4	7.0	7.9

Note: Figures refer to the percent of adolescents within each ethnic group at each grade level who chose each label as their most descriptive label. Any label that included the term "American," by itself or in combination with another term, was coded as including an American term except for "Central American." Any label that included "Asian," "Chicano/a," "Latino," and "Hispanic," either alone or in combination with another term, was coded as including a pan-ethnic term.

Table 2

Hierarchical linear models predicting change over time in the inclusion of a pan-ethnic or an American term in adolescents' ethnic labels

	Pan-ethnic term	American term
	b (SE)	*b (SE)*
Intercept	.30 (.02)***	.44 (.03)***
Gender	-.03 (.02)	-.02 (.02)
Ethnicity	-.03 (.02)	.07 (.02)**
Generation	.10 (.02)***	.21 (.02)***
Year	-.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Gender	.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Ethnicity	-.02 (.01)	.02 (.01)
Generation	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.01)

Note. Gender was coded boys = -1, girls = 1. Ethnicity was coded Latino = -1, Asian = 1. Generation was coded first generation = -1, second generation =1. All predictors were uncentered.

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$.

Table 3

Hierarchical linear models predicting inclusion of a pan-ethnic or an American term according to closeness with parents

	Pan-ethnic term	American term
	b (SE)	*b (SE)*
Intercept	.39 (.06)***	.34 (.06)***
Gender	-.01 (.05)	-.07 (.06)
Ethnicity	-.02 (.05)	.15 (.05)**
Generation	-.06 (.05)	.13 (.06)*
Closeness with parents	-.05 (.02)*	.05 (.03)
Gender	-.01 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Ethnicity	.00 (.02)	-.03 (.02)
Generation	.07 (.02)**	.03 (.02)

Note. Gender was coded boys = -1, girls = 1. Ethnicity was coded Latino = -1, Asian = 1. Generation was coded first generation = -1, second generation =1. All predictors were uncentered.

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$.

Table 4

Hierarchical linear models predicting inclusion of a pan-ethnic or an American term according to ethnic identity search

	Pan-ethnic term	American term
	b (SE)	*b (SE)*
Intercept	.35 (.03)***	.54 (.04)***
Gender	.00 (.03)	-.02 (.04)
Ethnicity	-.01 (.03)	.08 (.04)*
Generation	.05 (.03)	.18 (.04)***
Search	-.03 (.01)*	-.04 (.02)**
Gender	-.01 (.01)	.00 (.02)
Ethnicity	-.01 (.01)	.00 (.02)
Generation	.02 (.01)	.00 (.02)

Note. Gender was coded boys = -1, girls = 1. Ethnicity was coded Latino = -1, Asian = 1. Generation was coded first generation = -1, second generation =1. All predictors were uncentered.

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$.

Table 5

Hierarchical linear models predicting inclusion of a pan-ethnic or an American term according to affirmation and belonging

	Pan-ethnic term	American term
	b (SE)	*b (SE)*
Intercept	.43 (.06)***	.60 (.06)***
Gender	-.07 (.05)	-.05 (.05)
Ethnicity	-.07 (.06)	.07 (.05)
Generation	.05 (.05)	.10 (.06)
Affirmation	-.05 (.02)**	-.05 (.02)**
Gender	.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)
Ethnicity	.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)
Generation	.01 (.02)	.03 (.02)

Note. Gender was coded boys = -1, girls = 1. Ethnicity was coded Latino = -1, Asian = 1. Generation was coded first generation = -1, second generation =1. All predictors were uncentered.

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$.

Table 6

Hierarchical linear models predicting inclusion of a pan-ethnic or an American term according to heritage language proficiency

	Pan-ethnic term	American term
	b (SE)	*b (SE)*
Intercept	.34 (.06)***	.56 (.06)***
Gender	-.09 (.04)*	-.04 (.04)
Ethnicity	.07 (.05)	.06 (.05)
Generation	.03 (.05)	.10 (.06)
Heritage language proficiency	-.02 (.02)	-.03 (.02)*
Gender	.02 (.01)*	.01 (.01)
Ethnicity	-.03 (.01)*	.01 (.01)
Generation	.01 (.01)	.02 (.01)

Note. Gender was coded boys = -1, girls = 1. Ethnicity was coded Latino = -1, Asian = 1. Generation was coded first generation = -1, second generation =1. All predictors were uncentered.

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Change over time in likelihood of including a pan-ethnic term in adolescents' ethnic label according to generation.

Figure 2. Change over time in likelihood of including an American term in adolescents' ethnic label according to generation.

Figure 3. Percent of adolescents changing as to whether or not a pan-ethnic term and whether or not an American term was included in their ethnic label.

Figure 1.

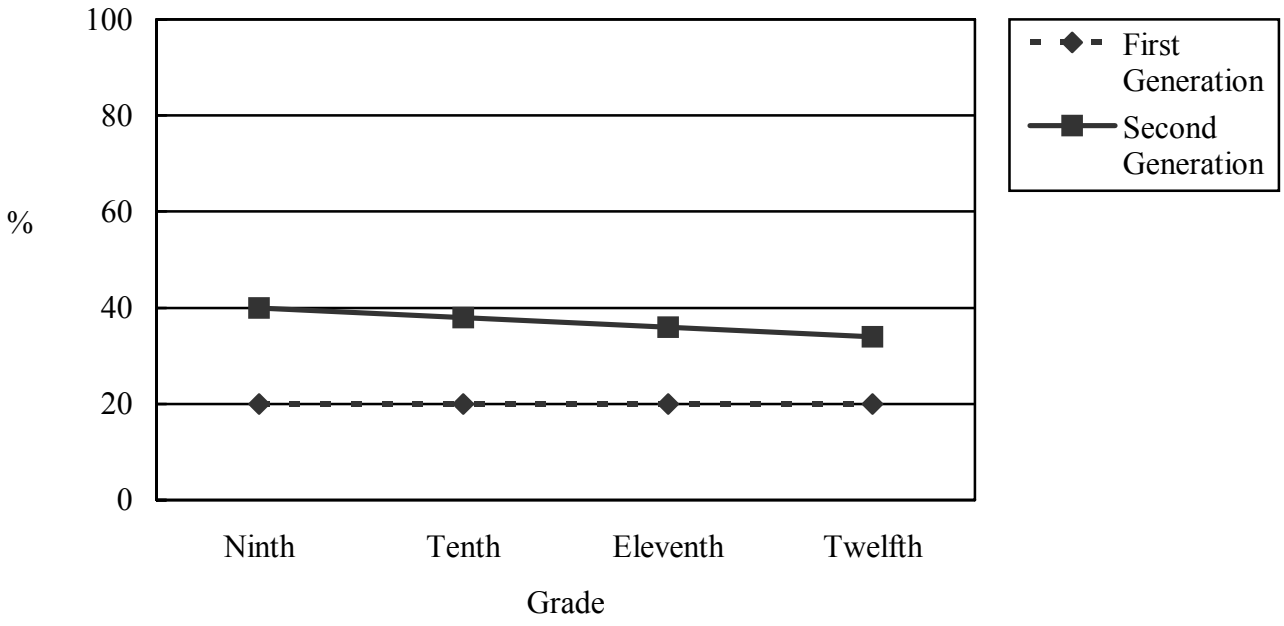

100
80
60
40
20
0
%
Ninth
Tenth
Eleventh
Twelfth
Grade
First Generation
Second Generation

Figure 2.

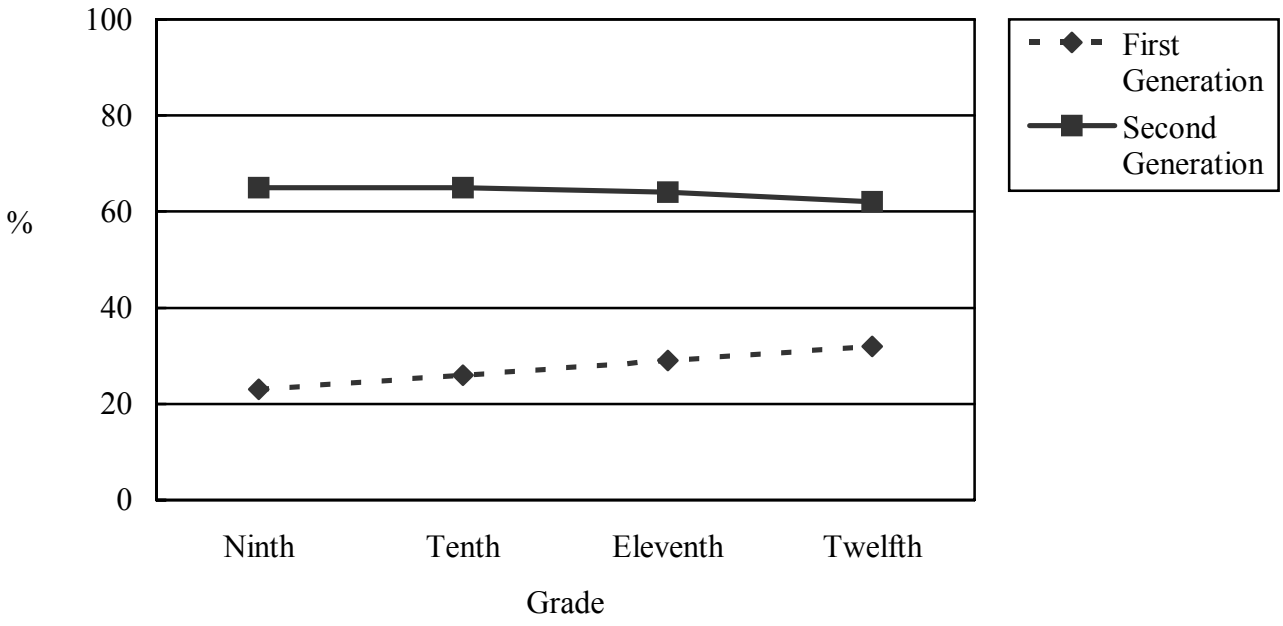
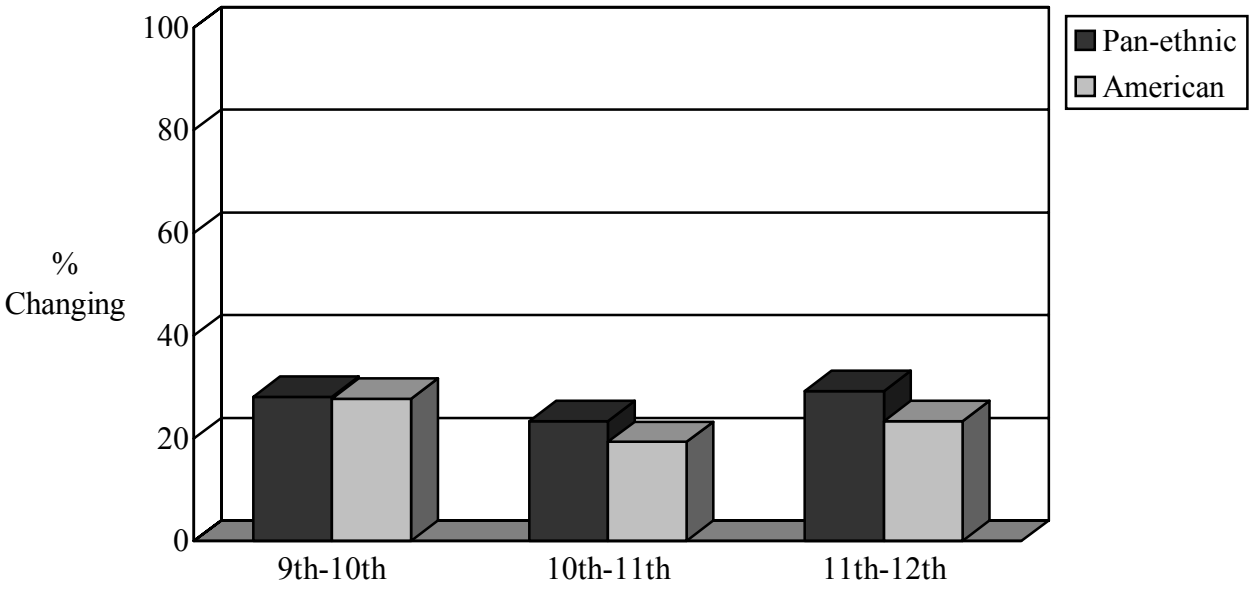

100
80
60
40
20
0
%
Ninth
Tenth
Eleventh
Twelfth
Grade
First Generation
Second Generation

Figure 3.


100
80
60
40
20
0
% Changing
9th-10th
10th-11th
11th-12th
Pan-ethnic
American