Durham University

Durham E-Theses

Chinese Postgraduate Students in a British University: Their Learning Experiences and Learning Beliefs

LIHONG WANG

How to cite:

WANG, LIHONG (2010) Chinese Postgraduate Students in a British University: Their Learning Experiences and Learning Beliefs. Doctoral thesis, Durham University.

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a https://etheses.durham.ac.uk/id/eprint/196/ is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the full Durham E-Theses policy for further details.

Academic Support Office, The Palatine Centre, Durham University, Stockton Road, Durham, DH1 3LE
e-mail: e-theses.admin@durham.ac.uk Tel: +44 0191 334 6107
https://etheses.durham.ac.uk

Title: **Chinese Postgraduate Students in a British University: Their Learning Experiences and Learning Beliefs**

Lihong WANG

Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic study of a group of Chinese postgraduate students in a British university as they become adjusted to the culture of teaching and learning in the new learning environment during their first year of overseas study. It focuses on these Chinese students' initial perceptions of British teaching and learning practices compared with their inherited culture of learning and how they make adjustments, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviourally, in order to make their learning successful, with the result of changes and developments in their conceptions and beliefs about knowing and learning. The present study seeks to draw together understanding from the fields of intercultural adaptation theories, tertiary students' conceptions of learning research, and the interface of culture and learning, i.e. cultures of learning, to explore the impact of studying abroad on students' intellectual development and personal growth so as to inform international and intercultural education.

Chinese Postgraduate Students in a British University: Their Learning Experiences and Learning Beliefs

Lihong Wang

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Durham University

School of Education

Durham University

February, 2010

Table of Contents

Abstract i
Table of Contents i
Declaration vii
Acknowledgments viii
Chapter 1 Introduction 1
1.1 Background of the Study 1
1.2 Statement of the Problems 5
1.3 Purpose of the Study 5
1.4 Significance of the Study 6
1.5 Rationale for Research Questions 7
1.6 Definitions of Key Terms 7
1.7 Limitations of the Study 10
1.8 Structure of the Thesis: an Overview of Chapters 11
Chapter 2 Research on Cultural Adaptation and Adjustment 15
2.1 Introduction 15
2.2 Intercultural Adjustment and Adaptation 15
2.2.1 Perspectives on Adjustment of Intercultural Sojourners 15
2.2.2 Intercultural Adaptation Models 19
(1) Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model 19
(2) Berry's Acculturation Strategies Model 19
(3) Yoshikawa's Double-Swing Model 20
(4) Burnett and Gardner's Five-Staged Adaptation Model 21
(5) Kim's Intercultural Identity/Personhood 22
(6) Anderson's (1994) Cross-cultural Adjustment Model 23
2.3 Intercultural Learning Theories 25
2.3.1 Tertiary Socialisation Theory 26

2.3.2 Kramsch's (1993) Third Place Theory 26
2.3.4 Byram's (1997) Intercultural Competence Theory 29
2.3.5 Theories of Intercultural Transformation and Personal Growth 31
2.4 Summary 34
Chapter 3 Research on Students' Learning 36
3.1 Introduction 36
3.2 Research on Tertiary Students' Learning Beliefs 36
3.2.1 Research on Students' Conceptions of Learning 38
3.2.2 Research on Epistemological Beliefs 41
3.2.3 Inter-relationship between Conceptions, Approaches, and Orientations 43
3.2.4 Holistic Conceptualization of Learning Beliefs 45
3.2.5 Change of Learning Beliefs 47
3.2.6 Summary 49
3.3 Existing Approaches to Chinese Students' Culture of Learning 50
3.3.1 Phenomenographic Approach: Cross-cultural Findings on Chinese Students' Beliefs of Learning 53
3.3.2 Essentialist Cultural Approach: Confucian Culture of Learning and Socratic Culture of Learning 57
3.3.3 Prototype Approach 64
3.3.4 Contextual Approach 66
3.3.5 Summary 68
3.4 Empirical Studies on Chinese Sojourning Students' Learning experiences in Western Learning Cultures 69
3.4.1 Academic Literacy 70
3.4.2 Perceptions of Classroom Activities and Participation 78
3.4.3 Expectations in Teacher -Student Roles and Learner Autonomy 81
3.4.4 Chinese Students Collaborative Learning and Co-nationals' Network in Adjustment to a Host Culture 87

3.4.5 Chinese Sojourning Students' Adaptability to Western Learning Culture 90
3.4.6 Summary 96
3.5 Summary 97
Chapter 4 Research Methodology 98
4.1 Introduction 98
4.2 Methods and Methodologies of Previous Studies on Chinese Students' Culture of Learning 98
4.2.1. Phenomenography 99
4.2.2. Inventory 100
4.2.3. Cross-cultural Comparison Questionnaires 101
4.2.4. Prototype Methodology 101
4.2.5. Ethnographic Methods 102
4.2.6. Homogeneity and Heterogeneity of CHC learners 102
4.2.7 Summary 105
4.3 Assumptions and Rationale for Ethnography 105
4.4 About *emic* and *etic* Approach 107
4.5 Vantage Point of Native Ethnography 108
4.6 Data Collecting Instruments and Justification 110
4.7 Data Collecting Procedures 116
4.8 Data Analysis Procedures 126
4.9 Trustworthiness, Authenticity and Credibility 129
4.10 Ethical Choices 130
4.11 Limitations of the Study 131
4.12 Summary 134
Chapter 5 Chinese Inherited Beliefs about Learning 135
5.1 Introduction 135
5.2 Participants Inherited Conceptions of Learning 136
A. What-dimension: Objects of Learning 136

B. How-dimension: Manner of Learning 149
C. Why-dimension: Purposes of Learning 156
5.3 Summary and Interim Discussion 163
Chapter 6 Initial Perceptions of British Learning Culture and Adjustments 168
6.1 Introduction 168
6.2 Cultural Encounter: Learning Shock? 169
6.3 Obstacles 174
6.3.1 Independent Learning: A Troublesome Term? 175
6.3.2 Verbal Participation 183
6.3.3 Critical Learning 192
6.3.4 Teacher-Student Role Relations 204
6.3.5 Summary 207
6.4 Adjustment Resources and Initial Acculturative Methods 208
6.4.1 Emotional Coping Resources: Emotional Capitals 209
6.4.2 Adjustment in Affect 210
6.4.3 Problem-focused Coping Strategies: Instrumental Acculturative Methods 219
6.5 Summary and Interim Discussion 237
6.5.1 Transferability of Chinese Culture of Learning 239
6.5.2 Cultural or/and Contextual Factors 240
6.5.3 Adaptation or Adjustment? 240
6.5.4 Other Issues 242
Chapter 7 Changes in Learning Beliefs 249
7.1 Introduction 249
7.2 Change in What-dimension 249
7.2.1 Change in Conceptions of Knowledge 250
7.2.2 Change in Conceptions of Ability 258
7.3 Change in How-dimension 272
7.3.1 Change in Conceptions of Learning Skills/Behaviour 273

7.3.2 Studying Abroad Entails Intercultural Learning Skills 292
7.3.3 Summary 300
7.4 Change in Why-dimension 300
7.4.1 Increasing Self-knowledge and Commitment to One's Life Aspirations 301
7.4.2 Broadened Conceptions of Self-Perfection 304
7.4.3 Development of International and Intercultural Identity 313
7.4.4 Summary 324
7.5 Summary and Interim Discussion 325
7.5.1 Teacher-dependence and Autonomy: 'Autonomous Interdependence' 326
7.5.2 Harmony and Critical Thinking: Transcending the Dichotomy 329
7.5.3 Chinese-Western Learning Identity: from Chinese Learner to Intercultural Learner 331
Chapter 8 Conclusions 333
8.1 Introduction 333
8.2 Answers to the Research Questions 333
8.3 Contributions of the Findings to the Existing Literature 336
8.3.1 Contributions to the Theories about Students' Conceptions of Learning 336
8.3.2 Contributions to Chinese Learning Culture 337
8.3.3 Contributions to Intercultural Adaptation Theories 338
8.4 Pedagogical Implications 339
8.4.1 Implications for Prospective Chinese Sojourners 340
8.4.2 Implications for Western Institutions 341
8.4.3 Implications for British Lecturers 343
8.4.4 Implications for Intercultural Education 345
8.5 Reflections on the Methodology of the Study 346
8.6 Suggestions for Further Research Directions 349

8.7 Concluding Remarks 351
References 352
Appendix I 1
Appendix II 11
Appendix III 32
Appendix IV 34

Declaration

No material contained in the thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

Statement of Copyright

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without her prior written consent or information derived from it should be acknowledged.

Permission to exceed the word limit of 100,000 by 10,000 words has been granted for this thesis.

Acknowledgments

I am obliged to the China's Scholarship Committee and the School of Education for their financial support, which afforded me the opportunity to pursue my PhD studies in Durham. In the course of this research, I received unfailing help from many people, and I would like to express my deep appreciation and sincere gratitude here.

First and foremost, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my two supervisors, Professor Mike Byram and Dr. Anwei Feng, for their insightful academic advice, well-reasoned judgment and constructive critiques, as well as their reassuring wisdom, which enabled me to strive to progress constantly in high spirits. Their dedication to their supervisory roles has definitely been a great motivator for the completion of this thesis.

I am also most grateful to the students who participated in my research for their great friendship and trust on me to share their thoughts and feelings. Without their unreserved contribution, this thesis would not have come into being. To certain extent, they co-authored this thesis.

Special thanks are extended to the staff of the School of Education for building such facilitating and welcoming environment, which made me feel like a valued member in the community rather than a sojourning stranger. Prof. Joe Elliot's infectious enthusiasm and Prof. Eric Meyer's genuine interest in my research are always invoking in me a strong sense of commitment to education. Also, my heartfelt thanks go to Anita for her patient and timely help over years, to Sheena and Hazel for their kindness in offering lifts, and to the competent computer technicians and the librarians for their efficient and effective help.

Last but not least, I owe many thanks to my husband Changqing and my daughter Biqiao, who never fail to bring me emotional support and spiritual comfort.

Chapter 1 Introduction

The present thesis is an ethnographic study of a group of Chinese postgraduate students in a British university as they become adjusted to the culture of teaching and learning in the new learning environment during their first year overseas study. It focuses on these Chinese students' initial perceptions of British teaching and learning practices compared with their inherited culture of learning and how they make adjustments, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviourally, in order to make their learning successful, with the result of changes and developments in their conceptions and beliefs about knowing and learning. The present study seeks to draw together understanding from the fields of intercultural adaptation theories, tertiary students' conceptions of learning research, and the interface of culture and learning, i.e. cultures of learning, to explore the impact of studying abroad on students' intellectual development and personal growth so as to inform international and intercultural education.

In this chapter, firstly, I will clarify the academic background against which the present study is conducted (Section 1.1) and then put forward the statement of the problems to set the present study in context (Section 1.2), which is followed by the purpose (Section 1.3) and significance of this study (Section 1.4), and the rationale of the research questions (Section 1.5). The chapter also provides the definitions of the key terms in this study (Section 1.6) and points out the limitations of the study (Section 1.7). The chapter is concluded with an overview of the structure of the thesis (Section 1.8).

1.1 Background of the Study

Cultures of learning

Since the 1990s there has been a paradigmatic shift in theorizing the interface of learning and culture. Säljö (1991) argues that culture should not be simply regarded as

an outside or independent variable that influences learning, but learning itself is a process of enculturation and transformation, because our patterns of social interaction, our understanding of the world, and our cognitive capabilities are themselves culturally mediated and constituted, and thus, the perspective on the culture-learning interface has changed from 'culture and learning' to 'cultures of learning', such as professional culture and classroom learning cultures, where discourse, students' voice, modes of participation, identity construction are the main themes (Kumpulanine & Renshaw, 2007: 109). In line with this thinking, contemporary approaches to research on learning-culture interface, both the sociocultural approach and the ethnographic-interpretive approach, put the historical and cultural learner in the centre of investigation. On the one hand, culture is regarded as resources or repertoire that the learner draws upon to make sense of their world; on the other hand, the learner's engagement and participation in cultural activities would constantly modify and create new forms of culture (Cole, 1985). It is within this paradigm that the present research is conducted.

Study abroad as a form of intercultural education[1]

Studying abroad is a fast growing phenomenon and has become one of the main interests in global higher education (See Byram & Feng, 2006; Savicki, 2008). Such phenomena of border-crossing and changing places give rise to plenty of research on the psychological and sociocultural adjustment of international students to the host culture, of which their academic adjustment is receiving increasing attention as well and being approached from different perspectives. For example, the student's academic achievement has been the research area of cross-cultural educational psychological studies, while the student's cultural learning experience is often the

[1] Selby (2008) made a distinction in terms of the content between international education and intercultural education. According to him, international education leads students to learn about the material culture of others, such as language, literature, art, while intercultural education leads students to learn about the subjective meaning people ascribe to events and relationships with institutions about other people, and ultimately to themselves (Selby, 2008: 4). Portera (2009) in a recent issue of Intercultural Education (Volume 19) provides an epistemological and semantic analysis of the concept of 'intercultural education' to be distinguished from multicultural and transcultural pedagogy and claims that intercultural education is the most appropriate answer to globalization and interdependence.

research topic in intercultural communication studies. The former research evaluates the student's academic achievements according to the specific standards of the institution, whereas the latter focuses on the benefits of study abroad in terms of personal growth and intercultural competence in general. But the research results of the two schools of research are often not compatible, and thus cause 'the educator's dilemma' in evaluating study abroad outcomes (Hoff, 2008: 3).

Dissonance between Confucian and Socratic cultures of learning

Both sociologists and cultural anthropologists have confirmed that culture guides socialization practices, among which education is an important aspect (Serpell & Hatano, 1997). Coming from a 'Confucian Heritage Culture'(Ho, 1991, cited in Biggs, 1996a: 47)—a term now widely used in the literature as we shall see—Chinese students are observed to be 'passive', 'surface learners who like rote memorization', 'deferent to authority', and 'without critical thinking' (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997). The dissonance between Chinese students' learning behaviours and Western classroom practice has been reported repeatedly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms (See Braine, 2002; Flowerdew & Li, 2009; Kiely, 2004; Wheeler, 2009) and other general content-based classrooms (Chan 1999; Cheng 2000; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Hammond & Gao 2002; Harris 1995) and this dissonance is more often attributed to the two different 'cultures of learning' (Jin and Cortazzi, 1993; 1998), termed Confucian and Socratic culture of learning respectively. The substantial presence of Chinese students in Western universities gives rise to the ever increasing academic interest in 'Chinese learners' (Biggs & Watkins, 1996) and poses challenges for both sides in teaching and learning. However, many empirical studies have challenged the negative stereotype and the deficit cultural learning model about Chinese learners and argue for the consideration of contextual factors (Biggs, 1999; Clark & Gieve 2006; Gu & Schweisfurth 2006; Holliday 1999; Kember & Gow 1991; Littlewood 2000; Stephen 1997). Some scholars simply deny the labels, such as 'passive', 'silent', 'obedient', 'rote learners',

that characterize Chinese learners (see Gieve & Clark, 2005; Ho & Crookall, 1995; Watkins, 2000). Other scholars acknowledge Chinese learners' having these learning behaviours and approaches to learning but interpret them favourably to legitimize them, for instance, 'memorizing' (Biggs, 1996a; Marton, *et al.*, 1996), 'silent learner' (Kim, 2002). In the latter studies, it is suggested that talking aloud in classroom interferes with Chinese students' learning and silence is more compatible with Chinese learners' psychological make-up for reasoning or other cognitive activities (Kim, 2002, cited in e-China-UK). However, the Chinese students in Lee's (1999) study acknowledge the need for classroom participation, though their conception of ideal classroom shows a preference for a tutor-led one. Such debate between cultural approach and contextual approach to investigating and interpreting Chinese students' learning behaviours continues. Both approaches challenge the prevalent stereotypes about Chinese learners, but neither of them is robust and systematic enough to resolve the obvious inconsistencies in the research findings.

Current contentions: Assimilation, Accommodation, or Education

The perceived and evidenced dissonance between Chinese culture of learning and 'Western' including British norms of teaching and learning has triggered discussion about how institutions meet the educational, socio-cultural and psychological needs of these Chinese sojourners in order to provide responsive pedagogy and practices to make them benefit most from their overseas study (Edwards & An, 2006). One debate is around whether British universities should adopt a so-called culturally responsive pedagogy to accommodate international students' previous learning norms, or whether the students should view overseas study as an opportunity to experience new ways of learning and develop new skills and intercultural competence (Stier, 2003). The argument for the latter is that 'students go abroad to study and learn, but not necessarily the same things they would at home' and there is 'educational benefit in detecting differences between here and there' (Stier, 2003: 79). Some scholars hold an eclectic view in this regard: while acknowledging the existence of certain cultural

differences in the practices of teaching and learning, these scholars claim that the perceived contrasting gaps between Chinese learners and British educational systems are more myth than reality (Watkins, *et al.*, 1991) and argue for 'teaching for education' approach (Biggs, 2003), which advocates an inclusive contextual approach focusing on the similarities rather than differences to extract the appropriate learning behaviours from all students, no matter what cultural backgrounds they are from.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Previous research on Chinese students' academic adjustment mainly works in the contrastive framework of Socratic and Confucian cultures of learning, which provides evidence for the existence of differences in these two cultures of learning but fails to attend to their interaction and impact on the development of an individual learner's personal culture of learning. In other words, the differences and difficulties confronting Chinese learners are clearly identified but little systematic research efforts are made to trace the developmental trajectory of their learning culture while interacting with other cultures of learning. Although some recent research adopts longitudinal qualitative research design to capture the dynamics of sojourning students' learning experiences, their results in this respect are neither consistent nor confident in answering the question whether Chinese sojourning students adjust to the Western culture of learning. In view of the tensions and controversies around the issues of Chinese culture of learning and the dubious profiles of Chinese learners studying in a Western culture of learning, the present research employs a longitudinal ethnographic design to elicit the students' own interpretation of their learning behaviour, rather than relying on researchers' interpretation, which is more often the case in many studies, so as to provide a more *emic* view of Chinese culture of learning and shed light on their intercultural adjustment to a new learning culture.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is three-fold: firstly, the study is to provide a better

understanding of the beliefs and conceptions of learning embraced by Chinese learners themselves; secondly, the study is designed to depict Chinese students' adjustment trajectory to a British culture of learning during their first-year overseas study; thirdly, the study is to document the changes which take place to their inherited Chinese culture of learning over time: what inherited beliefs are relinquished, what new perspectives and values are acquired, and what new forms of learning cultures are emerging or created as a result of being exposed to alternative ways of knowing and learning.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The fact that the term 'Chinese learner' enjoys much more currency than any other collocations in the similar structure, such as 'British learner', 'Russian learner', or 'African learner' in international education literature (eChina-UK) reveals the significance of studying this group of learners' characteristics. The ethnographic approach adopted in this study will provide *emic* interpretations of Chinese culture of learning and do justice to the students' own voice and challenge essentialist explanations based on the observed behaviour of Chinese students and the prevalent discourses about Chinese learners.

The study focuses on the interactions of the cultures of learning and the changes and development of the beliefs and conceptions of learning of Chinese sojourning students participating in a new learning culture, because this developmental dimension of cultural beliefs and conceptions of learning has not been systematically studied yet in the area of intercultural adjustment research. Therefore, the findings of the study about the process and the outcomes of study abroad will have both theoretical and practical implications for future intercultural education.

In addition, though recent years have seen increased interest in learning seen from the learners' perspective, little study has been done on international postgraduate students learning (Bullen & Kenway, 2003; Kiley, 2003), and therefore, this study will be

significant in that it informs the field of international postgraduate student learning from the students' own perspectives.

1.5 Rationale for Research Questions

Cultural differences in the modes of teaching and learning between Socratic and Confucian cultures of learning, which are typically represented by Chinese and British learning culture in this study, are believed to cause difficulties for Chinese students in adjusting to their host learning culture and this adjustment has been deemed as a critical factor in determining the success or failure of their study abroad. Therefore, the focus or the major conceptual question of the study is:

Do Chinese learners adjust to a Western culture of learning? If so, how?

The following specific questions will serve to guide operationalisation of this conceptual question:

Q1. What beliefs and conceptions of learning do Chinese students think Chinese culture of learning consists of?

Q2. How do Chinese students perceive British teaching and learning culture?

Q3. How do they go about adjusting to this new learning culture?

Q4. What changes take place to their beliefs and conceptions of learning as a result of study abroad?

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

Sojourner

According to Siu (1952: 34), sojourners are 'a type of stranger who spends many years of his lifetime in a foreign country without being assimilated by it'; or those individuals who voluntarily spend a medium length of time (six months to five years) in a new and unfamiliar environment with the intention of returning at some point to their home culture (Furnham, 1988). Siu (1952) states a sojourn will always have a

‘job’, an ultimate goal of which the sojourner is consciously aware and the sojourner will interact with the host culture to the extent that this will assist with ‘getting the job done’.

Byram (1997) also made a distinction between the tourist and the sojourner and emphasized effects of sojourning on both the sojourner and the host culture which received the sojourner:

[I]t is the sojourner who produces effects on a society which challenge its unquestioned and unconscious beliefs, behaviours and meanings, and whose beliefs, behaviours and meanings are in turn challenged and expected to change. …… The experience of the sojourner is one of comparisons, of what is the same or different but compatible, but also of conflicts and incompatible contrasts.

Byram (1997: vii-viii)

The Chinese term for ‘studying abroad’ is ‘留学’, whose literal meaning is ‘to study during staying’, implies temporary or short-term framed stay. Therefore, the concept ‘sojourner’ conveys faithfully the meaning of this Chinese term, implying temporary and voluntary residence, ‘usually related to task-based or instrumental purposes’ (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005: 123). As for most Chinese sojourning students, studying abroad, usually phrased as ‘*dujin*’, (镀金, literal meaning is ‘to be gilded’), implying that overseas study is an ‘investment in their identity construction’ (Norton, 2000a: 11) as well, they are expected not only to function academically well enough to get the degree certificate but also to be changed or cultivated in a favourable way, and not being ‘Westernized’.

Adjustment

Since students volunteer to study abroad and their stay is temporary, they may only adjust themselves to certain demands from the new learning culture, the ‘selected aspects for instrumental reasons’ (Furnham, 1987, cited in Anderson, 1994: 303-304). Therefore, considering the nature of the academic sojourn, ‘adjustment’ is used in this

study, in contrast to ‘adaptation’, to refer to the participants’ attempts to achieve a fit between themselves and the new learning environment through learning either to change self or change environment, maybe without necessarily relinquishing their inherited beliefs about learning. So ‘adjustment’ emphasises the sojourner’s agency and the adjusting process, implying its continuity and incompleteness.

Learning

Due to the domination of psychology in education, Western definitions of ‘learning’ have been exclusively related to cognitive capacity of meaning making and understanding. For example, ‘Learning is equivalent to what is new to understanding’ (Svensson, 1997: 68); ‘To learn is to strive for meaning, and to have learnt something is to have grasped its meaning’ (Dahlgren, 1997: 27). Even the phenomenoraphic view of learning—viewed from the learner him/herself: i.e. learning is seen as a qualitative change in a person’s way of seeing, experiencing, understanding, conceptualizing something in the real world (Marton & Ramsden, 1988: 271) ignores personal, social, or affective components attached to learning. As a reaction to the strong psychological focus or in contrast to internalisation, Wenger defines learning from a socio-cultural perspective as identity formation, an increasing participation in a community of cooperation (COP) and ‘a process of becoming—to become a certain person’ (1998: 215). In this study, this definition is adopted to emphasize the performative aspects of learning and incorporates social, affective, as well as cultural characteristics into the process of learning.

Learning culture/culture of learning

The cultural characteristics of the conceptions of learning have given risen to some terms, such as ‘cultural beliefs’ (Gardner, 1988), ‘culture of learning’ (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996), ‘learning culture’ (Riley, 1997), etc. to emphasize the cultural aspects of teaching and learning. In this study, ‘learning culture’ and ‘culture of learning’ will be used interchangeably to refer to the whole set of expectations, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, preferences, experiences and behaviours that are characteristic of a

certain culture with regard to good teaching and learning (Hu, 2002), which are not just culturally transmitted and socially constructed, but also individually interpreted, open to change and development.

Learning Shock

In this study, 'learning shock' (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997: 28) is understood as a form of 'culture shock' (Oberg, 1960)—but with more challenging than traumatic sense of the word—in the learning environment as a result of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), arising out of any mismatch between new culture of learning and one's inherited or existing schemata or beliefs about knowing and learning, and also the felt need to adopt those new culturally expected behaviours that may be incompatible with one's own values or attitudes. This term is used with other terms, such as 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957; Ryan, 2005), 'study shock' (Burns, 1991), 'intellectual cultural shock' (Ballard, 1987) to describe the considerable differences in the modes of teaching and learning experienced by the international students when studying abroad, especially in a culturally distant country.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

I am aware of the risk of stereotyping Western culture of learning. Sullivan's (2002, cited in Vandermensbrugghe, 2004) research into cultural and societal differences in assessment across Europe is also indicative of the diversity in assessment and teaching styles that exist within Europe itself. However, due to limitation of my language competences, which denies me access to the literature in other languages[2], i.e. French, German, etc., I can only avail myself of the access to English and Chinese literature, and most of which have been conducted on Chinese learners in Anglophone countries, i.e. the U.S., the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and so, with no intention of lumping all the Western countries without discrimination, the use of 'the West',

[2] Through talking with my supervisor, Mike Byram, who is versed in several European languages and much familiar with the educational systems in different countries, I begin to realize that there are similarities in the goal of education between former Eastern Germany and China; that French students consider effort at least as important as ability and hold similar attribution inclination to Chinese students'. Therefore, the present discourse about the contrast between East and West definitely misses these nuances.

‘Westernization’, or ‘Western learning culture’ in this thesis, is invariably referring to the Anglophone countries mentioned above. In fact, the internationalization of education has also been called Westernization of education (Biggs, 1997: 5) and this universalisation of Western education practices is, in practice, much more an Anglo-Saxonisation of education (Vandermensbrugghe, 2004: 418).

Another limitation is from the general challenge from researching cultural issues. The challenge to conduct a comprehensive investigation of Chinese learners’ learning profile is huge at a time when dramatic changes are taking place in Chinese society, which provide a powerful shaping force for every aspect of people’s life: parenting styles and socialization in family, teacher and student relations in educational institutions, the extension of exposure to globalization, etc. Therefore, we need bear in mind that the data of this study reflected a specific time and context, an analysis of the process of a group of Chinese students’ evolving their learning culture on a British campus in the northeast of England. The majority of this group of Chinese learners, most of whom are only-children in the family, are categorized as ‘after 80s’ (*80 hou*, ‘80 后’, a term meaning they were born after 1980s), which implies they are a new generation, with distinct characteristics different from those of their parents against the background of China’s nationwide open-door and reform. As this piece of research is coming to an end, ‘after 90s’ (90 *hou*, 90 后, a new catch phrase in China, referring to the new generation born after 1990s, also called *xin xin ren lei*, ‘新新人类’, meaning ‘a new mankind’) will enter tertiary education, with their hereditary make-up but also various metamorphoses. Therefore, the process of understanding Chinese learning culture, or any form of culture, will never be final, like the endless journey of learning itself.

1.8 Structure of the Thesis: an Overview of Chapters

In this chapter, I have introduced the academic background of the present study in a broader context, highlighted the purposes and the significance of the present study, and then expounded the rationale of the research questions. I will conclude this

chapter with an overview of the structure of the thesis.

In Chapter 2, I present a theoretical framework for the present study by drawing on the scholarships concerning intercultural adjustment, including intercultural acculturation models and theories (Section 2.2); intercultural pedagogic theories and perspective transformation learning (Section 2.3). The purpose of this chapter is to define and critique the field of study of adjustment as one of the locations of the thesis.

The function of Chapter 3 is to define and critique the field of the study of beliefs about learning (Section 3.2) and to present an analytical review of the approaches to the encountering of Confucian and Socratic cultures of learning (Section 3.3), giving special attention to Chinese sojourning students' learning experiences and their adaptability to Western learning culture (Section 3.4) and pointing out the issue of homogeneity and heterogeneity of Chinese learners (Section 3.5).

Chapter 4 is the methodology chapter, in which the previous studies' methodologies are reviewed before presenting the rationale for the ethnographic approach and longitudinal design of this study so as to get the best data to analyse learners' own theories about their learning and how their theories may change as they experience other people's theories (i.e. those of their lecturers and fellow Western students). This chapter highlights the vantage point of native ethnography—the native studying the native. A detailed description is provided of data collecting instruments and the fieldwork procedures, including access to the research setting and participant recruitment, along with the issues concerning trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7 are a chronological presentation of the data collected in the field: Chapter 5 presents a Chinese model of learning, i.e. the participants' inherited conceptions of learning from their previous learning experiences and socialization practice. This model comprises three basic constructs: what is to be learned, how to learn, and why to learn and provides a lens through which the Chinese sojourning students perceive the British culture of teaching and

learning and engage in constant comparisons and reflections. This Chinese cultural model of learning will also serve as a reference frame against which not only can we see the transfer of cultural resources to the new learning environment to facilitate (or impede) the adjustment but also the participants' later changes will be more grounded and better understood.

In Chapter 6, comparing with the existing theories concerning cultures of learning and intercultural adjustment, I analyze the students' early perceptions of and response to the new learning and teaching environment by drawing on a thematic analysis of the qualitative data, consisting of both what the participants say they do and how they explain what has happened by their own folk theories. The participants identify four areas — (1) Independent learning; (2) Verbal participation; (3) Critical learning; and (4) Teacher-student roles and relations— where they are likely to encounter difficulties in this new learning culture and what coping strategies they adopt to make various adjustments accordingly.

Chapter 7 is the analysis of the students' later accounts, contrasted with their earlier inherited Chinese beliefs, of their new understanding of teaching and learning modes in a British culture of learning. I illustrate this with interview data and field notes how the participants say they have modified their beliefs about knowing and learning through accommodating the alternative norms and new values of the British learning culture and their own explanations of their changes. The chapter is concluded with the researcher's theorizing of the participants' changes through comparing the data with the theories that are expected to explain these changes.

Chapter 8 is the concluding chapter, where I summarize the main findings and discuss in a broader way to what extent they support and/or can be explained by the theories existing in the literature on intercultural learning, and to what extent those theories need to be adjusted. Based on the findings of this study, pedagogical implications are offered and directions for future research on intercultural learning are suggested in the hope of informing international and intercultural education. The chapter is concluded

with a reflection on the effectiveness of the research methodology and the researcher's reflexivity of this study.

Chapter 2 Research on Cultural Adaptation and Adjustment

2.1 Introduction

We have located the problem of Chinese sojourning students' academic adjustment in the encountering and interactions of Confucian and Socratic cultures of learning. Considering the interdisciplinary nature of this study, I shall in the next two chapters introduce four strands of scholarship to establish a theoretical research framework for this study: a) intercultural adjustment and adaptation theories; b) intercultural pedagogic theories and perspective transformation learning; c) students' learning beliefs; and d) encountering of cultures of learning. The present chapter is to deal with the first two scholarship strands to describe and define the field of study within which the thesis is located.

2.2 Intercultural Adjustment and Adaptation

There is a substantial body of literature on international students' adjustment to the local culture. From methodological point of view, two major approaches in this field were summarized by Feng (2009: 72): one is using acculturation models such as those developed by Bennett (1993), Berry (1990) and Kim (1988) to describe development stages of intercultural sensitivity or adaptation; the other alternative approach is working in an interpretive paradigm to identify the themes emergent from empirical, mostly qualitative, data and evaluate the process and outcome of intercultural experience (see Byram & Feng, 2006; Murphy-Lejeune, 2003). The former are attempting at modelling and generalizing the stages of intercultural sojourners' experiences in the host culture, while the latter aiming at identifiable outcomes of intercultural learning, personal growth and transformation.

2.2.1 Perspectives on Adjustment of Intercultural Sojourners

In the field of intercultural adaptation, many theoretical models have been developed to capture the nature and process of intercultural encounters. Generally speaking,

adjustment to a new culture has been categorized into psychological adjustment and sociocultural adjustment (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). 'Psychological adjustment' 'is interwoven with stress and coping processes, whereas sociocultural adaptation is predicated on cultural learning' (Ward & Kennedy, 1993: 222). These two kinds of adjustment emphasize different variables and predict different patterns as well. For example, cultural shock theory (Oberg, 1960) and other earlier clinical or 'pseudo-medical' models (Furnham and Bochner, 1986) focus on the stress experienced in cultural encounters and the sojourner's intra-psychic adjustment, following a U-curve of adjustment (Lysgaard, 1955); sociocultural learning theories where cross-cultural exposure is seen less as a potential negative threat but as a learning experience of social-cultural skills in order to function effectively in the host culture predict an ascending linear learning curve. Though the trajectories of psychological and sociocultural adjustments are different, they are empirically correlated (Berry, 1997, 2005; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1993; 2001) and appraisal and coping strategies are related to both adjustments (Savicki, *et al.*, 2008).

Similar to Ward and Kennedy's (1993) classification, in her review of the existing approaches to intercultural adaptation, Kim (1988) identified two main trends in sojourner adaptation research: one is a problem-oriented perspective, such as culture shock studies or overseas sojourner 'effectiveness' studies, and the other is a learning and growth perspective, where intercultural learning experience is viewed as a transitional experience reflecting a 'movement from a state of low self- and cultural awareness to a state of high self- and cultural awareness'(Adler, 1975: 15, cited in Kim, 1988: 26).

With more evidence from empirical and successful cases, the positive aspects of 'culture shock' and struggling adaptation for personal growth begin to be recognized (see Bochner & Furham, 1986; Brislin & Yoshido, 1994; Ward *et al.*, 2001). The learning models, assuming that sojourners have difficulties in intercultural adjustment

due to lack of knowledge and ‘cultural-specific skills that are required to negotiate the new cultural milieu’ (Ward, *et al.,* 2001: 413), conceptualise adjustment as a predictable and reliable enculturation process of acquiring appropriate behaviours and skills with constant improvement and progress in their sociocultural functions (see Searl & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

A recent review by Rudmin (2009) on constructs and measurements of acculturation models also critiqued the fixation of the previous acculturation research on acculturative stress, ‘a chronic form of culture shock’ (2009: 6) and put forward an Acculturative Learning Model, in which acculturation is defined as second-culture acquisition of an individual, ‘a process of perceiving new practices and behaviours, imitating them, developing new cognitive schema, and inhibiting or extinguishing prior competing schema’ (ibid: 4). This model consists of three constructs; Acculturative motivation, Acculturative learning, and Changes in individuals. Among the factors in Acculturative motivation, sheer utility is legitimized. Four methods of acculturative learning are hypothesized by him: (1) information about the second-culture, (2) instructions, (3) imitation of second-culture behaviours, and (4) mentoring by persons competent in the new culture and caring enough about the acculturating person to be personally supportive. Rudmin calls for research on facilitating methods of acculturative learning, such as ‘acculturative imitation’ by saying ‘[i]mitation was historically the first noted method of acculturation, but it is now the most neglected’ (ibid: 13). As for the changes in individuals, skills and behaviours, beliefs and values, together with identities and social relations, are main aspects of changes. By citing Meintel’s (1973, cited in Rudmin, 2009)) argument that cross-cultural experiences allow self-discovery, personal growth and escape from social roles and culturally controlled perception, Rudmin advocates shifting the research paradigm from acculturative stress to acculturative methods.

Both psychological U-curve and sociocultural learning curve models have received some empirical support, but not always consistently in terms of time parameters of the

curve. For example, Thomas and Harrell (1994) criticize that these models do not reflect the multi-faceted nature of a person's life; they argue that there are multiple curves over time for different aspects of a sojourner's life. Supported by findings from an ethnographic study, Brown and Holloway conceptualize international postgraduate students' adjustment journey as an 'unpredictable and dynamic process' (2008: 232). Too broad variability and fluctuations, caused by a host of cultural, contextual, and individual factors, hardly render any curve models sufficient or convincing.

Apart from psychological and sociocultural approaches to intercultural adjustment, intercultural transformative learning models have been advocated (See Hunter, 2008; Taylor, 1994a), highlighting the theories of intercultural competence and 'perspective transformation' (Taylor, 1994a: 394) in intercultural experiences. Transformative learning theories are inspired by the cognitive and constructivist educational schools—learning leads to a change in meaning making, or even the way the student sees the world. This will be detailed in Section 2.3.5.

Apparently, these theoretical models have different foci—psychological, social-cultural, and cognitive aspects of human beings respectively. According to Edwards and An (2006), it is inappropriate to consider academic issues separate from the other aspects of students' experiences. Research has evidenced that academic success enhances personal confidence and status to facilitate their adjustment; and social and personal adjustments to the host country are important to academic adjustment (Hellstén, 2002). So, to best understand the complexity of the phenomenon of the sojourner's adjustment, an integrated perspective is adopted, taking into consideration emotional aspects, sociocultural (behaviour and skills to fit in) as well as cognitive aspects (perspective transformation).

In the following part of this section I am going to examine the influential naturalistic acculturation adaptation models first and other theoretical and pedagogical attempts in the intercultural field so as to place the academic interests of the present topic in a historical and disciplinary perspective.

2.2.2 Intercultural Adaptation Models

(1) Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model

Bennett's (1993) intercultural sensitivity model has been one of the most influential models in acculturation research since it came into being. Drawing on Perry's (1970) work on the intellectual and ethical development of college students (I will detail Perry's stages in the next section), Bennett (1993) developed a six-staged intercultural sensitivity model along a linear continuum from ethnocentric to ethnorelative stages, namely, denial, defence, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration (see Appendix I Table 2.1 for details).

The model takes ethnocentrism as the default stance of confronting a new culture but this may not explain Chinese students' eagerness to experience British education prestige, even before they are really exposed to it. And the last 'integration' stage, seemingly the ideal, is perhaps neither attainable nor desirable for an individual. Furthermore, from their empirical study on Chinese students in a UK university, Burnett and Gardner claimed that there is 'an implicit individualistic perspective in the model that limits its applicability in the context of those from more collectivist cultures' (2006: 73).

Based on these six stages, Evanoff (1999; 2004; 2006) advocated a constructivist approach to intercultural ethics and proposed a seventh stage, a 'generative stage', in which entirely new forms of culture are creatively produced and provide possibilities for personal and social transformation.

(2) Berry's Acculturation Strategies Model

Berry (1990; 1997; 2005) develops a classic model for acculturation, 'a process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between cultural groups and their individual members' (2005: 291). Berry contends that changes experienced by the person who is exposed to another culture are related to both maintenance of heritage culture and conformity to the host culture in attitude and

behaviour. His model consists of four mutually exclusive categories for acculturation strategies based on two independent dichotomous variables, namely, high/low level of identification with or participation in heritage/host culture. The four categories are: Marginalization, Separation, Assimilation, and Integration (see Appendix I Table 2.2)

His model is based on the assumption of the dichotomy of one's identification and participation in a given culture along a single dimension. This convenient dichotomization can hardly do justice to the complexity of the cultural or intercultural phenomena. Burnett & Gardner (2006) make a powerful critique of this model. They suggest that the model does not make sufficient distinction between intentions and behaviour and that the sojourner may use different acculturation strategies at different stages of their sojourn or in different aspects of their life. For example, a sojourner may not consciously realize that one's identity could be bracketed or could be separated from his or her cultural identity; and acculturation to social culture and academic culture could be very different in terms of priority and constraints to the sojourner student. Burnett & Gardner also point out that the model might give the impression that acculturation choices are consciously and entirely in the hands of the sojourner while 'the impact of the host culture's attitude to the sojourner is largely ignored' (2006: 69).

In addition, Berry's model fails to distinguish between 'constructive marginality' and 'encapsulated marginality' (Janet Bennett, 1993). The former leads to space for individual creativity, because the absence of clearly defined rules gives rise to opportunities to create new ways of doing things; the latter, on the other hand, results in psychological disintegration or disorientation. Moreover, Berry's assertion that integration strategy is most adaptive, since it allows sojourners to draw upon both home and host cultures, has been challenged with the view that assimilation and integration are equally adaptive strategies (Ryder, Paulhus, & Alden, 1999).

(3) Yoshikawa's Double-Swing Model

If we say Berry's model is more group-oriented, Yoshikawa's (1988) five-stage

developmental model, i.e. (1) Contact (2) Disintegration (3) Reintegration (4) Autonomy (5) Double-Swing, mainly drawing from his own intercultural experience in the USA as a Japanese, provides description for individual acculturation (see Appendix I Table 2.3).

This model provided a 'third perspective', which transcended the binary opposites of the Eastern and the Western in a state of dynamic 'in-betweenness', full of creative 'dialogical tension' (Yoshikawa, 1987: 329). In fact, Yoshikawa was fully aware of the nature of this intercultural synthesis or 'synergy', which he explained as 'one adds 1, one gets three, or a little more. This something extra is not culture-specific but something unique of its own, probably the emergence of a new attribute or a new self-awareness, born out of an awareness of the relative nature of values and of the universal aspect of human nature' (1978: 220)

Originating from a Confucian heritage culture (Watkins & Biggs, 1996), Yoshikawa's model is expected to be more powerful to explain Chinese student's experiences in a Western culture. However, empirical evidence from Burnett and Gardner's (2006) study on overseas Chinese students did not fully tally with the model. Burnett and Gardener (2006) modify the model into similar five stages to better catch the recursive and dynamic nature of Chinese students' adapting to a new culture.

(4) Burnett and Gardner's Five-Staged Adaptation Model

Employing a new qualitative research method of interpretations of students' drawings of their experience, Burnett and Gardner (2006) model Chinese students' experience in a UK university into similar five stages as Yoshikawa's: (1) Encounter, (2) Disorientation, (3) Reaction, (4) Independence, and (5) Internalisation (see Appendix I Table 2.4). Their modification of Yoshikawa's model is mainly due to the linguistic connotations of the terms, except the last stage, where the participants (Chinese undergraduates) show no sign of realization. Instead, they argue that sojourners do not inevitably change their cultural identity to one of in-betweenness but do internalise differences sufficiently to appropriately react to the cultural context.

(5) Kim's Intercultural Identity/Personhood

From a social psychological perspective, Kim & Ruben proposed an integrative model of intercultural transformation for immigrants and sojourners, which emphasized an internal change process in which the 'individual's cognitive, affective, and behavioural patterns are viewed to develop beyond their original culturally conditioned psychological parameters' (1988: 299). Later, Kim (1992; 2001) called the last stage of acculturation 'intercultural identity' and 'intercultural personhood'. In contrast to 'assigned' or 'ascribed' identity, this intercultural identity is 'an acquired identity', consistent with Grotevant's (1992) notion of 'adopted' identity as well as Phinney's (1993) 'achieved' identity' (cited in Kim, 2001:191). Kim (1992; 2001) made her argument that additional stress and conformity pressure from the host culture would lead to 'human plasticity', which was utilized to reform the person more fully into a more complete 'intercultural identity'. The development of intercultural identity is a 'stress-adaptation-growth' dynamic process, which is visualized as a spiral model figure (see Kim, 2001: 57), indicating that the intercultural identity is not a static state but a developmental continuum. Kim also claims that there is no contradiction between maintenance of a positive cultural identity and the development of a flexible intercultural identity (2001:67-68).

Kim's (1992, 2001) theory of acculturation describes communication as the mediating process required to facilitate the transition from one culture to the next and puts personal communication at the very centre of the structure. One critique which could be made about her communication theory is that she put host communication and ethnic communication in a rival position. For example, one of her theorems is 'the greater the ethnic interpersonal and mass communication, the lesser the intercultural transformation' (Kim, 2001: 91). Apart from acknowledging the short-term supportive function, Kim held an apparently counterproductive view of ethnic communication in the process of adaptation, which is explicitly formulated in her theorems (see Appendix I Table 2.5).

The problems with her theorems lie in her assumption that ethnic or original cultural ties are competing or interfering with the adaptation process and ethnic communication, and that communication with co-nationals is dysfunctional to the adaptation process as well. She seems to conceive of an intercultural encounter as a competing zero-sum game, rather than a win-win situation where the individual can gain additive cultural resources without losing his/her original attributes. For example, when Kim (1988:109) illustrates the network size of a stranger in the host culture, the ethnic ties decrease with the increase of host ties. The empirical evidence for her theories is from studies of immigrants, so these theorems may be true to the ethnic immigrants on a macro-level analysis, but may not be equally applicable to an individual sojourner's short- term adjustment process.

As with all the intercultural adaptation models reviewed so far, these 'stage theories', are criticized on the grounds that the adjustment process is not linear or in the order neatly presented. In other words, these models tend to be one dimensional and reductionist in nature, so they cannot capture all of the intricacies and dynamics of intercultural development as they occur in the real world.

(6) Anderson's (1994) Cross-cultural Adjustment Model

According to Anderson (1994), cross-cultural adaptation is in essence a common process of learning to live with change and difference like other 'transition experiences' (Bennett, 1977: 45) when significant changes happen in life. That does not play down the significance or the difficulty of intercultural adaptation but tackles the problem from a socio-psychological perspective. One of the key thrusts of this theory is that sojourners are not expected to be totally adapted to the new culture, for adaptation demands not only learning the culture's ways: 'It demands that their validity be accepted' (Anderson, 1994: 304). Referring to Shaffer and Shoben's (1956) distinction between the term 'adjustment' and 'adaptation' that the two concepts differ in terms of objectives and time frames: adjustment refers to 'the reduction of satisfaction of (short-term) drives, whereas adaptation is that which is valuable for

(long-term) survival (Shaffer and Shoben, 1956, cited in Anderson, 1994: 300), Anderson emphasises and justifies the individual's instrumental reasons to make selective adjustments. It is sojourners' own perceptions and appraisals of the events in the environment that 'determine both what must be adjusted to and how adjustment should proceed' (ibid: 303). Therefore, sojourners' adjustment varies in terms of degrees and modes.

Anderson's (1994) socio-psychological adjustment model consists of four components:

(1) Cultural Encounter

(2) Obstacles

(3) Response Generation

(4) Overcoming

In the model, Obstacle is a key component, referring to a 'dissatisfier' or 'stressor', which puts a person in a state of disequilibrium and exceeds the person's adjustive resources. Obstacles and Response Generation constitute a repetitive cycle before reaching Overcoming, 'a phase of relatively steady progression toward harmony with the new environment' (ibid: 308). The whole process is cyclical and interactive (ibid: 307). In each stage, emotional reactions accompany cognitive process and the interplay of the two leads to actions or behavioural responses to allow adjustments to occur. However, the relations among these three dimensions—affective/emotion, perceptual/cognition, and behaviour—'may be in synchronization……, one mediating, potentiating, or accompanying the other'; they may also 'be at war, producing dissonance and conflicts within the individual'; or 'they are quite independent of each other', for 'behavioral change … does not automatically go hand in hand with emotional, attitudinal, or cognitive change' (ibid: 308). This model is chronological in nature and less culture-loaded in its components. Moreover, later studies have proved that this model is applicable to describing first-year students' learning processes and

academic adjustment to university studies (Ramsey, *et al.*, 1999). Therefore, this model will be employed to structure the data of this study about the participants' adjustment to the new culture of learning.

So far, all these intercultural adaptation models are developed from naturalistic environments. Though these descriptive models are powerful in describing and explaining overall intercultural adaptation, they are not developed specifically for international sojourning students. In other words, they lack an educational perspective. Academic adjustment is essentially an intercultural learning and education process where the sojourner needs 'adjustive resources' to cope with confronting obstacles and acquires knowledge and skills to understand and appreciate new cultural practices, and in the meanwhile, he or she may reflect on their inherited values and beliefs when confronting unfamiliar cultural experiences. So, in the following part of this section, unlike the descriptive stage models reviewed, prescriptive intercultural pedagogic theories developed for educational setting are introduced to foreground the learning nature of studying abroad in intercultural settings.

2.3 Intercultural Learning Theories

Pedagogic theories of intercultural education are mainly developed for and from foreign language education, for foreign language classroom is the foreground of cultural encountering after all. So in this section, I shall introduce Tertiary Socialisation theory and Thirdness theories, though derived from and serving foreign language education, these theories will be proved to be explanatory to intercultural adjustment, for studying abroad or intercultural academic adjustment is fundamentally an intercultural communication process: classroom interaction, academic writing, and interpersonal relationship between teacher and student are essentially communicative events. The prescriptive nature of these theories will point to the ultimate goals of study abroad and evaluation of intercultural learning outcomes.

2.3.1 Tertiary Socialisation Theory

Drawing on Berger and Luckmann's (1966) socialization theory[3], Byram (1989; 2008) analogizes foreign language education to a tertiary socialization process, which not just involves disruptions of continuity or consistency of previous socializations but gives much emphasis on the function of education in providing opportunities for the learners studying in a new culture to create new subjective reality for themselves.

Unlike the descriptive concepts of primary and secondary socialization, Byram explicitly stated that '[t]he concept of 'tertiary socialisation' is prescriptive, suggesting purposes and objectives for education' (2008: 113), which should aim at breaking the national paradigm, enhancing both the teacher's and the student's awareness of the relativity in the practices of teaching and learning, and points to the significance of the teacher's role in helping the student to understand the new reality through unpacking the new concepts, new values and beliefs.

The result of this re-socialization will be integration of what the student regards as the positive aspects of the host culture into his or her inherited cultural frame to achieve a new harmony and consistency after temporary disruptions of continuity. Or it can be 'a cutting of the Gordian knot of the consistency problem—by giving up the quest for consistency and reconstructing reality *de novo*' (Berger and Luckmann, 1966:181), thus remarkable transformation in the individual.

2.3.2 Kramsch's (1993) Third Place Theory

Among those earlier theoretical intercultural models reviewed above, the most prevalent and influential till today are those that overcome assimilation or

[3]According to Berger and Luckmann (1966), primary socialization is the first socialization an individual undergoes in childhood, through which he becomes a member of society; secondary socialization is any subsequent process that inducts an already socialized individual into new sectors of the objective world of his society. Socialization is never complete and the contents it internalizes face continuing threats to their subjective reality when encountering competing definitions of reality.

accommodation constructs and conceptualise the matter from a Third perspective. Drawing on the theoretical strands of Peirce's (1898/1931) semiotics, Bakhtin's triadic dialogism in literary criticism, and Bhabha's Third Space theory in cultural studies, Kramsch (1993) developed her Third Place theory to reconceptualise foreign language teaching and learning from an intercultural stance. Her 'place' like Bhabha's 'space', emphasizes the displacement on the one hand and non-fixity and possibilities on the other. She employs the powerful concept of intercultural speaker (Byram, 1997; 2008) to subvert foreign language learning paradigm which takes native-speaker as the target of learning outcome, and initiates the foreign language learner into new space where he/she can relativise and mediate between languages and cultures. In other words, foreign language learners are moving not only between two meaning systems but also two modes of existence. She termed this intercultural mode of existence 'thirdness'.

One of the possibilities of creating such a third place is to establish a 'sphere of interculturality' (Kramsch, 1998: 205), conducive to reflecting on both one's inherited and host cultures so that new meanings are created. By citing Fiske (1989), she argues that acquisition of knowledge and competence in a foreign language is not an additive process, but a dialectic one:

> *New knowledge is not an evolutionary improvement on what precedes it; rather, new knowledges enter adversarial relationships with older, more established ones, challenging their position in the power play of understandings, and in such confrontations new insights can be provoked.*
>
> (Fiske, 1989:194, cited in Kramsch, 1993: 238)

She claims that the opportunities from transformation are embedded in cultural encounters where individual learners change by virtue of being confronted with the unfamiliar and she also argues that this confrontation or struggle is the educational process *per se* (Kramsch, 1993: 238-257).

Kramsch defines culture as membership in a discourse community; 'Even when they

have left that community, its members may retain, wherever they are, a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting' (1998:10). This definition, on the one hand, emphasizes both the collective and the discursive nature of culture; on the other hand, it indicates that one's perception, beliefs and value systems are much retained, or 'quite entrenched' (Kern, 1995: 76), even one is relocated in a new culture. Therefore, physical mobility is not enough to break through cultural constraints on one's view of the world. That means changes in perception and beliefs do not happen spontaneously but involve acquiring intercultural competences, willingness to empathise with and relate to Otherness, knowledge to understand and interpret, skills to discover and relate, and critical awareness (Byram, 1997).

2.3.3 Synergetic Culture

Recent scholarship on 'tertiary socialisation' (Byram, 1989; 2008) and 'thirdness' (Kramsch, 1993; 1999) in cultural studies and foreign language education sheds new light on intercultural communication theories and renders alternative perspective to view international students' intercultural learning experiences as well. However, as Feng (2009: 87) argues, the concept of third space should be understood as interactive space between newness and mediation, 'striking a balance between the '*heimlich*' and 'un*heimlich*' nature of culture'. He also points out that

> *less stressed by third space theorists are the processes of internalization of social realities through primary socialization…and modification of them through later socialization long argued by … theorists in tertiary socialisation (Byram, 1990; 1997; Doyé, 1992;1999; 2008) who maintain that exposure to otherness through learning a foreign language or studying abroad may enable individuals to extend their perspectives to see the world and reconcile their identities in three dimensions: cognitive, moral and behavioural.*
>
> (Feng, 2009: 87)

This theoretical stance observes and acknowledges that some aspects of cultural

beliefs and values are never, nor necessarily, completely relinquished for another, for not all the new values and beliefs can be comfortably integrated into the inherited system (See Byram, 2003; Paulston, 1992). International students studying in a new learning culture might be seen as in a process of tertiary socialisation happening in third space where they, as both the bearers of an inherited learning culture and the creators of their own personal learning culture, are engaging in constant evolutionary and, perhaps sometimes, revolutionary changes in a holistic way.

Inspired by Bhabha's Third Space theory, which emphasizes that 'all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity' (Rutherford 1990: 211) and drawing on his initial ethnographic research on Confucian Heritage Cultures (Ho, 1991) students' learning experiences in a Western context, Feng (2006, 2007) puts forward the concept 'synergetic culture', defined as 'interactive space in which 'culture' is built into the very condition of communication in the performative present of interpretation' to capture the intricacies of intercultural space, where mediated ways of behaving and modes of thinking can be identified and individual identities are negotiated and partially transformed. This concept challenges the binary opposites such as

> *the here and the there, self and other, the present and the past, the local and the global, and of course the traditional view that sees … 'deep learning' and 'surface learning' as polarities. Theories of thirdness in a practical sense, provide us with useful vocabulary to critique binary conceptions of social phenomena and to analyse and problematise culture by turning all physical places, symbols, customs, ideas, etc. into lived zones of trans-cultures and trans-ideologies.*
>
> (Feng, 2009: 74).

2.3.4 Byram's (1997) Intercultural Competence Theory

Byram (1997) developed a comprehensive framework of intercultural competence, which contains five *savoirs* (see Appendix I Table 2.6 for detail). In this framework, *savoir-être*, as an affect construct, has both emotional and cognitive dimensions. It

emphasizes postnatal nurture of open-mindedness instead of natural-born psychological disposition or static humours.[4] The construct of knowledge (*savoir*) includes both the declarative knowledge (know-that) about factual information of the culture concerned and the procedural knowledge (know-how) about the sociocultural aspects of the culture(s). Similarly, the skills include not only the practical skills, such as social skills to conduct daily communication and routine activities to be accepted by the host culture, but also intercultural skills of interpreting and discovering, which are essential to dissolve intercultural conflicts especially when they are seemingly irreconcilable. Another laudable feature of this framework is its critical stance towards cultures, especially towards one's own culture, which is central to the process to achieve the 'thirdness' (Kramsch, 1993; 1999).

Critical reflection is also often the 'missing link' in intercultural adaptation or transformation studies despite their insight into the acculturation process: 'They do not recognize that, for strangers to develop a broader world view, they must not only become aware of their long-standing and taken-for-granted meaning perspective (cultural and personal constructs) but must question its very validity through critical reflection' (Taylor, 1994a: 402). In fact, all these concepts of intercultural identity (Kim, 1988; 2001), 'multi-cultural man' (Adler, 1977), 'double swing' (Yoshikawa, 1986), 'moral inclusion' (Opotow, 1990), or 'humanocentrism' (Gitler, 1974, cited in Wichert, 1996), involve a level of intellectual and emotional maturity that allows a decentring from one's culture and implies a critical stance.

The theoretical framework of intercultural competence from an educational perspective also underpins that studying in another culture is an educational process *per se*, promising intellectual maturity and intercultural identity. Therefore, we are to argue by this study that intercultural competences are not only the outcomes of sojourning students' intercultural learning but also the prerequisites for their

[4]Some scholars tend to emphasize personality factors in foreign language learning (Eysenk, 1970) and intercultural adaptation; however, such personality theories need more empirical evidence in intercultural competence studies. Extrovert personalities do not necessarily make better intercultural speakers or become more empathetic or open-minded than the introvert. This study does not therefore deal with such theories or attempt to use them in analysis.

successful intercultural adjustment.

2.3.5 Theories of Intercultural Transformation and Personal Growth

From theories and models which have been developed from teaching perspectives, we turn to those which focus on learning from experience in and beyond the classroom. Transformative learning as a adult learning theory was first put forward by Jack Mezirow (1978; 1990; 1991), who defined learning as the 'process of making a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience, which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action' (Mezirow, 1990:1). Changes not only include gaining new skills and knowledge, but also may be unexpected major changes in their worldview and ways of being, particularly in the sense of self.

Two concepts are articulated in transformative learning theory: meaning schemes and meaning perspectives. Meaning schemes are 'the specific beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions articulated by an interpretation' and 'serve as specific habits of expectations' (Mezirow, 1991: 35). Meaning perspectives are groups of related meaning schemes or 'generalized sets of habitual expectation, act as perceptual and conceptual codes to form, limit, and distort how we think, believe, and feel and how, what, when, and why we learn' (ibid: 34). Based on this difference, Hunter calls for teaching for transformation and further distinguishes transformative development from normative development of the student. She claims,

> *Life experience that causes a student to reorganize existing schemes in order to accommodate new information and negotiate new environments represents learning that leads to normative development. One the other hand, life experience that challenges students to reconsider the fundamental reasoning behind their most basic notions of the way the world works can precipitate an entire change in perspective. Learning of this nature is said to be transformative.*
>
> Hunter (2008: 94-95)

So meaning schemes and meaning perspectives, formed through prior learning

experiences, will filter students' perceptions and comprehensions of new experiences and reality. Transforming these limited meaning schemes and meaning perspectives through constant reflection is the essential outcome of adult learning, as Mezirow explains:

> *Perspective transformation is the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and, finally, making choices or otherwise acting on these new understandings.*
>
> (Mezirow, 1991: 167)

Obviously, perspective transformation is much similar to intercultural adaptation in terms of the process and outcomes. People situated in the process will undergo a period of personal crisis, alienation or dilemma, followed by an experimentation with new ways of life, and move into a new integration stage. The difference between these processes lies in that transformative perspective theory as a learning theory emphasizes critical reflection during the process—so do the pedagogical theories outlined above—while most intercultural adaptation models seem not to have given due attention to that.

Transformative learning theory thus puts great emphasis on reflection and meaning construction. Reflection is defined as 'the process of critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience' (Mezirow, 1991:104). When students are having difficulties in carrying out their habitual actions under new circumstances, reflective actions can help them to be mindful of both the content and the process of their learning, because mindfulness is 'associated with greater accuracy of perception of unfamiliar and deviant, avoidance of premature cognitive commitment, better self-concept…' (ibid: 117). In fact, this mindfulness is an inseparable element in the intercultural communication model (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Martin & Nakayama (2004) also claim that self-knowledge is a

most important component of intercultural communication competency.

Mezirow's perspective transformation learning theory has gained currency in intercultural education through the work of Taylor (1994a; 1994b). Taylor (1994a, 1994b) identified a significant link between perspective transformation and intercultural competency development. Taylor (1994b) found that perspective transformation learning theory partially explained the learning process of becoming interculturally competent, but it did not address how personal history and goals affected the readiness of individuals for change. Walley (1996, cited in Hoff, 2008) also applied Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory to the analysis of a group of Japanese university students studying abroad and found that meaning schemes were not transformed in the sense of complete deletion, as in Mezirow's (1991) original theory; 'instead they were bifurcated—being appropriate to the culture in which one was participating' (Hoff, 2008: 66). Thus, perspective transformation during the process of culture learning is emancipatory in that it presents students with new alternatives to act on these new understandings.

Taylor (1994a) also pointed out the limitations of Mezirow's theory. One of the major criticisms is Mezirow's Western bias, which takes an assumption of a universal learning theory transcending cultural differences, and his attempt to impose Western ways of knowing upon other cultures. Another bias of this theory is its assumption that individuals are autonomous and self-directed learners, who are free to choose and define their reality. For example, Mezirow claimed that '[o]ne must become dissociated from an organic relationship with society to move along the gradient of perspective transformation' (Mezirow, 1978: 106, cited by Taylor, 1994a: 405). So it may only offer an explanation of the learning process of intercultural competency among Western participants. Taylor concluded that 'it is Mezirow's Western bias and universal assumptions that limit transmission for the learning process of non-Western participants who become competent in a Western culture' (Taylor, 1994a: 405).

Perspective transformation theory is nonetheless a relevant culture learning theory in

intercultural education. ‘It attempts to explain how our expectations, framed within cultural assumptions and presuppositions, directly influence the meaning we derive from our experiences’ (Taylor, 1994a: 395), and how the revision of meaning structures from experiences lead to personal transformation and growth. However, the 10-phase linear process listed by Mizirow (1991) may hardly do justice to the nature and the complexities of individuals’ progress.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have constructed a theoretical framework to foreground the issue of the contact of cultures of learning as an intercultural, as opposed to cross-cultural, encounter and critically reviewed the influential descriptive acculturation models and the prescriptive intercultural pedagogic theories developed in the educational domain. Starting from Bennett’s, all the naturalistic models reviewed above are working in the conceptual framework of the learning/growth approach, but the learning dimensions apparently fall short in all these models. Firstly, these models, except Burnett and Gardner’s (2006), are not specifically addressed to sojourner students; secondly, the models describe the adaptation process without detailing the intricacies of the learning process. In stage models, qualitative changes are taking place in each stage with aid of intercultural competence, but how the person acquires their proper attitude, knowledge, and skills is inadequately addressed. The questions are left unanswered: What roles, positive and/or negative, does his/her own culture play in the adaptation process? Is the learning process assimilative, accommodative, or transformative? In addition, the individual may not only interact with homogenous host culture, but may also with other subcultures or ‘small cultures’ in the field (Holliday, 1999)

The research literature on intercultural adaptation has shown that the successful adaptation process itself is a transformative learning experience which brings about changes in perceptions of self and other and leads to personal development (Adler, 1975; Anderson, 1994; Gill, 2007; Kim & Ruben, 1988; Montuori & Fahim, 2004).

Furthermore, intercultural adjustment does not take place spontaneously but involves the development of intercultural competence. Taylor (1994a; 1994b) has established the link between Mezirow's (1978; 1991) transformation learning theory and intercultural competence theory, therefore, overseas learning experience is likely to stimulate the students' changes in their holistic learning beliefs system and promote personal growth.

This chapter has located the research of this thesis in the field of study which might be called adaptation/adjustment studies with particular reference to experiences of countries and cultures which are very clearly perceived as 'other' or 'different' or 'foreign'. My argument is that adjustment to cultures of learning has to be seen in this wider perspective but that a wider perspective is too general to account for the experience of learning in another academic tradition, hence the need to examine previous research on beliefs about learning among tertiary education students and cross-cultural analyses dealing with Chinese students in the West. In the next chapter therefore I shall analyse the research on students' beliefs about learning and in particular the research which attempts to compare and contrast Chinese students' cultures of learning with those in Western traditions.

Chapter 3 Research on Students' Learning

Learning is becoming a topic in sociology and anthropology rather than in psychology.

(Murayama, 1995: 5)

3.1 Introduction

The focus of this study, though located theoretically in the literature on adjustment and change, is on a particular aspect of change, i.e. change in beliefs about learning, rather than the general issues of change covered under 'cultural shock' (Oberg, 1960) and as such it can be characterised as being about 'learning shock' (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997). This is located in the literature on students' conceptions of learning and the effects of study abroad on changes of beliefs. The function of this chapter is to define and critique the field of study of beliefs about learning (Section 3.2) and to review the existing approaches to studying Chinese students' beliefs of learning (Section 3.3) and Chinese learners' encountering with Western learning culture, giving special attention to Chinese sojourning students' adaptability to Western learning culture (Section 3.4), and pointing out the issues of homogeneity and heterogeneity of Chinese learners (Section 3.5). The purpose of this part of review is to identify the inconsistency among the research findings from different approaches as well as the under-researched angle concerning Chinese sojourners' learning profiles in Western learning environment and highlight the originality of this study in research methodology.

3.2 Research on Tertiary Students' Learning Beliefs

The initial impetus for research into students' beliefs of learning came from William Perry's (1970) study of US university students' intellectual and ethical development. His research on Harvard University students identified nine stages of intellectual and ethical development (see Appendix I Table 3.1), moving from a simplistic or absolute

stance on the fundamental nature of knowledge towards a complex, relativistic one. Among these nine stages, the fifth stage is most important, for it is regarded as

> *a watershed, a critical traverse… in crossing the ridge of the divide. Students see before them a perspective in which the relation of a learner to knowledge is radically transformed. In this new context, Authority, formerly a source and dispenser of all knowing, is suddenly authority, ideally a resource, a mentor, a model, and potentially a colleague in consensual estimation of interpretations of reality…. [Students] are no longer receptacles but the primary agents responsible for their own learning …… As students speak from this new perspective they speak more reflectively. And yet the underlying theme continues: the learner's evolution of what it means to know.*
>
> (Perry, 1988: 156)

Later, the nine stages are summarized as the following four stances: Dualism, Multiplicity, Contextual Relativism, and Commitment in Relativism (see Appendix I Table 3.2).

During the initial period of Dualism, the student views knowledge as either right or wrong, justified by Authorities. With increasing exposure to conflicting opinions, the student develops an attitude of Multiplicity, and awareness that there might be an indefinite number of legitimate points of view in some specific area. Then during the stage of Contextual Relativism, the student perceives the general legitimacy of uncertainty and embraces the view that knowledge is correct relative to contexts. Here, Authority is not the arbitrator but a source of interpretation and guidance. Finally, at the stage of Commitment in Relativism, the student appreciates the need to achieve some kind of personal commitment as a means of resolving the uncertainty. Perry (1970) also argues that the progression through the stages from dualism to commitment in relativism is neither continuous nor irreversible: 'at any stage they may suspend, nullify, or reverse the growth process' (cited in Entwistle & Peterson, 2004: 409).

Though Perry's intellectual and ethical development theory was not developed for cultural or intercultural contexts in the first place, and a cross-cultural dimension of its validity seems lacking as well, its relevancy to the learning outcome of general tertiary education and intercultural education is not far-fetched. The ethical development of students from dualistic to multiplistic then to relativistic thinking is comparable to Bennett's (1993) Intercultural Sensitivity Model, which starts with ethnocentrism and concludes with ethnorelativism.

Perry's seminal work has inspired several strands of research into students' learning. One school of scholarship investigates students' conceptions of learning and approaches to learning, represented by Marton & Säljö (1976), Säljö (1979; 1982), Ramsden (1979, 1981) and Entwistle and Ramsden (1981, 1983); another perspective focuses on students' epistemological beliefs about knowledge, such as Ryan (1984), Schommer (1990; 1993; 1994a). The former employs phenomenographic qualitative methodology, the results of which fuel the design of inventories to investigate how students approach and orchestrate their learning (Biggs, 1987; 1991; Marton, Hounsell, & Entwistle, 1997; Meyer, 1991; 2000; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999); the latter is much metacognition-oriented, using quantitative research design to investigate the student's attitude towards knowledge and ways of knowing.

Recent research efforts have been made to reconceptualise these two trends of research on students' learning into one holistic conceptual framework via integrating core beliefs (about knowing) and peripheral beliefs (about learning) (Brownlee, Boulton-Lewis, & Purdie, 2002). In the following, I shall review in some detail the three research orientations mentioned above to bring these theoretical threads together in order to reconceptualise the constructs in the concept of 'learning culture', the focus of this present study.

3.2.1 Research on Students' Conceptions of Learning

Conceptions of Learning

On the basis of a thorough analysis of 90 people's responses to the question 'what do you actually mean by learning?' Säljö (1979, 1982) identified five specific conceptions of learning (see Appendix I Table 3.3). Säljö also claimed that his results were parallel to an account of intellectual development presented by Perry (1970) and constituted a developmental sequence or hierarchy (Säljö, 1982)

Later, Marton, Dall'Alba, & Beaty (1993a) reported a sixth conception apart from the five ones similar to those Säljö (1979) had originally described (see Appendix I Table 3.4) Both conception (A) *Increasing one's knowledge* and conception (B) *Memorizing and reproducing* take learning as accumulating factual knowledge from the teacher or other authorities. Students with conception (C) *Applying* realize that the purpose of learning is to apply what one has learnt. When learning is seen as (D) *Understanding*, it marks the watershed of a qualitative conception of learning, for the student starts making sense of ideas for themselves by relating it to their life world; in other words, 'information becomes transformed into personal meaning' (Entwistle & Peterson, 2004: 411). When the student reaches the stage of (E) *Seeing something in a different way*, it indicates a transformative change has taken place in the student (Marton & Tsui, 2004). The culmination of this conception of learning is to see it as (F) *Changing as a person*, a fundamental change in the sense of 'being'. According to Marton *et al.* (1993a), this sophisticated conception was seen only in students who had previously exhibited Conception (E) during the later years of their academic career, reflecting the kind of personal commitment that is involved in the later stages of Perry's (1970) model of intellectual development. Meyer (1998) categorizes the first three and the last three conceptions of learning into Accumulative and Transformative conceptions respectively.

Approaches to Learning

The term 'approach' was originally used to describe the specific form of study activity provoked by the student's perception of a task instruction on a particular occasion; however, students tend to show a certain consistency in their approaches to learning

(Entwistle, 1991: 201). After their phenomenographic research on students' approaches to learning, Marton and Säljö (1976) categorized their findings into two qualitatively different approaches to learning, termed surface approach and deep approach. Deep approach aims beyond the written and spoken discourse itself towards the message the discourse is intended to communicate. These students feel themselves to be the agents of learning; they utilize their capacity for logical thinking in order to construct knowledge (Marton & Säljö, 1976). In contrast, surface approach is reproducing knowledge by rote learning, without any perception of the holistic structure of knowledge.

Ramsden (1979; 1981) claims to have identified a third approach, 'strategic approach', by reference to a particular group of students who had been described by Miller and Parlett (1974) as 'cue seekers', who 'button-holed staff about the exam questions; sought them out over coffee; made a point of discovering who their oral examiner was, what his interests were and, most of all, deliberately attempted to make a good impression on staff' (Miller and Parlett 1974: 52, cited in Ramsden, 1981). Cue-seeking is especially tuned to assessment preparation strategies (Tang, 1991; Tang & Biggs, 1996). Later, Biggs (1988) named this approach 'achieving approach'. (see Appendix I Table 3.5)

Both Marton, *et al.* (1993a) and Säljö (1979) worked on the assumption that a student's conceptions of learning would determine his/her approaches to learning. However, following research showed that students' approaches to learning were also influenced by other factors (Laurillard, 1979). Laurillard argues that different approaches to studying are characteristic not of individual students but of students in relation to particular learning contexts: students 'are responsive to the environment, and their approach to learning is determined by their interpretation of that environment' (1979: 408). Moreover, Entwistle (1991) claims that it is not necessarily the context itself but the student's perception of the learning environment that influences how a student learns.

Subsequent research has made it clear that assessment exercises a powerful influence on students' approaches to studying and makes the line between surface and deep approaches blurred: because researchers find that students also rote learn while engaging understanding, which can be seen particularly when they are preparing for examinations (Entwistle & Entwistle, 2003; Meyer, 2004). In fact, Säljö (1979; 1982) has pointed out that students with more sophisticated conceptions of learning are more aware of contextual requirements and would adopt appropriate approaches to different types of learning tasks, no matter deep or surface, and so overstressing the differences or dichotomising the two would be dangerous.

3.2.2 Research on Epistemological Beliefs

To try to reconcile Perry's (1970) original model of intellectual development with subsequent theories, Schommer (1990; 1993; 1994a; 1994b) pointed out that Perry's (1970) uni-dimensional theoretical stance fails to capture the complexity of personal epistemologies, and reconceptualises Perry's absolutist-relativist distinction by proposing a multi-dimensional system. Later, Shommer-Aikins (2002) produced a broader inventory that covered both personal epistemological elements, such as *stability*, *structure* and *source* of knowledge, and conceptions of learning, including *speed* and *control* of learning. Speed of learning indicates whether people see learning either as occurring quickly or not at all or as a gradual process of understanding. Control of learning describes whether a person views ability as something innate or fixed or something that can constantly develop throughout life. Thus, an unsophisticated learner in Schommer's model will tend to believe that (a) knowledge is certain; (b) orderly process of acquiring knowledge; (c) knowledge is handed down by authority; (d) learning is quick or not at all; (e) the ability to learn is innate and fixed.

Later researchers, (see Boulton-Lewis *et al.*, 2001; Dart, *et al.*, 2000; Jehng, *et al.*, 1993) have shown that epistemological beliefs are evolving over time, but 'do not necessarily develop in synchrony' (Schommer, 1994b: 302). These researchers also

suggest that changes in personal epistemological beliefs are likely to emerge as a result of educational experiences, but the areas of epistemological intervention are relatively uncharted (Kardash & Scholes, 1996).

Recent research has begun to debate whether students' epistemological beliefs are independent of their specific discipline or domain of knowledge (Buehl & Alexander, 2001). Buehl and Alexander (2001) reviewed four studies on students' epistemological beliefs with within-subject analysis and found that three of them—exception being Schommer and Walker's (1995)—support the claim that beliefs about knowledge are not independent of academic discipline. According to these researchers, graduate students tend to hold more sophisticated beliefs about knowledge than undergraduate students; moreover, students majoring in well-structured 'hard' fields, (such as mathematics) tend to view knowledge as more certain than students in 'soft' areas of study, like social sciences, which are assumed to be more ill-structured (Jehng, *et al.*, 1993; Kitchener, 1983a, 1983b).

As for cultural influences on the development of personal epistemological beliefs, some research attempts have provided support that culture plays a prominent role in the process of personal epistemological development (see Reybold, 2002; Youn, 2000). Youn (2000) claims that students' beliefs are shaped by the culture in which they are situated; individualistic cultural values, as well as other Western cultural characteristics, such as small power distance (Hofstede, 1984), were favourable to the development of sophisticated beliefs about knowledge and learning.

As a critique to a purely psychological orientation to epistemology, Goldberger (1996) offered a cultural analysis of Belenky *et al.*'s (1986) five women's ways of knowing, i.e. (1) Silence, (2) Received Knowing, (3) Subjective Knowing, (4) Procedural Knowledge, and (5) Constructed Knowledge (see Appendix I Table 3.6). For instance, instead of being a female way of knowing that implies inability to engage in personal reflection, '*Silence'* may represent an adaptive way of knowing:

> *...if culture mores dictate silence as a mark of respect, then such silence represents a different*

way of knowing to those silenced through oppression and poor relationships with significant authorities in their lives

(Brownlee, *et al.*, 2002: 3)

Similarly, *Received Knowing* may not be necessarily passive or naive if considering cultural factors, such as deference to external authority, which is the expected way of learning in some cultures (Goldberger, 1996); likewise, *Subjective Knowing*, based on intuitive ways of knowing, is often associated with Eastern way of knowing and thinking (Nisbett, 2003; Nisbett & Miyamoto, 2005). Therefore, there is a need to re-evaluate the appropriateness of developmental ideals of epistemological beliefs in increasingly multicultural and intercultural academic settings.

3.2.3 Inter-relationship between Conceptions, Approaches, and Orientations

Learning Orientations

'Learning orientations' was another broad concept introduced into learning theories to 'refer to the whole domain of students' personal goals, intentions, motives, expectations, attitudes, concerns and doubts in education or a course' (Gibbs, Morgan & Taylor, 1984, also cited in Vermunt and Verloop, 1999: 260). They represent the student's personal context for learning—their personal values and purposes for learning: 'From the point of view of learning orientation, success and failure is judged in terms of the extent to which students fulfil their own aims' (Beaty, Gibbs, & Morgan, 1997: 76).

According to the main functions of higher education, Beaty, Gibbs & Morgan (1997) categorized students' learning orientations into four kinds: academic, vocational, personal and social. Combined with intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions, altogether eight categories of orientations are presented (see Appendix I Table 3.7).

To some extent, students' learning orientations and their conceptions of learning

cannot be demarcated, though learning orientations are more contextualized and personalized and conceptions of learning may tend to be more stable or resistant to change. In fact, researchers in the field of students' learning are somewhat arbitrary in these aspects, especially concerning the 'alien' orientations or conceptions of learning of non-Western students. For example, Australian Aboriginal students' learning purpose for 'helping their own people' (Boultion-Lewis, Marton, Lewis & Wilss, 2000a, b) was taken as a kind of social orientation, though 'it has extended the range of the social intrinsic category' (Entwistle, 2004), while Purdie & Hattie (2002) treat their findings of Japanese students' 'learning as a moral duty' and 'learning as developing social competence' as conceptions instead of orientations.

Though researchers do not reach an agreement on the scope of conceptions of learning, i.e. whether students' conceptions of knowledge or personal epistemological beliefs are part of their conceptions of learning, and, to what extent, conceptions of learning and learning orientations are overlapping or distinct, they are important constructs in the analysis of students' thinking about learning and in turn, their approaches to learning tasks. Powerful inventories incorporate more of these dimensions to describe and explain students' learning process. For example, *Reflections on Learning Inventory* (RoLI) (Meyer, 2000) contains subsets of both conceptions of knowledge and learning orientations. In the long list of the perceptions of meta-learning compiled by Jackson (2004: 393), changing perceptions of learning, the ability to adapt and change approaches to learning as conditions change and new knowledge emerges, and a sense of identity in the learning process, etc. are all included.

The interrelationship between conceptions of learning, learning orientations and approaches to learning has received much empirical evidence and support from both qualitative and quantitative studies (Boultion-Lewis, *et al.*, 2000a, 2000b; Entwistle, 1998; Beaty, Gibbs, &Morgan, 1997; Vermunt, 1996; 1998). Advanced conceptions of learning are positively related to both intrinsic academic and personal orientations and deep approaches to learning. By contrast, conceptions of learning as accumulation of

‘pieces’ of knowledge via extrinsic, certificate orientation, or learning as a sense of duty (RoLI—Meyer, 2000), correlate to surface approaches to learning, relying on external regulation and rote memorising. In addition, Entwistle (1998) and Vermunt (1998) point out the students’ perceptions of and preferences for different kinds of teaching—‘conceptions of instruction’ (Lowyck, Elen, & Clarebout, 2004)—are in line with their own approaches to learning as well. Therefore, contradiction between what the student believes high-quality learning ought to involve and the unfavourable teaching-learning environment will result in ‘dissonant orchestration’ (Meyer & Vermunt, 2000). However, according to Vermunt & Verloop (1999), constructive frictions, which represent situations where students are unable to use a certain learning activity independently but are able to do so with the guidance of an expert, will help and challenge students to try new ways of learning and thinking. Therefore, the student’s ‘instructional conception’ or the preference for certain type of teaching or teaching-learning environment may also be integrated into the holistic framework of the student’s conceptions of learning.

3.2.4 Holistic Conceptualization of Learning Beliefs

The results from research on students’ learning seem to indicate that students’ approaches to learning are intimately related to students’ personal epistemology—their ways of knowing or what conceptions of knowledge they hold. It is predicted that students who take a more dualistic way of thinking tend to use surface approaches to learning; whereas those who are more relativistic in thinking tend to take a deep approach to their learning. Unfortunately, little research has been done on this relationship (Zhang & Watkins, 2001). According to Zhang and Watkins (2001), Perry (1981) once hypothesized that changes in students’ views of the nature of knowledge and the role of authority would bring observable changes in their modes of learning, but he did not conduct any further research on this relationship. Rodriguez and Cano (2006) also find that researchers who have examined ‘approaches to learning’ seldom integrate these constructs with students’ epistemological beliefs about learning and

knowing. But, in fact, the origins of all these constructs have already been connected in Perry's work.

Based on an overview of the literature related to epistemological beliefs and student learning, particularly Rokeach's (1968) Five-Typed beliefs structure[5] and Hofer and Pintrich's (1997) core and peripheral beliefs concepts, Brownlee, Boulton-Lewis & Purdie (2002) developed a holistic framework of epistemological beliefs, which consists of core beliefs about knowing and peripheral beliefs about learning (see Appendix I Table 3.8). The corresponding relationship between beliefs about learning and conceptions of learning is expounded through the example 'learning as memorising' (Marton, *et, al.,* 1993a; Säljö, 1979):

> *First, the success of rote learning (memorizing) at school may lead to a judgement or an evaluation that this particular type of learning is valuable. Second, such a conception of learning may also have related affective qualities. For example, if an individual has experienced success with memorisation in the past, these experiences may have provided the individual with strong positive feelings that become associated with such a conception. The affective characteristics are then likely to influence learning behaviour because an individual will often expend more energy and time on learning activities that are associated with positive experiences. Conceptions of learning may be similar to beliefs about learning if individuals evaluate the nature of the particular conception of learning, develop strong feelings regarding such conceptions, and then behave in a way that reflects those understandings.*
>
> (Brownlee, *et al.*, 2002: 9)

Therefore, conceptions of learning become beliefs about learning if values are accorded to them. Brownlee, *et al.*'s (2002) contribution to the research on student

[5] Rokeach (1968) categorizes human beliefs system into five types: Type A, B, C, D, E, ranging from more central to more peripheral beliefs in nature. The more a belief is central to a system, the more impervious it is to change. For example, Type C beliefs concern which authorities *could* know and *would* know and which authorities we are to trust and distrust, to look to and not look to, as we go about our daily lives seeking information about our world: '…any given authority belief is typically controvertible because the believer has learned that some of his reference persons and groups do not share his belief' (Rokeach, 1968: 10). So such beliefs, though generally resistant to change, are nevertheless subject to change when they are consciously reflected upon. According to Brownlee, *et al.* (2002), beliefs about learning belongs to this category.

learning lies in that their framework formally integrates the two strands of literature related to epistemological beliefs and the conceptions of learning. In their holistic framework, core beliefs about knowing and the nature of knowledge are central values, integrating other beliefs, whereas 'peripheral beliefs about learning, instruction and intelligence' (Hofer and Pintrich, 1997: 113), derived from the core beliefs, are more easily reflected upon and changed. Therefore, if a student's core beliefs about knowing become more sophisticated we have good reason to believe that their peripheral beliefs about learning are changing as well. This holistic framework is expected to have the potentials in later chapters to account for students' changes in their beliefs about learning when studying abroad.

3.2.5 Change of Learning Beliefs

Given the importance of changes of beliefs among the students in this study, it is important to examine this issue in more detail. Using the core-peripheral framework to conceptualise beliefs makes it possible for the beliefs about learning to be described within the epistemological beliefs system. That means beliefs related to learning are derived from core beliefs about knowing, and thus, are considered more open to change (Brownlee, *et al.*, 2002).

Entwistle (1997a) and Morgan and Beaty (1997) also argue that students' conceptions develop and change in light of their learning experiences. For example, a considerable number of first year (Western) university students were reported to hold quantitative beliefs about learning and they are likely to possess predominantly dualistic epistemological beliefs as well when they are transiting from secondary school to higher education (See Van Rossum and Schenk, 1984; Baxter-Magolda, 1992). This means conceptions of learning and epistemological beliefs are much the results of previous educational experiences, particular experiences with rigid examinations or assessment, and so the development of conceptions itself is also a gradual learning process, with characteristics of successive stages.

Subsequent research indicates that students with advanced conceptions of learning are also able to regulate their learning processes more consciously and so adopt those most appropriate to specific tasks (Vermunt, 1998; 2007). Therefore, though conceptions of learning are empirically related to approaches to learning, there is no evidence that we can rule out the possibility that the student who has developed sophisticated epistemological beliefs and advanced learning conceptions will not totally give up quantitative perspectives of learning or abandon quantitative learning approaches to their learning tasks. As students with a sophisticated conception recognize that there are different learning processes to adopt for different purposes, they will not use deep approaches all the time (Entwistle & Peterson, 2004).

Despite the common belief that education promotes the changes and development of students' epistemological beliefs and conceptions of learning[6], the existing empirical research on conceptual development indicates that conceptions of learning enjoy relative stability and the conceptual change process tends to be slow and difficult. The development and change of students' conceptions of learning generally depends on a mismatch between existing ways of thinking and new learning experiences (Entwistle, 2004; Vosniadou & Kollias, 2002). Both 'constructive friction' (Vermunt & Verloop, 1999) and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) will stimulate the changing process. In Entwistle and Peterson's words, 'to make students somewhat uncomfortable, while providing enough support to allow new strategies to be developed without undue anxiety' is necessary to challenge students' existing conceptions and preferences in order to bring about changes for quality learning (2004: 425).

In this respect, Reybold's (2001; 2002) studies are important for our topic since they revealed the power of intercultural experiences and study abroad in the development of more inclusive and complex ways of knowing: individuals with considerable international experience are more likely to be relativistic thinkers and contextual

[6] Broadly speaking, both education and life experiences and natural maturity may all facilitate epistemological development though the exact roles of these factors in influencing the developing process are not clear yet (Schommer, 1998).

knowers (Reybold, 2001: 426). Reybold (2002) indicated that cross-cultural experiences in an overseas program caused a re-negotiation of beliefs about knowing and learning and argued for encouraging the transformation of personal epistemology through negotiating the conflicts between cultural and personal models of self[7]. Though his research, similar to Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning approach, was much gender-oriented, it worked from a cultural perspective of epistemology, interfacing knowledge, learning and culture—'Culture is a powerful determinant of epistemology' (Reybold, 1996, cited in Reybold, 2001: 415). Since there is an established link between formal or informal educational experiences and intellectual development (Perry, 1970) and epistemological perspectives (Belenky, *et al.*, 1986; Goldberger, 1996), intercultural learning experiences would encourage the development and transformation of a student's personal epistemological beliefs system, for the intense intercultural educational experience usually requires the student to explicitly reflect on his or her beliefs about learning through engaging in different teaching and learning practices. However, the variety of prior educational experiences and how the student values and interprets the new learning environment may mediate the changing process.

3.2.6 Summary

In this section, I have analysed the historical development of the research into students' conceptions of learning and their epistemological beliefs and the theoretical attempts to integrate these two research strands into one holistic conceptual framework. Research on the student's conceptions of learning identified two main categories: accumulative (quantitative) conceptions and transformative (qualitative) conceptions. The accumulative or quantitative conceptions of learning view learning as acquiring knowledge from an external authority instead of actively constructing

[7] *Self* is an important concept which proves to have great impact on one's conceptions of learning. Tasaki (2001) provides evidence that self-construal has important implications for personal epistemology: students who endorse an interdependent self-construal showed stronger belief in omniscient authority, certainty of knowledge, and rigid learning; students who take independent self-construal are more likely to believe that knowledge is uncertain and evolving and have weaker beliefs in omniscient authority.

personal knowledge; whereas, transformative or qualitative conceptions of learning see learning as a process of meaning seeking and creation, which leads to a change in the person.

In the holistic framework presented by Brownlee *et al.* (2002), quantitative conceptions of learning are parallel to the core beliefs about knowing that knowledge is certain, from an omniscient Authority and qualitative conceptions of learning are similar to the more sophisticated core beliefs about knowing that knowledge is uncertain and subject to evolution and change. Thinking in this integrative framework, if a student's core beliefs about knowing and the nature of knowledge are becoming more sophisticated, we have good reason to believe that their peripheral beliefs about learning are changing as well.

As for the development of conceptions of learning, existing empirical studies seem to indicate that the conceptual change process tends to be slow and difficult. Though few studies have been conducted in this aspect, especially to keep track of the same group of students, it is argued that students' conceptions develop and change in light of their formal and informal educations, especially their perceptions and reflections about their learning experiences. Exposure to diverse viewpoints and perspectives—not least through study abroad—about learning and knowing in intercultural settings is expected to stimulate and change the student's personal epistemological beliefs system and provide space for them to renegotiate their personal and cultural self in learning. This is one of the dimensions which will be studied in this thesis empirically.

In order to locate this empirical research in the literature on learning and the possible effects of study abroad – in this case of Chinese students in Britain – we now need to consider the research which has compared conceptions of learning in China and the West.

3.3 Existing Approaches to Chinese Students' Culture of Learning

The cultural characteristics of the conceptions of learning as well as cultural practices

in conducting teaching and learning have given risen to some terms, such as 'cultural beliefs' (Gardner, 1988), 'culture of learning' (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996), 'learning culture' (Riley, 1997), etc. to emphasize the cultural specificity in terms of teaching and learning. Understandably, before drawing wide attention from other international educational settings, all these terms are originally coming from language teaching and learning, which has been a foreground for the encountering of different cultures and practices of learning and teaching.

Jin and Cortazzi's 'culture of learning' focuses on classroom-based schemata—'culturally based ideas about teaching and learning, about appropriate ways of participating in class, about whether and how much to ask questions' (1998b:100).[8] The culture in this definition is normative in nature, which means they see students' culture as explanation for their behaviour in class and excludes the possibility that learners and teachers may also develop new cultural beliefs and create new forms of teaching and learning. In contrast, the term 'learning culture', defined by Riley (1997) as 'a set of representations, beliefs and values related to learning that directly influence (students') learning behaviour' (Riley, 1997: 122), emphasizes that cultural beliefs and values the learner has acquired are from formal and informal socialization process, thus leaves room for further modifications and construction as result of new experiences or 'tertiary socialisation' (Byram, 1989, 2008). In this study, 'learning culture' and 'culture of learning' will be used interchangeably to refer to the whole set of expectations, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, preferences, experiences and behaviours that are characteristic of certain culture with regard to teaching and learning (Hu, 2002), which are not just culturally transmitted and socially constructed, but also individually or institutionally interpreted and practiced, open to change and development.

Such a cultural model of learning beliefs—systems of cultural knowledge, values,

[8]This definition is slightly different from their earlier definition (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996: 230): 'the cultural aspects of teaching and learning; what people believe about 'normal' and 'good' learning activities and processes, where such beliefs have a cultural origin'.

beliefs, and behavior norms acquired by people belonging to a particular cultural group (Lee & Sheared, 2002)—embeds tacit assumptions about reality, motivates and cultivates individual behaviours and actions (D'Andrade, 1987; Quinn and Holland, 1987). The significance of the cultural model to the field of education is that it can provide insider understanding of why the students from certain cultural backgrounds show different learning preference, participation mode, motivations and expectations, etc. It is a good starting point before examining its encountering and interactions with the Western teaching and learning culture, which will be a promising way to capture Chinese sojourning students' academic adjustment in an intercultural setting.

Biggs states that many of the early cross-cultural studies in the field of educational psychology could be criticised as being little more than the administration of Western measuring instruments to non-Western subjects, though after translation (1996a: 9) and warns against the dangers of 'pseudoetic' (Triandis, 1972) research, where concepts from one culture are imposed on other cultures as if they were universal (Biggs, 1996a: 20). *Emic* views of learning—views of those being studied—have been less tapped, even in qualitative research; as Li observes, cultural models of conceptions of learning from anthropological domains have rarely been examined directly (2002: 250). Since what counts as learning is highly subject to different socially and culturally established conventions, educationists and researchers investigating the complex phenomenon of learning should set aside previous assumptions made about student learning and be prepared to interpret the learning behaviour of certain culture with an open mind. Moreover, the semantic relativity warns us that different languages do not simply provide different ways of expressing the same idea, but they are also different in the meanings attached to the idea. Therefore, a more *emic* examination of the words that students use is needed so as to explore the variability of meanings in perceiving and conceiving their learning experiences.

Such approaches are present in phenomenographic research, whose purpose is to

understand how students perceive and react to the learning situation according to their own interpretation rather than objective reality. Initial findings about Chinese learners' distinct conceptions of learning by Marton *et al.* (1993) gave rise to much following interest in Chinese learners. The title of the book *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences*, published in 1996 by Watkins & Biggs, pointed to new directions of the research on Chinese students' learning, which can be generally classified into phenomenographic, cultural (essentialist), prototype, and contextual approaches.

3.3.1 Phenomenographic Approach: Cross-cultural Findings on Chinese Students' Beliefs of Learning

Memorising and Understanding

In Marton's *et al.* (1993) hierarchical conceptions of learning reviewed in Section 3.2.1, 'memorization' and 'understanding' are essentially seen as being mutually exclusive, for memorization and rote learning are generally equated and believed not to lead to understanding in the Western tradition of learning (Marton, Dall'Alba, &Tse 1996: 82). However, the investigations carried out with students in Hong Kong and Mainland China have found that both Chinese teachers and students see memorizing and understanding as interlocking processes, complementary to each other. First, most of the subjects distinguished between purely mechanical memorization and memorization with understanding; second, some regard memorization with understanding as a way of retaining what has already been understood, and others regard memorization with understanding as a strategy to achieve deep learning; third, some subjects regard understanding as a relation between a learner and an object, but others regard understanding as a process of personal development (Biggs, 1996b; Kember, 1996; Marton, *et al.*, 1996; Marton, Watkins & Tang, 1997; Watkins, 1996). Therefore, the terms 'memorization' and 'understanding' connote different meanings and serve different purposes in Chinese learning practice. Marton *et al.* (1996)

conclude that Chinese learners might possess some different conceptions of learning. This finding is correspondent with another cross-cultural difference identified by Dahlin & Watkins (2000) that whereas Western students see understanding as usually a process of sudden insight, Chinese students typically think of understanding as a long process that requires considerable mental effort. This new way of seeing the relationship between memorization and understanding provides certain clues to tackle 'the paradox of the Chinese learner'[9] (Biggs & Watkins, 1996; Watkins & Biggs, 2001a) but also cautions the interpretations of the learning behaviours of a different culture and sheds light on the argument that the constructs of conceptions of learning developed in the West may not always justify the learning practices adequately in Asian cultures.

Achieving approach

Besides the binary surface and deep approaches found from Western samples, a third approach 'strategic approach' (Ramsden, 1979, 1981) or 'achieving approach' (Biggs, 1988) was identified. Biggs (1988) claimed that 'achieving approach' was particular characteristic of Chinese learners: be willing or force himself/herself to put efforts into organized studying; tend to and intend to manifest excellence by aiming at high grades and competing against other students; be alert to assessment requirements and criteria and constantly monitoring the effectiveness of their ways of studying, etc. This achievement intention and motivation is much related to a sense of responsibility, not just to oneself but also to significant others, such as, 'family face' (Ho, 1993), or even society at large (Meyer, 2000, 2004; Salili, 1996). Studies of ethnic groups in multicultural learning settings also provide evidence that Chinese students present different learning attitudes and achievement motivation (Hau & Salili, 1991;

[9] There are two aspects to this paradox: one is students from Confucian Heritage cultures (CHC) out-perform Western students despite the learning conditions which cannot be conducive to good learning in terms of Western standards; the other is CHC students are perceived to be passive rote learners, yet orient to high level of understanding (Watkins & Biggs, 2001a: 3). However, it has long been claimed that even though Chinese students may outperform their Western counterparts, mainly in the area of mathematics and science, they do not evidence creativity and original thinking due to the authoritarian education system and the pressure for conformity in society as a whole (Salili, 1996; Spence, 1985).

Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Yu & Yang, 1994). For example, a number of key factors have been offered to account for Chinese students' school success in Western learning settings and a consensus is reached that Chinese people develop more positive attitudes toward learning and place higher value on learning (Biggs, 1996a; Chao, 1996; Li, 2001; Li, 1990; Stevenson & Lee, 1995). In addition, Chinese notions of intelligence emphasize effort, a sense of humility, and moral self-striving, in addition to general cognitive ability (Chen, 1994; Li, 2002; Yang & Sternberg, 1997). Furthermore, Chinese adults and children are more inclined to view ability as something that they achieve through personal effort and social factors rather than something that causes achievement *per se* (Li, 2001; 2003; Pratt, 1992; Salili, 1996).

Intellectual development (Perry, 1970) and academic achievement

Zhang and Watkins (2001) provided cross-cultural evidence of the relationship between student approaches to learning and stages of cognitive development and of validity of Perry's theory of such development, but an interesting finding of this research is that there is a statistically significant relationship between cognitive development and academic achievement among the American group, whereas no relationship was found between cognitive development and academic achievement among the Chinese group. Since much research has indicated that there is a relationship between cognitive developmental level and academic achievement (Cano, 2005; Schommer 1990; Schommer *et al.*, 1997), Zhang & Watkins conclude that 'the lack of relationship between the two variables was due to chance' (2001: 256). They also found that the intellectual development patterns of Chinese students were not as suggested by Perry (1970). The rank order from the most dualistic to the least dualistic was not from Year 1 to Year 4, but follows the order of Year 1, Year 4, Year 2 and Year 3. All these seemingly confusing results might be explained by the rigid and high-stake examinations prevalent in China's secondary and tertiary educational systems, especially in national entrance examinations, which the secondary students take to enter tertiary education and Year 4 university students for postgraduate studies.

In these examinations, only memorization of 'correct answers' can guarantee academic success, because objective or standardized marking criteria do not give much room for the play of multiple stances or perspectives. Therefore, it is not surprising that cognitive development does not always correlate to academic achievements in China.[10]

In an investigation of Chinese students' development of learning approaches in a Chinese Mainland university, by analyzing the quantitative data collected from 552 economics students, Xu claimed that the trend of development suggested by the way the deep and surface approaches changed across the four years seemed to offer some confirmation of the non-standard pattern of development in students' learning: the deep approach seemed to decline while the surface approach increased across the years, though not substantially (2004:15). Xu also found that an 'unthinking acceptance' item, which is supposed to be closely related to other surface approach items in Western quantitative instruments, 'kept standing out as a separate scale in the factor analysis' and might more appropriately be treated as an item describing an approach different from the deep and surface one (ibid: 16). Furthermore, Xu pointed out the constraints of the concept 'approach to learning' and replaced it with a much more disciplined-oriented concept: 'ways of thinking and practising' (WTP, Entwistle, 2005), which 'might include anything that was explicitly taught to, or tacitly absorbed by, students as they approached graduate-level mastery of a subject area'. For WTP can describe the richness, depth and breadth of student learning by 'taking into account both how students go about their studying and what they gain from their engagement in their study processes, and the gains encompass not only knowledge and understanding but also skills, values and attitudes' (Xu, 2004: 3).

[10] A teenager writer Han Han, who has published several long novels and collection of poems in Chinese, confessed when being interviewed on TV, that he failed to pass his Chinese subject in school, because he couldn't memorize common facts about works and writers. Likewise, few adults of postgraduate levels could pass the national entrance examination for tertiary education without intensive training and preparation, though they are cognitively more mature than secondary school students. In my university, the final-term examination is much more an achievement test than a proficiency test using a high percentage of standardized items, such as multiple choice, True or False, to ensure 'objectivity' and 'fairness' and to reduce subjective or 'personal' marking. My daughter was advised not to be 'too original' in answering questions or in writing composition, because the originality might be but might not be appreciated by the assessor, so in normal times, you can experiment with your new ideas, but at formal exams, 'just follow the safe code'.

The assumptions that epistemological beliefs are congruent with cultural beliefs in learning and teaching also received challenges from Chan and Elliott's (2002) survey on 385 Hong Kong teacher education students. They found that, unlike American student teachers, the Hong Kong student teachers' epistemological beliefs were incongruent with their pedagogical beliefs: these Chinese education students were not inclined towards constructivist teaching although most of them were relativistic in their epistemological beliefs system. This contrast certainly requires more *emic* studies as well as both cultural and situational factors to explain.

Citing Kember and Gow (1990), who note that the documented goals of higher education are remarkably similar across different systems of higher education, which include the promotion of independent, critical thinking, but also that this construct is contextualized within any particular situation and reflects what aspects of it are valued in that culture, Richardson claims that a reproducing orientation to studying 'will be determined not by culturally agreed goals but instead by the students' attempts to cope with counterproductive institutional practices that are likely to show systematic cultural variations' (1994: 464). The conclusion we may draw from his argument is that cultural influences will be more apparent in the case of the less desirable approaches to studying but education itself should cultivate in students the same universal values. In other words, students' learning behaviours are not necessarily correspondent to their conceptions of learning but may be contingent upon both institutional requirements and conventional practices.

3.3.2 Essentialist Cultural Approach: Confucian Culture of Learning and Socratic Culture of Learning

Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC) is the term used to refer to China, including Hong Kong and Taiwan, Japan, Korea and Singapore where Confucian values are prevalent to varying degrees (Ho, 1991; Biggs, 1996a) and gains much currency in the research on Asian learners (see Watkins & Biggs, 1996). Even though 'teachers or students

may not be fully aware of it', Confucian ideals and practices in education are still very influential in modern China (Jin & Cortazzi 1998a: 757). Chang (2000) used the term 'vernacular Confucianism' to refer to those common beliefs held by Chinese teachers, parents, and students, which may not be directly derived from the Confucian educational values from the *Analects*, but, as Watkins and Biggs (2001a) remark, 'the point is not which current beliefs about the raising and educating of children can be attributed to what ancient scholars, but the fact itself that these beliefs are current today, within the focus culture' (2001a: 4)

Lee's (1996) article 'The Cultural Context for Chinese Learners: Conceptions of Learning in the Confucian Tradition' set the scene for the studies on Confucian culture of learning in contrast to a Socratic culture of learning. Through interpreting Confucian classics about education and learning, Lee says that in the Confucian tradition, the concept of the attainability of human perfectibility through education is expressed in terms of sagehood, which can be attained through willpower[11] and effortful learning (1996: 30-31). The other side of the coin, he points out is the utilitarian orientation of education, i.e. social mobility and seeking government office are the rewards of successful learning:

> *The aspiration for upward social mobility through educational success seems to coexist with the ideal for intrinsic personal growth in the process of education, although they look contradictory to each other.*
>
> (Lee, 1996: 38)

Therefore, the ideal outcome of learning is typified in the notion of '内圣外王' (*neisheng waiwang*, meaning 'sage within and king without').

Tweed and Lehman (2002) succinctly categorized the core educational beliefs in Confucian culture of learning into the following aspects: (1) Absorptive learning of

[11] The Chinese character for 'willpower' 志 is etymologically related to 'knowing' and 'mind', so it is not only ' an emotive driving force of effort, but contains an element of rationality'(Tu, 1979, cited in Lee, 1996: 32), inseparable from learning.

essentials; (2) Respectful learning; (3) Collectivist learning; (4) Behavioural reform; (5) Pragmatic learning; (6) Effortful learning; and (7) Affinity for poetic ambiguity. By contrast, they characterize Socratic learning culture as (1) Tendency to question, (2) Tendency to evaluate, (3) Esteem for self-generated knowledge. This categorisation of the characteristics of two cultures of learning is not free of value judgement and leaves the impression that the Socratic process of teaching and learning, i.e. to publicly challenge others' beliefs by carefully examining and evaluating knowledge to elicit one's self-generated knowledge is foreign to Chinese people. In fact, there is no lack of emphasis on reflective thinking and enquiry in the Confucius's conception of learning. In the classics of *Zhong Yong《中庸》*, five steps of learning are 'studying extensively, enquiring carefully, pondering thoroughly, sifting clearly, and practicing earnestly' (*The Mean, XX. 19*, cited in Lee, 1996: 35). According to Zhu Xi, one of the most influential successors of Confucius, 'memorising, reflecting and questioning are the basic components of learning' (Lee, 1996: 36):

> *in reading, we must first become intimately familiar with the text (memorise) so that its words seem to come from our own mouths. We should then continue to* ***reflect*** *on it so that its ideas seem to come from our own minds. Only then can there be* ***real understanding.*** *Still, once our intimate reading of it and careful reflection on it have led to a clear understanding of it, we must continue to* ***question****. Then there might be additional progress. If we cease questioning, in the end there'll be no additional progress*
>
> (Gardner, 1990: 135)

Therefore, Confucian absorptive and respectful learning do not exclude questioning and evaluating; collectivist learning and pragmatic learning do not go against intrinsic motivation of learning for self-cultivation, either.

Nonetheless, since East and West are easily viewed as antithetical, the dichotomy in conceptualizing Confucian and Socratic learning discourses, which are presumed to represent typical Chinese and Western ways of going about learning, is prevalent among the studies on Chinese learners, including Chinese sojourning students in a

Western learning culture. This essentialist or 'large culture' approach (Holliday, 1999) is based on conceptions of fixed ethnic cultural characteristics to explain the perceived differences in students' learning beliefs and learning behaviour. The following three theoretical strands of conceptualizing Confucian and Socratic learning cultures are mainly working in this approach.

a. Dialectic vs. Dialogic (Hammond and Gao, 2002)

Characteristic of Western learning culture, the Socratic method of learning 'developed a split between dialectic, the art of logical argument, on the one hand, and rhetoric, the art of persuasive speaking, on the other' (Scollon, 2001: 14). According to Scollon, dialogue is at the heart of Socratic methods, which are alive not only as a subject but 'in much of the Western day-to-day experience of discourse inside and outside the classroom. Much of Western education is preparation for such events as oral dissertation defences and other examinations, and ultimately job interviews.' (ibid: 15). By citing Oliver (1971), Scollon claims that unlike the West, 'the ancient Chinese made no division between dialect and rhetoric' (2001: 15). In other words, seeking truth and logical reasoning is not a high priority in Chinese education. 'In his concern with consequences rather than truth, Confucius used rhetorical rather than leading questions. Rather than engaging in lengthy dialogues, he emphasized the importance of care of in speaking' (ibid: 18).[12] So, verbal interaction has not been a prominent element in the learning behaviour in Chinese learning culture.

As for originality, Confucius sees himself as a messenger who transmits the wisdom of the ancients without innovation. 'Instead of invoking an internal authority, he has been seen as providing his students with an external authority' (ibid: 19-20). Unlike

[12] Confucius' emphasis on action and aversion to clever talk is easily evidenced in his *Analects*. The following are well-known admonitions in *Analects*: 'In ancient times, people didn't say things lightly, as they would be ashamed not to be able to match up to their words' ('古者言之不出，耻躬之不逮也'《论语·里仁》, Cai, 2006: 45); 'A gentleman takes it as a disgrace to let his words outstrip his deeds' ('君子耻其言而过其行',《论语·宪问》, Cai, 2006: 67); 'A gentleman should be careful in speech and quick to act'('君子欲纳于言而敏于行'。《论语·述而》, Cai, 2006: 95).

Socrates' attacking the straw man by using spoken arguments, Confucius taught his disciples by employing analogy and allusions to appropriate classic texts. Therefore, a Confucian method of learning is exemplified by effortful, pragmatic, and respectful learning to acquire essential knowledge. Verbalization and argumentation are not essential ways of learning.

b. Independent and interdependent self

Another binary construct used to explain the perceived differences between Chinese learners and their Western counterparts is independent self vs. interdependent self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991a). Empirical research has confirmed the congruence between cultural characteristic and structure of self (Erez & Early, 1993; Tasaki, 2001; Trafimow, *et al.*, 1991). So they have become synonymous with the difference between individualistic and collectivistic in cross-cultural studies. For example, Trafimow *et al.* (1991) compared Chinese students, from a collectivist cultural background, with students from North America, an individualistic culture, and found that North American subjects retrieved more cognitions about their independent selves than Chinese students. Tu also holds that 'a distinctive feature of Confucian ritualization is an ever-deepening and broadening awareness of the presence of the other in one's self-cultivation' (1985: 232). Ting-Toomey (1988) also claimed that in collectivistic cultures such as China, the 'self' is a situationally and relationally based concept; there is a constant interplay between the self and others in the definition of the self'. In other words, in CHCs, the 'self' is shaped in terms of his or her relationships to others, webs of relationships between and among individuals (Chu, 1997; Ho, Holmes, & Cooper, 2004).

Based on Markus and Kitayama's (1991a, 1991b) distinction of 'self', Littlewood (1999) lists the corresponding learning behaviours exercised by independent self and interdependent self respectively: the independent self is disposed to express individual ideas, attach importance to individual goals and 'self-actualization', be willing to enter into confrontation and competition and prefer equal relationships; whereas the

interdependent self will pay much attention to the group when forming opinions, support group goals and expectations, emphasize harmony and cooperation in the group, attach importance to preserving 'face', and feel comfortable in vertical unequal relationships (see Appendix I Table 3.9). However, empirical evidence does not always support these hypotheses (see Shi, 2006; Phuong-Mai, *et al.*, 2005)

Sociocultural psychologists have made the point that epistemological beliefs strongly relate to the ways people interact with each other, including how one views the 'self' and how the 'self' interacts with others in the immediate environment (Schommer-Aikins, 2004) and I have also mentioned in the last section that certain epistemological beliefs promoted in Western educational systems may be biased against students from non-Western cultures, because endorsing an interdependent self-construal tends to show stronger belief in omniscient authority, certainty of knowledge, innate ability, and rigid learning (Tasaki, 2001). Nonetheless, though independent self and interdependent self, subject to the restraint within the involved social web, tended to be regarded as relatively consistent and stable structures within each culture, on the individual level, self can be emancipated and acquire new sense when a person is free from relational or social restraints. This explains why individualism can be quite distinctive among the Chinese who have left their relational circles, when migrating to overseas (Eberhard, 1971; King, 1992; cited by Lee, 1996: 33), a factor which will be relevant to the empirical data in later chapters.

c. Cultural Synergy Model (Jin & Cortazii, 1993)

In examining Chinese overseas students/ visiting scholars' and their UK supervisors' expectations and their academic language uses, Jin and Cortazzi (1993) found that Chinese students' academic success in Western learning culture attests to a degree of successful accommodation, yet problems of communication remains. The academic culture gaps between the expectations of British university staff and those of Chinese sojourning students were juxtaposed as follow:

British academic expectations	**Chinese Academic expectations**
● individual orientation	● collective consciousness
● horizontal relations	● hierarchical relations
● active involvement	● passive participation
● verbal explicitness	● contextualised communication
● speaker/writer responsibility	● listener/reader responsibility
● independence of mind	● dependence on authority
● creativity, originality	● mastery, transmission
● discussion, argument, challenge	● agreement, harmony, face
● seeking alternatives	● single solution
● critical evaluation	● assumed acceptance

(Cortazzi & Jin, 1997: 78)

Based on this binary discrimination of two cultures of learning, they borrowed Morgan & Harris's (1988; 1991) concept 'cultural synergy' to refer to a mutual or reciprocal cultural movement between people from two or more cultures so that they can 'interact systematically, cooperating for a common purpose with an attitude of being willing to learn, understand and appreciate the other's culture without loss of their own status, role or cultural identity' (1993: 95). Similarly, Zhou & Todman's (2008) recent study on Chinese sojourning students' experiences in the UK universities calls for a two-way reciprocal adaptation, which may be viewed as 'an extension of the cultural synergy process' (Zhou & Todman, 2008: 223), demanding mutual acquisition of social and behavioural skills by individuals from different

cultures (Ward, *et al.*, 2001).

Despite the fact that their essentialist and selective way of portraying Chinese learner has received much criticism (see Stephens, 1997), this cultural synergy model, going beyond uni-directional social and behavioural acculturation to include a mutual adaptation of cultural values from both sides, seemingly points to a positive solution to the different academic expectations, but such an ideal approach to the differences may not be attainable, because it is unrealistic to expect a British lecturer in a multicultural classroom to know and attend to all the various cultures of learning that the students bring with them. Their concept 'Chinese culture of learning' was challenged too for not considering contextual factors (see Gieve & Clark, 2005). Therefore, the weakness of their research lies in its selective subjects as well as its essentialist stance in explaining Chinese students' learning behaviours.

Although essentialist views of cultures are useful to start with, the emphasis on difference may create 'alien syndrome' (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004), which may prevent us from examining the performative aspects of the students studying in a new learning culture to discover the complexities and intricacies of their learning cultures on individual levels. Egege and Kutieleh argue that 'hypersensitivity to perceived differences could then become a potential obstacle to understanding and productive interaction, rather than a means to enable understanding and positive interaction' (2004: 76).

3.3.3 Prototype Approach

Another conceptualization of the antithesis of Chinese and Western cultures of learning is from Li's (2000) prototype research on Chinese conceptions of learning. Li (2000) compared Chinese and U.S. conceptions of learning using prototype research methods (Shaver *et al.*, 1987), which allow the participants to brainstorm any ideas related to learning in order to generate *emic* concepts about learning in these two cultures. The findings of her research show that the two cultures' conceptual map of

learning are distinct, and the terms used in describing learning differ remarkably as well: American students appear to be hyper-cognized (Levy, 1973) – i.e. they are very well articulated and differentiated— for the process of learning while Chinese students appear to be hyper-cognized about attitudes to learning. For instance, American students emphasize thinking, communicating one's ideas and active learning; Chinese students see learning mainly related to seeking knowledge and achievement, and emphasize the social and moral aspects of learning, such as self-fulfilment. Later, Li (2002) terms these two tendencies 'mind orientation' and 'virtue orientation' or 'person orientation'. According to Li, the Western model of learning emphasizes finely differentiated mental functions to understand the essentials of a given topic, to question the known, to explore the unknown, and to develop personal insights and creative problem solving. In contrast, Chinese beliefs of learning show 'an overarching moral tone regarding the whole person, … mentally oriented understanding … alone is not central to their learning beliefs' (2005: 191). The conclusion she draws from her research is there exists little overlap between Chinese and American conceptions of learning.

Through collecting and analysing Chinese learning-related terms, Li (2001) found that most terms centred around the folk concept '*hao xue xin*' (好学心), a native term with literal meaning of 'heart and mind for wanting to learn'. Unlike Western learners' intrinsic motivation and enjoyment in learning, *hao xue xin* emphasizes two aspects: seeking knowledge as well as achievement. Seeking knowledge includes a) cultivating a desire or passion to learn, b) a lifelong learning orientation through diligence, endurance of hardship, humility, steadfastness, and concentration, and c) learning benefits self, family and society; 'achievement' is conceived as a) the unity of moral development and knowledge, b) extraordinary ability, c) representing breadth and depth of knowledge. She also argues for the idea that learning may be a 'hypercognized' domain of Chinese culture, exerting a 'directive force' (D'Andrade, 1992) for people's actual learning and assuming an essential role in Chinese lives (Li, 2002: 250).

The significance of Li's research lies in her *emic* approach to describe a Chinese cultural model of learning. She points out that research in psychology and education tends to shy away from systematically documenting cultural meaning systems. Moreover, 'although previous research illuminates many important aspects of how people in different cultures learn and achieve, indigenous conceptions of learning and achievement have received relatively little attention' (Li, 2001: 112).

One of the shortcomings of Li's approach is that the cultural model of Chinese learning that Li is striving to present is not intended to describe the Chinese learners' conceptions of learning on an individual level or a performative level. The subjects are asked to list the terms related to learning, which are common terms, phrases, idioms and sayings in everyday speech but the subjects themselves may not identify with those beliefs. This cultural model of learning, though laudable in its *emic* sense, cannot capture the dynamic development of the conceptions of learning embraced by the Chinese learners when they are sojourning abroad as we shall attempt to do in later chapters.

3.3.4 Contextual Approach

The contextual approach rejected the essentialist cultural approach by attending to immediate constructions *in situ* of small cultures (Holliday, 1999), where members with their own beliefs about learning are constantly adjusting and adapting themselves in order to be accepted by the new culture of learning. Recent scholarship is more inclined to argue for a contextualized approach to researching Chinese students in intercultural contexts (Chan, 2001; Gorden, *et al.*, 1998; Gu & Maley, 2008; Gieve & Clark, 2005; Gow *et al.*, 1996; Nines, *et al.*, 1999; Ramburuth & McCormick, 2001; Sadler-Smith & Tsang, 1998; Smith & Smith 1999; Volet, 1999; Volet & Renshaw, 1996; Zhang *et al.*, 2003) by showing empirical evidence that Chinese sojourning students' approaches to learning were not vastly different from those of their local

counterparts (in English speaking countries) (Niles, 1995; Ramburuth, 1997[13]; Volet & Renshaw, 1996) or European Erasmus students (Gieve & Clark, 2005). Therefore, the powerful role of the learning context has been stressed as the key to understanding Chinese students' flexibility in tackling academic issues and their adaptation to Western culture of learning (Biggs, 1996; Kirby, *et al.*, 1996; Littlewood, 1999; Volet & Renshaw, 1996).

In this vein, based on the studies conducted in Hong Kong, Chan contends that 'learning approaches are not inherent in the learners and that they could vary as a function of the learning contexts' (2001: 200). In other words, learning and teaching approaches are contextually constrained rather than culturally determined. According to Chan's view, the didactic teaching or the transmission approach prevalent in Hong Kong classroom is the result of the 'contextual constraints', such as examination pressures, and 'does not typify the teaching of the great Chinese teacher' (ibid: 184).

Both qualitative and quantitative evidence suggests that besides cultural factors, personal, psychological and pedagogical factors are equally important in influencing the intercultural adaptation process and outcomes. (Gu & Maley, 2008). In investigating a group of Chinese English learners' response to a self-directed learning program in the UK, Gieve & Clark (2005) suggest that, given appropriate conditions, what are apparently cultural determined dispositions towards a certain approach to learning can turn out to be quite flexible. They also point out that fluid and multiple identities (Norton, 2000a, 2000b) 'would allow for students taking on the attitudes and practices of different social and cultural groups simultaneously, contingently, instrumentally, and flexibly' (2005: 274). They also called for ethnography of autonomy (Riley, 1988) to be done to discover how Chinese students in British higher education organize their study strategies in contexts structured differently from what they have been used to.

[13] In their research, though no statistically significant differences were found between Asian international and Australian students in their overall approaches to learning, Asian international students demonstrated significantly higher use of deep motivation, surface and achieving strategies than their Australian counterparts. Moreover, the two groups differed significantly in their preference for collaborative learning, supporting the notion of Chinese students being more group-oriented in their learning style (Ramburuth & McCormick, 2001).

A constructivist approach to teaching and learning can be seen as another attempt to fight against the essentialist approach to viewing cultural differences in classroom practice. Biggs (1999) argues that the principles of good teaching and learning might exist across cultures and any cultural differences can be accommodated by good teaching and learning practices. Intervention studies of constructivist instruction on Chinese students' learning and understanding in Hong Kong classrooms draw the conclusion that constructivist instruction, including problem-based learning, could be implemented successfully for promoting Chinese students learning (Chan, 2001; Stokes, 2001; Tang, 2001).

Similarly, a substantial body of pedagogical writing on the ways that people learn and acquire knowledge bears on the Socratic-Confucian framework, but more on an individual level continuum rather than a cultural-level dichotomy (see Perry, 1970; Magolda, 1992; King& Kitchener, 1994). The findings from comparative studies often show that with respect to what the students believe in, there is much less difference between the groups of different countries than there is between the individual responses within the same country (see Chan, 1999; Littlewood, 2000). Therefore, the generalized concepts, such as collectivism, the interdependent self, 'face' theory, high power distance, can not be sufficiently robust to predict how learners behave in a new learning context. Though the contextual approach, by emphasizing the importance of learning in the presence of others, i.e. the dynamic and interactive aspects of subcultures of learning, offers a much more heuristic and positive view of Chinese learners' flexibility and adaptability in terms of learning approaches and behaviours, their cultural traits acquired through former socialisations may not be easily shed off.

3.3.5 Summary

From earlier phenomenographic approaches and much criticised essentialist cultural approaches, to recent *emic* prototype approach and contextual approach, we have got kaleidoscopic profiles of Chinese learners. The research results about their responses

to Western culture of learning from the studies by different approaches are not consistent either or even incompatible. This inconsistency will be illustrated by the analysis of more empirical studies in the following section which focuses on Chinese students when studying outside their own environment.

3.4 Empirical Studies on Chinese Sojourning Students' Learning experiences in Western Learning Cultures

A large body of literature has documented Chinese students' learning experiences when they study in Western learning cultures, mainly in English speaking countries, i.e. Australia, New Zealand, the USA, and the UK (Ballard & Clanchy, 1984; 1991; 1997; Barker *et al.*, 1991; Bradley & Bradley, 1984; Burnapp, 2006; Burns, 1991; Chalmers & Volet, 1997; Durkin, 2004; Gu & Maley, 2008; Gribble & Ziguras, 2003; Jones, 2005; Kelly & Bennoun, 1984; Liberman, 1994; McCargar, 1993; Mullins, *et al.*, 1995; Ninnes *et al.*, 1999; Philips, 1988; Robinson-Pant, 2009; Samuelowicz, 1987; Turner, 2006). In the studies by cultural approach as reviewed in the last section, CHC students are presumed to bring their culturally different conceptions and attitudes toward learning to the Western learning setting which lead them into an intense state of 'learning shock' (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997: 28) or various dissonances. However, many other researchers have started to view these dissonances from broader perspectives and give more attention to Chinese sojourners' adaptability with regard to their learning beliefs and behaviours after a certain time of immersion in the new learning culture (see Durkin, 2004; Turner, 2006). Empirical studies on Chinese sojourning students' learning issues mainly focus on the following aspects: (1) Academic literacy, including academic discourse, critical thinking, and issues of plagiarism, etc.; (2) Perceptions of classroom activities and participation; (3) Expectations of teacher-student roles and relationship, among which the issue of learner autonomy is most prominent; (4) Co-national network in adjustment to the host culture; (5) Adaptability to the host culture of learning.

3.4.1 Academic Literacy

Though ‘academic language… is no one’s mother tongue’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1994: 8), academic literacy and discursive issues have been more prominent among international students, especially students from non-English speaking countries, because the wholesale transfer from first language literacy to second language literacy is always problematic (Bell, 1991). Furthermore, academic terminology itself ‘is a potential source of alienation’ (Aspland & O’Donoghue, 1994: 71) and may put certain groups of students in a disadvantaged position.

Academic literacy and discursive issues have been a major theme in the literature of international students’ intercultural communication and academic writing. From the perspective of contrastive rhetoric, Kaplan (1966) identified the structure of Chinese writing as circular, in contrast with the linearity of English. This discursive difference naturally finds its way into academic writing. In essay-writing tasks, CHC students may use a more circular style of prose, contextualize, and use a lot of background historical information instead of Western linear and direct styles (Biggs & Watkins, 1996; Gay, 2000; Jia, 2005; McLoughlin, 1995; Samovar & Porter, 2004). Therefore, some Western academics see the Asian preferred academic style as ‘waffling’ or ‘not getting to the point’ (McLean & Ransom, 2005: 57). Conversely, Jin and Cortazzi (1999) suggest that Asian students see the Western style as ‘giveaway’: because the most important point is revealed in the first topic sentence of each paragraph. In other words, Western academic style is more overtly linear in its logic and more explicit, whereas in Asian academic writing the meaning is negotiated by using inferences (Wilkinson and Kavan, 2003). However, some scholars point out that modern Chinese academic writing has much in common in structure with that of Western academic norms (Huang, 1997; Kirkpatrick, 1997; Mohan & Lo, 1985). There exists the tendency to exaggerate the differences while overlooking the similarities between the two academic literacy systems.

Canagarajah (2002) examined five pedagogical approaches to academic literacy:

English for Academic purposes (EAP) approach, contrastive rhetoric approach (CR), social process approach, transcultural model (Zamel, 1996; 1997), and contact zones (Pratt, 1991) [14] and argued for a more critical orientation to teaching academic writing so that students can gain critical voice through appropriating the dominant discourse:

> *Students shouldn't be satisfied with just **switching** discourse…, or **fusing** discourses as Zamel encourages, but **appropriating** dominant discourses according (to) their interests and values in order to gain voice. Through discursive struggle, students adopt creative strategies to reshape academic conventions to represent their interests and values.*
>
> (Canagarajah, 2002: 40)

However, many specialists in the field of EAP adopt a pragmatic or instrumental attitude toward academic writing discourse (Johns, 1990; Reid, 1989; cited in ibid: 33) and reduce discourse features to skills for students to practice and master. Others argue from a discipline perspective and view academic writing as an acculturation process for all students in the disciplines: 'it can be extremely difficult for students to reference effectively until they have spent considerable amount of time reading around the discipline to understand its key concepts, theoretical underpinnings, values and controversies' (Schmitt, 2005: 69). In addition, the notion that general language skill trained in preparatory English language courses could be easily and successfully transferred to discipline-specific tasks is also challenged, for 'all academic work is socially situated' (Spack, 1997: 50). This applies to all students, not just CHC or other international students. Dong's case studies of three Chinese sojourning doctoral students indicate that the major problem facing them is 'lack of membership' (Dong,

[14] According to Canagarajah (2002), EAP approach adopts the normative attitude that the discourses of academic communities are not open to negotiation or criticism; Contrastive rhetoric approach displays the openness or relativism to treat the features of academic communities as results of students' unique linguistic and cultural traditions; social process approach takes the view that each discourse suits its social practice and historical experiences, so there is no discursive paradigm of any community can make a superior claim to truth; transculturation model, originated from postmodern culture, allows merging of boundaries and moving between discourse communities; contact zones, referring to a meeting point of disparate discourses, 'takes into account of the struggles and conflicts in negotiating power while retaining the agency of writers to cross boundaries' (2002; 39).

1996: 453) in their academic discourse community. As novice members of a discourse community, they are not acquainted with the conventions that shape its genres, therefore, a hands-on approach from the supervisor was more effective than 'probing in the dark and learning from mistakes' (Braine, 2002: 64), though some studies suggest that some non-native postgraduate writers may resist the assimilation of another cultural discursive practice if they perceive that it entails alienating themselves from their own culture (Kiley, 2003; Shen, 1989).

Perhaps as a counter-balance to the prevailing expectations, Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggests it is ethnocentric to judge literacy skills according to one cultural framework and we should respect and value the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of our students rather than suppress them. According to Kumaravadivelu, awareness of different writing values and styles can enhance rather than restrict writing competence and students should use their own cultural background as a springboard to mastering academic discourse.

Critical thinking

Despite the fact that there is no 'general agreement between academics across disciplines in regards to what they believe critical thinking is' (Egege and Kutieleh, 2004: 79), the assumption is critical thinking is 'not only desirable, beneficial and attainable but they are universally valued. Critical thinking is seen as the epitome of good thinking' (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004: 79). As critical thinking is regarded as the distinguishing feature of Western universities, it has become the indicator to distinguish Western learning culture from non-Western, especially CHC learning cultures (Cadman, 2000). The view is prevalent among Western academics that Chinese-speaking students have neither analytical skills nor the critical enquiry that are required in Western universities (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991; Samuelowicz, 1987; Swoden, 2003). 'In many Asian countries … the intellectual skills of comparing, evaluating different points of view, arguing and presenting one's point of view are not developed' (Samuelowicz, 1987: 124). 'Masked by language problems lie the much

deeper problems of adjusting to a new intellectual culture, a new way of thinking and of processing knowledge to meet the expectations inherent in the Anglo education system (Ballard, 1996: 150). This deficit approach to Chinese learners was criticized by Biggs (1997) as 'conceptual colonialism', which means Western academics take their own limited teaching and learning experiences as standard paradigm and depreciate other ways of learning as deficits or deviations by arguing that Chinese-speaking students are successful in their overseas learning and even outperform their western counterparts (Biggs, 1996; Kember, 1996). But, such research does not provide convincing evidence that Chinese students outperform their western counterparts in analytical and critical thinking (see Section 3.2.1 about the paradox of the Chinese learner). On the contrary, their outperforming may well challenge Western academic assessment system which boasts its critical thinking.

Chinese students' disengagement with critical approach to learning is usually explained from a cultural perspective, that is, for fear of destroying social harmony (Carson & Nelson, 1996; Durkins, 2004, 2008; Turner, 2006). But Jones' (2005) findings showed that Chinese speaking students were no more reluctant to engage in critical thinking than their local peers as defined by the task. The similarities between these Chinese students and Australian students' perceptions of the critical thinking task suggest that 'despite it being a new learning experience, these international students were adept at determining what the task involved' (Jones, 2005: 351). Hence, it is teaching context, rather than cultural background, that plays a vital role in shaping students' understanding the nature of critical thinking:

> *What teachers do, the way they teach and assess, their styles of thinking, and the ways in which the discipline is constituted by the teacher all have a powerful influence on the ways in which students approach their learning.*
>
> (Jones, 2005: 351)

Therefore, the scaffolding provided in the first year will benefit all the students, for transition to tertiary education is an issue for all the students, international as well as

local (McInnis & James, 1994). However, research in the UK (Durkin, 2004; Turner, 2006) argues that even if the Chinese students engage in critical learning, these changes tend to be temporary and superficial.

These researchers advocate making explicit the cultural assumptions, biases and values of Western critical thinking so that the international students would not feel academically deficient or culturally compromised in engaging this approach (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004). But again, we need to realise that critical thinking is a high order cognitive skill as well as a cultural way of learning. To make a differentiation, Ennis (2000) states that critical thinking consists of a set of cognitive dispositions and abilities. Abilities, as the first level in the model above, refer to the cognitive skills, while dispositions emphasize the attitudes or inclinations of minds towards critical thinking. Smith (1992) also claims that critical thinking requires knowledge, authority, and a willingness to doubt. These distinctions will be useful to explain the data of this study, for it shows concerns about both cognitive abilities and social-affective interpersonal relations and socio-cultural appropriacy of engaging critical thinking.

Assessment

Dahlin, Watkins and Ekholm (2001) state there are two different views on the relation between assessment and learning, an external or an internal relation. By an external relation, the assessment is an external device to measure, check and control the students' learning; internal relation, on the other hand, view assessment as 'a learning experience in its own right. [15]. In terms of the relation between assessment and learning, Chinese learning culture features the external relation between the two. Assessment mainly takes the form of closed-book examination where definitions of concepts, multiple choice, and norm-referenced short answer questions are the main

[15] Between these two types of conceptions, there is a third view that 'basic knowledge' is seen as something students have to acquire or internalise before more sophisticated learning strategies can be usefully applied. To show their disapproval, they called this point of view 'double-tongued' (Dahlin, *et al.*, 2001: 69). But this view is rather prevalent in Chinese mind, both in folk pedagogy theories and formal education systems.

testing items to measure and check students' achievements or learning outcome. Western assessment is assumed to focus on students' independent thinking and problem solving skills, which are new to students from CHC countries who are used to 'being assessed by tests and examinations that are based on the lessons or texts covered in class, rather than from a variety of sources. The teacher and textbook are seen as the prime authorities and therefore New Zealand teaching modes violate Asian students' expectation (Li, *et al.*, 2002: 10). Considered as a most effective way of learning, writing essays is the major method of assessment in Western tertiary institutions, intending to encourage students to adopt deeper strategies —'understanding, reflecting, interpreting, analysing, and relating' (Dahlin, *et al.*, 2001: 69).

The students in Li' *et al.* (2002) felt uncertain whether the answers they provided were appropriate or not due to the fact that the assessment criteria were not clear to them. This uncertainty confronted by international students and the implicitness about assessment criteria both in Western academics' expectation and in academic discourse have been noted by international educationalists. They have come to realise that 'the hidden codes or 'prompts' contained in the assessment task are often only apparent to students familiar with the academic discourse' (Ryan, 2005: 99) and called for a more explicit approach to teaching international students (Turner, 2006). Though most research points out Chinese students are not proficient in the skills of writing for Western criteria, studies also show that students benefit and value the explicit, constructive and encouraging comment or the written feedback on their essays (Cronin & Sparrow, 1999, cited in McLean & Ransom, 2005).

Dahlin, *et al.*'s (2001) study also emphasises the 'backwash effect', referring to the phenomenon of influence of assessment forms on learning strategies (Crooks, 1988; Biggs, 1995; Watkins & Biggs, 2001). Elton and Laurillard once claimed that 'the quickest way to change student learning is to change the assessment system' (1979: 100). Therefore, in view of the directive force of 'backwash effect' of assessment, we

have good reasons to expect Chinese students, with strong achieving motivation (Biggs, 1987) to be successful academically as reviewed in earlier sections, will adjust their learning approaches responsively to meet the requirements of the new assessment modes, an issue which will appear in later chapters.

Cultural perspective on plagiarism

The issue of plagiarism is another frequent theme related to overseas CHC students, and it is perceived more from a cultural perspective than an academic one in recent literature (see Jiang & Zhang, 2001; Jin & Cortazzi, 2006). Holmes (2004) identifies three key reasons why Chinese students might plagiarize: a) cultural differences in the attitude to knowledge; b) a mismatch between the educational experiences of students who are new to the learning environment and teachers who may not be making explicit the expectations of learning tasks and the academic rules that accompany them; and c) the unfamiliarity associated with working in the discourse of a specialized language or in another language. With respect to this third factor, students may favour a strategy that closely approximates the words and ideas of the source, a strategy that risks unintentional plagiarism. Biggs and Watkins (1996) also point out that CHC students may often feel their own paraphrasing to be quite inadequate in English, especially when they have not mastered the language.

Pickering, viewing cultural differences as a part of the plagiarism issue, explains that plagiarism and intellectual property-rights have been of only low priority in Chinese universities until recently (Pickering, 2004, cited in Ho, Holmes and Cooper, 2004: 36). Jin & Cortazzi (2006) also note that some Chinese students will encounter issues in acknowledging sources and giving references in writing, because individual authorship, origination and originality, ownership and plagiarism are given less attention in the Chinese context. As a part of solution to the issue, Pickering (2004) suggests a ‘cultural approach’ for educators to explore students’ values and beliefs in dealing with plagiarism. For instance, Chinese students who value honour and respect of teachers and authority could be shown how disrespectful plagiarism is to authors

and teachers.

Jiang and Zhang (2001) did a general survey in the University of Luton, UK, about students' perceptions of plagiarism. Despite the small sample, Chinese students' perceptions of the four chosen scenarios were significantly different from those of their British counterparts and other international students' as well. Chinese students tend not to consider translated work as plagiarism and work produced from memory tends to be considered as the learner's own knowledge.

From a developmental perspective, drawing upon the experiences of 10 Chinese students on a pre-sessional course and subsequently their postgraduate studies, Gu & Brooks (2008) investigated the change in these students' perceptions of plagiarism when studying in a British academic context over time. Recognizing that perceptions of plagiarism are culturally conditioned, they argue for a holistic and developmental perspective to understand the dynamic nature of this change of perception in a cross-cultural context and a culturally sensitive stance in teaching notions of ownership of ideas to students from different learning cultures. Their findings also provide evidence supporting Howard's (1993; 1999) assertion that 'patchwriting' —copying small pieces of another's writing—'is one of a series of *developmental* stages that (all) writers pass through' (Gu & Brooks, 2008: 347).

Similarly, 'plagiphrasing,' one of the four stages of development in students' writing (Wilson, 1997, cited in Schmitt, 2005: 69)[16], is taken as a legitimate way of learning or a learning strategy, and an important stage on the way to developing the appropriate academic writing style. It demonstrates that students are beginning to speak with their own voices, so this hybridized style should not be suppressed or condemned.

Finally, in contrast to the cultural approach to plagiarism, some scholars argue that cultural conditioning is not the major culprit for plagiarism (Liu, 2005; Phan, 2006) — 'it is much too easy to attribute the differences observed in Chinese students to the

[16] These four stages are: repetition, which involves extensive copying without citation; patching, which also involves extensive copying but with appropriate citations; plagiphrasing, in which students blend copied sections, quotations, paraphrases, and their own words; and conventional academic writing.

consequences of Confucian heritage culture' (Gu & Brooks, 2008: 340). Though perceptions of what constitutes plagiarism are not the same across cultures, CHC students' propensity to cheat is not supported empirically. On the contrary, CHC methods of learning are less likely to lead to cheating behaviour (Brennan & Durovic, 2005). Learning and writing in a new language and other contingent factors, such as constraint of time, may also contribute to plagiaristic behaviour, as shown in the 'shadowed data' [17]of this thesis.

3.4.2 Perceptions of Classroom Activities and Participation

Classroom activities include various forms of teaching and learning: lectures, seminars, classroom participation in asking questions and discussion, group work, evaluations, etc. These classroom activities seem to pose great challenges for 'cultural outsiders' (Ho, *et.al*., 2004:31-37), such as Chinese students, who follow different 'social scripts of learning' from Western students (Wu, 2008) and preferred a very structured learning environment with the teacher in control in order to maintain harmony within the classroom and viewed spontaneous discussion as very unorganised, unplanned and unstructured (Li, 2004, cited in Ho, *et al.*, 2004), therefore they are not used to many verbal interactions with the teacher or among the peer students in formal learning situations.

CHC students are reported to have difficulties in participating in seminar and tutorial discussions when studying in a Western classroom in which interactive, open discourse approach is adopted (Barker, *et al.*, 1991; Biggs & Watkins, 1996; Chapple, 1998; Choi, 1997; Liu, 2000, 2002; Liu & Littlewood, 1997; McLean & Ransom, 2005; Tan & Goh, 1999; Volet & Renshaw, 1995; Wright & Lander, 2003). Unlike their Western counterparts, CHC students 'adopt passive learning styles and avoid debate or criticism of the material raised in class' (Barker, *et al.*, 1991; 80) and find questioning and challenging rather intimidating and aggressive in face-to-face

[17] 'Shadowed data' refer to those which are produced by participants when they talked about other people's experience. (Morse, 2001)

discussions, exacerbated by lack in confidence in English language ability (Mullins *et al.*, 1995)

Chinese students' reluctance to participate in class or to give their opinion has been often explained away with Chinese social-psychological make-up: either essentialists' 'face' theory or the Confucian precept of group solidarity and the inappropriacy of shining in front of one's peers (Flowerdew & Miller, 1995). Much existing literature tends to attribute Chinese students' silence to the Chinese culture which values harmony highly, and this is more likely to preclude public criticism or debate (Durkin, 2004; Littlewood, 1999; Argyle, *et al.*, 1986). According to some researchers, Chinese students prefer to assume a silent role in the group interaction and overt questioning and critical thinking practice, which have the potential to disrupt this social harmony, are not culturally sensitive to Confucian heritage cultures (Phuong-Mai, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2006: 2).

As a counterbalance to the prevalent cultural perspective on this issue, some research on Chinese students' learning experience suggests that Chinese students at a certain stage do not hold Confucian values strongly nor are they unduly inhibited by issues of 'face', although students may lack confidence in participation (Rastall, 2006) or they felt intimidated in class because of their minority status (Volet & Kee, cited in Chalmers & Volet, 1997), or simply because their responses were ignored by the local students (Mullins *et al.*, 1995). Particular contingent and contextual problems the students identify include the speed of speech, idiomatic expressions, materials which need cultural background knowledge to understand (Choi, 1997; Mills, 1997; Mulligan & Kirkpatrick, 2000; Li, *et al.*, 2002).

Mulligan and Kirkpatrick (2000) explored the learning experiences of both English-speaking background students and non-English speaking background (NESB) students in a technology university through combined research instruments of observations, surveys and interview and found that less than one out of ten NESB students felt they understood the content and intent of their lectures very well and

almost one quarter of the NESB students did not understand much of the lecture at all.

According to constructivist theories, 'because learning is individually constructed, socially supported, and culturally mediated, learners in unfamiliar social and cultural environments may have difficulty in activating, or 'hooking into', their existing schemas in order to build new knowledge, especially where new information is incongruent' (Ryan & Hellmundt, 2005: 14). This incongruence could result in 'cognitive dissonance', which can be exemplified in the following comment by a Chinese student studying Business in New Zealand:

> *We do not have any work experience and cultural knowledge in New Zealand. Teachers often talk about New Zealand markets and business. We have difficulty understanding the course because they all involve New Zealand cultural background, history, the legal system, and etc. We have lots of difficulties doing assignments and examinations. When we are asked to discuss some topics with the Kiwi students, we simply do not know what they are talking about.*
>
> (Cited in Li, *et al.*, 2002: 11)

Western practices in markets and business do not fit this Chinese student's schemata and cognition about markets and business practices in China. This 'cognitive dissonance' will definitely affect both their understanding and classroom behaviour. Obviously, neither cultural 'face' theory nor English proficiency *per se* could fully accounted for the student's inhibition or lack of verbal interactions in classroom. Furthermore, lack of verbal participation did not make the students in Li *et al.*'s study devalue classroom interactions but take classroom discussion as valuable time to learn local culture.

Contrary to most studies' findings on Chinese students' reticence, Renshaw and Volet (1995) showed that Singaporean Chinese students contributed no less than their Australian counterparts in terms of the frequency of verbal interactions in the classroom. This inconsistency will be discussed in the section 4.2.6 on homogeneity and heterogeneity of Chinese learners.

It is also worth noting that scholars start to critique the Socratic assumption that the practice of making students speak up in class is the only way of encouraging critical thinking; silence can mean engagement in deep thinking as well; thus attributing their silence to passivity is misleading: '[b]eing quiet does not necessarily means being mentally passive (Chalmers & Volet, 1997: 90) and the Western assumption that talking is connected to thinking is not shared in the East (McLean & Ransom, 2005: 50).

In short, empirical studies on Chinese sojourning students' participation in the Western classroom have provided evidence that Chinese students are unprepared for Western ways of classroom verbal interaction. Language, cultural values, social scripts about classroom behaviour, as well as contingent or situational factors may all affect their participation. Despite all these attempts to understand Chinese students' silence in classroom, few studies adopt longitudinal design to document their changes in behaviour and students' own beliefs and voice for justification of their behaviour are also often less tapped.

3.4.3 Expectations in Teacher -Student Roles and Learner Autonomy

The roles of the teacher and the student 'are kinds of conventional script, or prescript, which constrain the individual person to assume a persona in conformity to normal and expected patterns of behaviour' (Widdowson, 1990: 181). These scripts about their roles are culturally-derived, so, without explicit discussion, they are likely to cause misunderstanding and even hostility (Cameron, 1990; Cortazzi, 1990; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). Widdowson (1990) makes a distinction between two kinds of classroom engagement, i.e. interactional and transactional. The former 'services the hidden curriculum of acculturation and the promotion of accepted values' (ibid: 184), and the latter serves pedagogic purpose, i.e. the most effective dealing with a particular subject on the *overt* curriculum. Thus, the teacher will exercise two kinds of authorities: interpersonal authority and transactional authority (ibid: 187-188). This distinction may shed light on interpreting Chinese students' perceptions of

teacher-student role relations in both Chinese and British cultures of learning.

Regarding the roles of student and teacher, two issues are prominent among the empirical studies: one is the mismatch in expectations about the roles and relationships between Chinese students and their Western teachers; the other is the controversies around learner autonomy in the two cultures of learning.

Teachers' Roles and Teacher-Student Relationship

The misunderstandings between international research students, mainly from non-English speaking backgrounds, and their Western supervisors about their expectations and learning experiences have been addressed by a number of researchers (Aspland, 1999a, Bamford, *et al*., 2002, 2006; Belcher, 1994; Braine, 2002; Cortazzi, 1990; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). Shaped by their previous educational experiences, international students tend to expect a hierarchical relationship with their teachers or supervisors, who are expected to act as a guide and/or parent to exercise control over the research, whereas Western teachers prefer to be a friendly critic and facilitator (Ryan, 2000; 2005). The Chinese students in Cortazzi and Jin's (1997: 85) expected their British teachers to be (1) an authority in the subject field, (2) a friend and parent who knows students' problems, (3) a model of how-to and know-that, (4) giving clear answer and guidance about what to do (see Appendix I Table 3.10 and Table 3.11).

Apparently, there is considerable gap between Chinese students' and British teachers' beliefs about each other's roles, which needs to be clearly negotiated and understood in the first place. International educators argue for an empathetic relationship between the student and the supervisor and suggest that the department allocate supervisors 'with overseas experience, cultural sensitivity or intercultural communication skills, empathy, or who have background knowledge of the student's home country or culture' (Ryan, 2005: 103), especially to those students on research degree programmes, because they 'often only have their supervisors to relate to, the relationship therefore becomes paramount' (ibid: 101). Ryan (2000; 2005) also

emphasised that the first six months are crucial, and this is the time when the relationship needs to be negotiated. However, in contrast to the belief that international students are accustomed to a formal student-professor relationship, Sarkodie-Mensah (1998) reported that they also value warm, friendly and equal relationships with their supervisors and instructors.

Learner autonomy

Though an autonomous approach to learning is justified on ideological, psychological and economic grounds (Crabbe, 1993: 443), there persists a tension between the view that learner autonomy is conflated with Western individualism and the view of taking it as a cross-culturally valid educational goal.

On ideological grounds, Pennycook criticizes learner autonomy as a neo-imperialist construct, 'another version of the free, enlightened, liberal West bringing one more form of supposed emancipation to the unenlightened, traditional, backward and authoritarian classrooms of the world' (1997: 43). He claims that the 'autonomous individual constructed by liberal humanism is a very particular cultural and historical product, emerging from the western model of enlightenment and modernity' (ibid: 38). With direct reference to pedagogy, whether autonomy is appropriate as a universal goal or not has been a topic of debate as well. Little and Dam (1998) claim that autonomy is one of the defining characteristics of humanity; while other scholars emphasize 'ethnography of autonomy' (Riley, 1988), that is, the national cultural background of learners can be a facilitator or a hindrance in promoting autonomy (Holliday, 1994; Canagarajah, 1999; Smith, 2003b). For example, Ho and Crookall (1995) cite respect for the teacher's authority and relational hierarchy in Chinese classroom setting as an example to show that cultural traits may be an obstacle to the promotion of autonomy:

> *Being autonomous often requires that students work independently of the teacher and this may entail shared decision making, as well as presenting opinions that differ from those of the teacher. It is, thus, easy to see why Chinese students would not find autonomy very*

comfortable, emotionally or indeed intellectually.'

(Ho & Crookall, 1995: 237)

However, this does not necessarily imply the meaning or the value of autonomy is too alien to be acceptable to Chinese learners. The notion that autonomy is inimical to Asian learning cultures is called into question by the reported success of several programmes designed to promote it (see Gieve & Clark, 2005; Ho & Crookall, 1995). Furthermore, empirical studies suggest generalizations about cultural groups are problematic, for they are not correspondent to the complexities of reality and the modern 'vernacular culture' (Watkins & Biggs, 1996). For example, Littlewood (2000) finds that East Asian students' stated beliefs in autonomy elicited by a questionnaire in eight Asian countries contradict the observations and common stereotypes of their passive and dependent behaviours:

They do not see the teacher as an authority figure who should not be questioned; they do not want to sit in class passively receiving knowledge; and they are only slightly on the 'agreement' side that teacher should have a greater role than themselves in evaluating their learning.

Littlewood (2000: 33)

Littlewood also suggests that there is much less difference between the responses of Asian students and European students than between the individual responses of the students within the same country. The conclusion drawn is 'if Asian students do indeed adopt the passive classroom attitudes that are often claimed, this is more likely to be a consequence of the educational contexts that have been or are now provided for them, than of any inherent dispositions of the students themselves' (2000: 33). Of course, this finding may have to be subject to methodological complexities, such as 'the deprivation model' (Peng, Nisbett, & Wong, 1997), which suggests that people from cultures that feel deprived of certain needs come to value them more. The key indicator of their readiness for autonomy may be 'the degree of independence with

which learners feel comfortable' and 'autonomous learners are likely to be individuals who have overcome the obstacles which educational background, cultural norms and prior experience may have put in their way' (Cotterall, 1995: 200).

The inconsistencies and even contradictory findings in the research make it necessary to re-examine and unpack the concept of learner autonomy. Holec (1981) made a distinction between a desirable learning situation or behaviour ('self-directed learning) and the capacity for such learning ('learner autonomy'). Cotterall defined autonomy as 'the extent to which learners demonstrate the ability to use a set of tactics for taking control of their learning' (1995: 195). Benson (2001: 47-50) also defined learner autonomy as 'the ability to take control of one's own learning' and described three levels of autonomy:

(1) learning management: taking control over one's learning behaviour;

(2) cognitive process: taking control over the cognitive aspect of learning

(3) learning content: taking control over what to learn and learning situations, etc.

This differentiation of three levels, which are nonetheless interdependent, has been generally accepted and also points to the issue that the exercise of autonomy may not always be in the hands of the learner.

Littlewood (1996, 427-435) provided a useful framework to conceptualize the capacity to exercise autonomy. It depends on two main components: ability and willingness. Thus a person may have the ability to make independent choices but feel no willingness to do so (e.g. because such behaviour is not perceived as appropriate to his or her role in a particular situation). Conversely, a person may be willing to exercise autonomy but not have the necessary ability to do so. Ability comprises of both knowledge about the alternatives from which choices have to be made and the necessary skills for carrying out whatever choices seem most appropriate. Willingness includes both the motivation and the confidence to take responsibility for the choices made.

Similarly, Candy (1988: 67) makes a distinction between **emotional autonomy and epistemological autonomy** to point out that attitude is one thing and mastery another. The view of learner autonomy as 'a capacity and willingness to act independently and in cooperation with others, as a social, responsible person' (Dam *et al.*, 1990: 102, cited in Smith, 2008: 396) highlights an important role for teachers in cultivating 'the psychological attributes and practical abilities involved in learner autonomy' (Smith, 2008: 396):

> *The novice's 'need for assistance' does not necessarily represent some pathological inadequacy on the part of the learner. On the contrary, it may even be evidence of a higher-order form of autonomy which allows him or her 'to choose between dependence and independence as he [or she] perceives the need'.*
>
> (Candy, 1988: 73)

Thus, it is **choice** that defines learner autonomy.

Taking a related view, Chanock (2004) suggests that methods of autonomous learning are not in fact incompatible with dependence on the teacher. She argues for 'responsible dependence on teachers', for it is responsible of the student to depend on others who know more than he/she does. As Higgs emphasizes, the activity of autonomous learners 'is best thought of as the pursuit of whatever learning activities the learners consider would best help them to achieve their learning goals' (1988: 48). Knight also claims that independence is 'not the absence of guidance but the outcome of a process of learning that enables learners to work with such guidance as they wish to take, whether it be from peers, from electronic media, or from tutors' (1996: 36).

The interdependent nature of autonomous learning is receiving more sympathy even among Western pedagogues. The idea of 'autonomous interdependence' (Benson, *et al.*, 2003) should be seen as a more developed stage of autonomy than total independence (Boud, 1981/1988; Brookfield, 1985, 1986).

3.4.4 Chinese Students Collaborative Learning and Co-nationals' Network in Adjustment to a Host Culture

Two independent strands of research on the role of co-nationals' network in Chinese students' learning experience. One is about Chinese learners' preference for collaborative learning style and the other is about the effect of co-national network on their adjustment to the host culture.

Collaborative Learning

Given that Chinese culture emphasizes social relationships and collectivism (Bond & Lee, 1981; Hofstede, 1983, 1991), it would seem natural for Chinese learners to opt for cooperative or collaborative learning inside and outside classroom. Yet, research in this aspect is ambiguous. Tang (1996) distinguishes between Western teacher-initiated cooperative learning, in which students are rewarded on the basis of the achievement of the group, and Chinese spontaneous collaborative learning (SCOLL), which is initiated by students' themselves informally outside class as an achieving strategy for individualistic reward. Besides cultural reasons, Tang claims that SCOLL is a latent dimension in Chinese students' learning but 'sensitive to context': two contextual factors identified are students' previous experience with the assessment formats and their competency in the language used (ibid: 189). Her research was conducted on Hong Kong Chinese students rather than in an intercultural setting.

Another issue is the mode of working in intercultural settings—whether in groups or alone. Contradictory evidence is available from Chinese students with regard to their preference (Holmes, 2003; Tan & Goh, 1999; Tang, 1996; Woodrow & Sham's, 2001). In intercultural learning settings, researchers' findings about Chinese students' perceptions about group work are not directing in the same direction. Some research is concerned with whether group work, as a classroom activity or means of assessment, is perceived to be an effective way of learning (see Woodrow & Sham, 2001); other studies are more interested in the dynamics among the culturally-mixed members in

the group work operation from intercultural communication perspective (c.f. Holmes, 2003; Tan & Goh, 1999). Holmes (2003), of the latter, states that aside from a careful approach to monitoring and building language capabilities, there is a need for interventions that foster intercultural communication, for example, strategies that promote intercultural sharing within the classroom and guidance for all students in group work processes.

Co-nationals Network and Adjustment to the Host Culture

International students were found to seek social interaction with the host culture or develop social networks with other international students to overcome social isolation and academic difficulties confronted during their overseas study (Berno & Ward, 2003; Holmes, 2000; McClure, 2003; Myburgh, Niehaus & Poggenpoel, 2002; Volet & Ang, 1998). As for Chinese students, like other international students, they have the expectations to practise their English with the local people and learn about the host culture on the one hand and need compatriot networks for instrumental and emotional supports on the other. However, the lack of interaction between international students and host students, both socially and academically, is widely noted and reported in Australia, New Zealand, and United Kingdom (Ho, Holmes & Cooper, 2004; Pelletier, 2004). This is supported further by a survey in the UK:

> *It is a major concern that two of the largest national groups on campus (Greek and Chinese students) mainly socialize with fellow nationals or other international students on campus.*
>
> (UKCOSA, 2004:66-67)

Moreover, other research studies found that social integration and interaction with host nationals is correlated with lower levels of stress and satisfaction with host cultural relations (Remond & Bunyi, 1993; Searle & Ward, 1990). Berno and Ward's (2003) study found that Asian students' pre-arrival expectations were more positive than their experiences once they were in New Zealand, and suggested that students whose expectations are 'under-met' experience more depression, have more academic

difficulties and have more difficulties with social adjustment during their first three months of study in New Zealand (Berno and Ward, 2003: 5, cited in Ho, *et al.*, 2004: 37).

Based on Ward *et al.*'s (2001) model, Spencer-Oatey and Xiong's (2006) study is one of the few empirical studies focusing on Chinese students' psychological and sociocultural adjustment experiences in the UK. They researched on two cohorts of Chinese students taking a foundation course in English language at a British university. In their study, the majority of the respondents were not experiencing undue psychological stress and reported little difficulty in sociocultural adjustment, although social interaction was reported to be most problematic. Their findings illustrated that the most developed social network of overseas Chinese students was with other Chinese co-nationals in receiving and providing emotional support and practical help, and they showed a tendency to mix more with Asian students than with British or other European students; they attributed their low level of social interaction with local people to clashes of values and lack of things in common. Moreover, the proportion of Chinese students seems a potential disadvantage for overseas Chinese students' intercultural experience:

> *Too many Chinese students is no good, because it's not like living abroad. It's like being at college in China. Given the choice, I would choose a university with less Chinese students.*
>
> (A young female student from Spencer-Oatey & Xiong, 2006: 49)

In fact, as for Chinese students' interactions outside classroom, the research findings are not consistent. Some research reveals that Chinese students tend to seek collegial support from those who come from similar cultural backgrounds rather than from the host country (McClure, 2003); other research gives evidence that Chinese students value the interactions with those who are studying in the same field or working at a similar or more advanced stage of research (Yang, 2006). This inconsistency seems to fall into Bochner's (1977) functional model of overseas' student friendship patterns that overseas students use social networks to fulfil different functions: overseas

students prefer local students for help with language and academic difficulties, but co-nationals for emotional support. Bochner (1997) disagrees with the view against the co-national friendship network and maintains that such network assists sojourners adaptation.

Chalmers & Volet reported that all of the Asian students in their study had formed informal study groups, which provided opportunities for the students to clarify academic problems and senior students were used as a source of information to help with both general and specific problems about their studies. Therefore, the Chinese co-national network provided not just social and emotional support but also assisted academic adjustment by providing 'direction, focus and explanation' (1997: 92).

Wray's (2008) case study of a successful Chinese student at a UK university describes how a student balances his life between two social contexts: a Chinese community for the emotional support he needs and local cultural and academic contexts to gain legitimate membership of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). This case study suggests the complexities of, or rather challenges, the concept of 'the Chinese learner'. Intercultural learning experiences seem to make it possible for a student to negotiate and reconstruct his/her own cultural and learning identities so as to develop personal qualities necessary for successful postgraduate studies. This point will be attended to in my own investigation.

3.4.5 Chinese Sojourning Students' Adaptability to Western Learning Culture

The studies from contextual approaches cited above form a consistent argument that Chinese students are flexible in their approaches to learning, versatile in their learning strategies to engage with their overseas studies. Chinese students have been observed to be highly adaptive to their learning environments, more responsive to the contextual demands than sticking to their culturally defined learning practices (Chan, 2001; Dion & Dion, 1996; Gu & Schweisfurth, 2006; Volet & Renshaw, 1996; Zhang

et al., 2003). In addition, compared with the students from other cultural backgrounds, the Chinese sojourning students studying on American campuses demonstrated a relatively rapid acculturation process (Dion & Dion, 1996). Ethnographic research from New Zealand by Holmes (2000) also demonstrated how ethnic Chinese graduates students successfully reconstructed and renegotiated their learning and communication styles in order to become both proficient and successful students by the end of their degree programmes while undergraduate students struggled with the reconstruction process.

Skyrme (2005) conducted a longitudinal study of Chinese sojourning students in their first semesters of study in New Zealand. These Chinese sojourning students developed some key strategies in response to their growing understanding of the demands placed on them in a new learning setting. For example, getting help from teachers outside class time is a frequent learning strategy in China, and the student was reported as developing from overusing this strategy in the beginning of the semester to coming to terms with responsibility for one's own learning by the end of the year. Therefore, it will be fruitful to record the change pattern of the adjustive stressors and resources or strategy use in salience over a period of time.

In Australia, several longitudinal studies were carried on CHC learners (Matthew, 2004, 2005; Renshaw & Volet, 1995; Volet & Renshaw, 1995, 1996) and found that Chinese students strategically modified their learning behaviours, adjusted their learning goals, approaches to study and even conceptualizations of learning in order to meet the host academic requirements. Their comparative studies prove that the change patterns in Chinese students' approaches to learning are identical in nature and direction to those of local Australian students.

In the UK, Gieve and Clark (2005) found that the Chinese students appreciate the benefits of autonomous study as much as their European counterparts and suggested that given appropriate conditions, what are apparently culturally determined dispositions towards a certain approach to learning can turn out to be quite flexible.

Their study raises the question of to what extent the approaches to learning are culturally determined and to what degree they can be modified or even 'unlearned' through encountering other learning cultures.

Chen's (1999, ctied in Pelletier, 2004) examined the learning experience of a cohort of Chinese students studying on a link program between a Chinese university and its UK partner. The semi-structured interview data revealed that studying in the UK had encouraged the students to re-formulate their ideas about teaching and learning, valuing more independent forms of study and more peer-to-peer learning. Despite having never been abroad before, the students reported less difficulties and problems but remarkable adaptation to the new learning context. Their answers on what they have learned and how they have adapted would appear to make them ideal students, which contrasts with studies which emphasise the intractable difficulties which international students face (Pelletier, 2004). As Pelletier (2004) points out, the fact that the researcher of the study is also the teacher of the participants and the coordinator of the program may leave his findings under somehow suspicion.

Despite the common features of change, research is not consistent with regard to the trajectory of the changes to the Chinese students' learning strategies and conceptions: some studies seem to suggest that the longer they stayed in a host learning culture, the greater the changes were (Guan & Dodder, 1998, cited in Matthew, 2000), but some other scholars noted an ambiguous pattern concerning the change and its stability (Currie, 2007; Durkin, 2004; Turner, 2006). Zhao (1995, cited in Ho, Holmes and Cooper, 2004: 20) also demonstrated that Chinese tertiary students had changed their study habits as a result of being immersed in the New Zealand educational environment. Over time they were comfortable with challenging and questioning, but they still remained concerned with saving 'face' by not asking 'silly questions'. Such a mediating state definitely deserves more investigation.

Turner's (2006) study of the Chinese students on a one-year MA degree program of a UK business school was conducted during 2001 and 2002 through lightly structured

conversation interviews. The pattern of development over the year showed a complex pattern of change and conflict, of adaptability and resistance. She exemplified a generally low level of awareness that participants showed of shifts in their orientation to learning; in other words, the participants' underlying approaches to learning did not change substantially over the year owing to the culturally implicit nature of UK academic conventions. According to her, much of the participants' experience was confined to explicit 'learning about' learning in the UK rather than 'participating' in the implicit cultures of learning reflexively (ibid: 37). Moreover, the participants in her study did not hide their motive of instrumental accommodation—with the aim of satisfying the extrinsic objective of obtaining a degree certificate, and highly valued the experience of living overseas for a year and the contribution of a master's degree to future employment. As to academic progress or personal development, their accounts largely focused on the technical and instrumental aspects of the learning process, rather than fundamental changes in epistemological composition of learning. Turner concluded that 'the degree to which participants shifted their fundamental values and beliefs in this context, however, seemed fragmented and patchy—certainly the dominant underlying factors remained relatively unchanged' (ibid: 42).

This entrenchedness of cultural beliefs in learning also found support from Durkin's (2004) research on East Asian postgraduates regarding their perception or reception of critical thinking and argumentation. In her study, the majority of East Asian postgraduate students ultimately rejected full acculturation into the academic norms and values of the UK by the end of the course and showed no desire to leave aside their own culture specific ways to embrace a new mindset. The pattern of their changes in learning beliefs or learning culture is interpreted in a 'middle way' mode (Durkin, 2004) which synergizes those elements of Western academic norms, termed 'adversarial approach', with the traditional cultural academic values held by many East Asian students, namely 'conciliatory approach' (Durkin, 2004: 511). This Middle Way Model allows ample space for diversity of opinions and gives priority to harmonious relationship among the group members. The possible reason for not

moving towards acculturation is given by the researcher as follows:

> *It involves great risk and the students might have drawn back believing that, pragmatically, there was no long-term purpose in putting themselves through this final pioneering stage. Or they may have made the conscious decision that, as they were only transient would be returning to fit back into their own culture, it would be futile, and even detrimental exercise. They may, on the other hand, have recognized that they did not have the time in one year to fully adapt, and that further experimentation would not further their main goal of achieving the degree award.*
>
> Durkin (2004: 512)

The findings in her research indicate that East Asian students' adaptations are temporary, 'can be detached, (…) and do not constitute an inward transformation of self-perception and identity' (ibid: 512). The significance of this study lies in the fact that it poses a challenge towards previous cultural adaptation models (White, 1976; Kim, 2002; Van Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1988), which follow a unitary and irreversible trajectory towards acculturation.

Chinese students' incomplete acculturation may also be related to the issue of transferability of study approaches from one learning context to another. Based on a review of literature on CHC students' adaptability and continuity in approaches to learning, Volet (1999) suggests that some aspects of students' learning transfer well across cultures, while others reflect ambivalent, difficult or inappropriate transfer. Considering the socio-cultural appropriateness of transfer, Volet's framework highlights the significance of both variations of educational practices in different cultural contexts and the universality of fundamental good learning beliefs, which are cross-cultural in the real sense. The following table (Volet, 1999: 630) illustrates the classification of the examples of transferability of Chinese learning culture to Western learning culture:[18]

[18] Appropriate transfer refers to situations where the aspects of learning are congruent with the characteristics of learning valued in the host cultural-educational context; Ambivalent transfer refers to situations where there is no

Appropriate transfer	High achievement motivation
	Attribution of failure to lack of effort
	Informal peer support groups
Ambivalent transfer	Diligence at cue seeking
	Memorizing study materials
	Conformity to task requirements
Difficult transfer	Expectations regarding learning and instruction
	Seeking help from teachers
	Low participation in tutorial discussion
Inappropriate transfer	Reporting verbatim
	Copying down relevant extracts without proper referencing

In view of the four types of transfer, Volet (1999) suggests that the aspects of learning that travel well across cultural educational contexts are those that reflect students' fundamental belief system about learning, such as high academic motivation, effort attribution theory, social forms of learning for deep learning—these all reflect the influence of students' internalisation of the overall value of education for personal and societal development in Confucian Heritage Culture. In contrast, memorization verbatim, copying without proper referencing, and low participation in tutorial discussions are specific aspects of the educational system; they do not reflect students' fundamental beliefs about learning and are not part of their fundamental dispositions, therefore, they are amenable to change (ibid: 638).

Yang's (2006) findings about Chinese PhD students' learning strategies in Australian universities support Volet's observation that metacognitive and social/affective strategies are transferable across academic tasks and learning contexts whereas cognitive strategies are more contextualized and less transferable across different types of academic tasks.

Volet's (1999) categorizations provide a theoretical and operational framework to investigate what aspects of Chinese learning culture are positively transferred and what aspects resist changes when encountering a Western learning culture. Taking

---

general consensus as to whether the transfer of certain aspects of learning is appropriate or not. Difficult transfer refers to the aspects of learning that all interested parties would find difficult to reach a general consensus. Inappropriate transfer refers to aspects of learning, which may have been acceptable in students' home culture, but are considered as unacceptable when transferred to the host educational context.

both cultural and contextual factors into consideration, this framework sheds light on the dynamic and interactive nature of learning beliefs and educational contexts and underpins Biggs' (1999) 'teaching for education' model by identifying universal features of good learning regardless of students' cultural backgrounds. However, the shortcoming of this framework may lie in that the appropriateness or inappropriateness is mainly seen through the Western academic lens rather than from the student's point of view.

3.4.6 Summary

This section has selectively reviewed the empirical studies on Chinese students' perceptions of and reactions to Western learning culture, mainly in New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom and five themes are prominent from existing research: (1) Academic literacy; (2) Perceptions of classroom activities and participation; (3) Expectations of teacher-student roles; (4) Functions of co-national network; (5) Adaptability to the host culture of learning.

Previous literature on Chinese sojourners' adjustment mainly focused on the initial difficulties and adjustment results without detailing their adjustment process. Volet's (1999) classification of the appropriateness of transfer of culture of learning has been presented and its promise in analysing Chinese sojourning students' response in the new culture of learning is argued for.

On the one hand, difficulties and dissonances encountered by the Chinese sojourning students when studying in a new learning culture are much presented; on the other hand, the adaptability of Chinese students to the new academic requirements has also been evidenced in many studies, though, as some studies show, this adaptation could be rather compromised by their entrenched Confucian learning culture, thus, the changes in their conceptions of and approaches to learning may be superficial, instrumental, and temporary.

The inconsistencies in research findings point to the direction of further research into

the dynamic interactions of the two cultures in view of the contemporary classroom where the cultural individuals with their own tacit understandings of the implicit cultural rules observe and reflect about the norms of different learning cultures and make their own judgements and adjustments in order to be successful in a new learning culture. Moreover, the existing studies also expose the inadequacy of both the essentialist cultural approach and the idealized contextual approach in describing Chinese sojourning students' adjustment results and call for a more holistic ethnographic approach.

3.5 Summary

This chapter presents an analytical review of previous theories about students' conceptions of learning and the existing approaches to the encountering of Confucian and Socratic cultures of learning. A holistic integrated learning beliefs system is introduced to help reconceptualise the concept 'learning culture' in terms of both its constructs and its nature of non-fixity and permeability, i.e. its cultural and developmental dimensions. Special attention is given to the controversies concerning Chinese sojourning students' adaptability to Western learning culture by reviewing the empirical studies in the field so as to emphasize the necessity for an *emic* study of Chinese students' own theories of learning and longitudinal ethnographic approach to their adjustment to a new learning culture.

Chapter 4 Research Methodology

Ethnography is neither subjective nor objective. It is interpretive, mediating two worlds through a third.

(Michael H. Agar, 1986: 19)

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall review the methods and methodologies of previous studies on Chinese students' culture of learning first (Section 4.2) before describing the research design, methodology, and issues arising during the process of this study. I will make explicit the assumptions and rationale of using ethnography approach and my personal epistemological stance in this study (Section 4.3) and the nature of *emic* and *etic* ethnographic study (Section 4.4). Section 4.5 attempts to justify native ethnography as a valuable approach to intercultural studies on one's own cultural group. Then I will give a detailed description of data collecting instruments employed in this study (Section 4.6) and procedures (Section 4.7), including access to the research setting, participants recruitment, and data analysis process (Section 4.8), along with the issues and concerns cropping up during the process. The chapter is concluded with a discussion on trustworthiness (Section 4.9) and ethical considerations (Section 4.10) as well as limitations of this study (Section 4.11).

4.2 Methods and Methodologies of Previous Studies on Chinese Students' Culture of Learning

Contrastive or even contradictory views on Chinese sojourning students' learning profiles are presented in the research literature: Chinese students are portrayed either as passive, dependent, uncritical, surface rote learners, or active, independent, deep learners, and culturally adaptive to the new learning environment. This inconsistency results from as much from methodological issues as from situational factors. Therefore, partly as an explanation for this disparity or inconsistency of the research

results about Chinese learners, this section is devoted to critiquing the methods and methodology of previous studies on Chinese learners and Chinese culture of learning.

4.2.1. Phenomenography

In investigating students' conceptions of learning, Marton and his colleagues adopted introspective interviews as research instruments and labeled this approach 'phenomenography', the 'from-the-inside' approach that sought to describe the world as the learner experienced it (Marton, 1981). This is indeed a laudable shift from focusing on purely information processing to exploring learners variations in their inner world. However, one criticism of the phenomenographic approach is the interview accounts are more retrospective than introspective in nature. Social psychologists have shown that people sometimes denigrate their past capabilities in order to fit their own implicit theories about personal change, and this can certainly occur when students are asked to assess the value of recent educational experiences (see Conway & Ross 1984; Ross, 1989). Thus, the validity of the phenomenographic research design is called into question.

In addition, the individual's conceptions of learning are not static, not immune to the contextual factors, such as the perception of the task, so it would be more convincing to have evidence of progression through different concurrent accounts obtained from the same students at different stages of their learning process. Case studies of just this sort showed the development during the first year of study (Gibbs *et al.*, 1984) and in subsequent years (see Beaty and Morgan ,1992, Beaty, *et al.*, 1997).

Kember & Kwan (1999) also pointed out the inherent defect in phenomenographic approach in claiming a relationship between learning approaches and learning conceptions:

> *Part of the problem is that it can be difficult to unconfound such variables in phenomenographic interviews, and claims of a relationship may be artefact of the method adopted.*

(Kember & Kwan, 1999, cited in Watkins & Biggs, 2001a:10)

These researchers warned against the presumed relationship between conceptions of learning and approaches to learning, with quantitative conceptions of learning being associated with a surface approach, and qualitative conceptions with a deep approach: 'attempts to link these supposedly different constructs have not been as clear-cut as we might wish' (Watkins & Biggs, 2001a:10).

4.2.2. Inventory

In the field of student learning, quantitative research tools for investigating students' approaches to learning have been developed, such as Biggs' (1987) SPQ (Study Process Questionnaire), Entwistle & Ramsden's (1983) ASI (Approaches to Studying Inventory), and Meyer's (2000) *RoLI* (Reflections on Learning Inventory). All these inventories are developed from English speaking countries[19], the so-called Western countries. Though the construct validity of these Western inventories instruments have been proved to be appropriate for use with students in a number of non-Western cultures and the cross-cultural reliability was moderately established (Watkins, 1996), doubts have been cast about the validity of using Western study inventories in some cross-cultural studies (See Mugler & Landbeck, 1997; Watkins, 2000; Watkins & Biggs, 2001a; Watkins & Regmi, 1992, 1995). For example, Watkins' (2000) meta-analysis of these quantitative instruments questioned the validity of a number of basic Western tenets of educational psychology regarding the nature of motivation and the role of memorization and he warns that there might also be culturally specific aspects that render the constructs of Western theories and instruments only partially appropriate. Therefore, a more *emic* type of research is needed to reach a reliable result about Chinese students' approaches of learning.

[19] Biggs works in Australia; Entwistle, Ramsden, and Meyer are all working in the UK. But Biggs and Meyer have done extensive research on non-Western students as well (See Biggs, 1996a, 1996b; Meyer, 1998).

4.2.3. Cross-cultural Comparison Questionnaires

Cross-cultural quantitative comparison questionnaires are frequently used to identify the cultural differences in learning beliefs and values among the learners of different cultural backgrounds. But these cross-cultural comparisons are rife with methodological problems (Heine, *et al.*, 2002), such as response styles, in which people from one culture are more likely to answer toward the centre of a scale than are people from another (see Chen, Lee, & Stevenson, 1995), translation errors, which can produce measures conveying different meanings across cultures (Brislin, 1970), and it is plausible that members of some cultures may be more likely to disguise their response behind a facade of modesty than are others (Heine, Takata, & Lehman, 2000).

Peng, Nisbett, and Wong (1997) suggest a deprivation model, which means that people from cultures that feel deprived of certain needs come to value them more. They noted that Singaporean Chinese are more likely than Americans to value choosing their own goals, and Americans are more likely than Chinese to value humility. Besides, the reference-group effect, which means that people from different cultural groups use different referents in their self-reported values (see Peng, *et al.*, 1997), is also a confounding role of context in comparisons of mean questionnaire responses across different groups, in particular across different cultures.

In short, quantitative designs of comparing measures with subjective Likert response options will not truthfully reflect the Chinese overseas students' learning beliefs and behaviours, for their reference group—co-nationals or British or other international students—are implicit in their response.

4.2.4. Prototype Methodology

The prototype research methods (Shaver *et al.*, 1987) employed by Li (2000, 2001, 2003) in discovering the folk concepts concerning the indigenous conceptions of learning in Chinese students' mind are an *emic* approach to documenting Chinese

cultural model of learning as reviewed in Chapter 3. However, the cultural model of Chinese learning that Li is striving to present is not intended to describe the Chinese learners' conceptions of learning on individual level, so it lacks robustness in explaining the situational or contingent learning behaviour the Chinese students revealed when studying a new learning culture. Therefore, this approach is not suitable to capture the dynamic development of the conceptions of learning embraced by the Chinese learners when studying abroad.

4.2.5. Ethnographic Methods

In Chapter 3, we have seen that several contextualized longitudinal studies (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Burnapp, 2006; Cadman, 2000; Currie, 2007; Durkin, 2004; Russell, 2007; Skyrme, 2005; Spack, 1997; 2004; Turner, 2006) have produced some interesting but not always consistent findings concerning Chinese students' learning adjustment. Ethnographic methods, such as observation, in-depth interviews over time, employed in these studies have proved to be the productive instruments to address the complexities of the study of conceptions of learning and their development in an intercultural setting. However, since these researchers do not speak the language of the studied, and the latter's English might fail them to express fully about their complex feelings about the new learning experiences, a native ethnographic research design will be fruitful in exploring this issue to complement and enrich previous *etic* findings. Before justifying this approach adopted by this study, it is worth noting the issue of the homogeneity and heterogeneity of CHC learners in previous studies.

4.2.6. Homogeneity and Heterogeneity of CHC learners

The majority of research on CHC students tends to take the group as homogenous without taking their nationalities or geographic factors into consideration. Watkins and Biggs (1996) argued that Chinese students, whether in Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, or the Mainland China, shared a Confucian cultural heritage (Ho, 1991, cited in Biggs, 1996: 46) which influenced their attitudes to and methods of learning. Though

Watkins (2000) iterates they ‘do not, of course, claim *all* Chinese students are the same but we do believe from the research evidence that many Chinese students, because of their cultural heritage, approach education in a different way to most Western students’ (Watkins, 2000: 171). This indiscriminative way is common in researching Chinese students learning, and very few studies attempt to differentiate or compare the similarities or differences among CHC learners.

In much literature in this respect, terms of ‘Asian students’, or ‘South East Asian students’, are treated as the alternative terms for CHC students. ‘Chinese students’ is another umbrella term to refer to all the students who share Chinese as common ethnic background without differentiating their sub-cultural factors. For example, Snider (2005, cited in Lê & Shi, 2006) identified as Chinese various international students from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

One of the sub-cultural factors is perhaps language. The language issues cannot be regarded as an irrelevant factor in their engaging with different learning tasks and classroom activities. For example, Renshaw & Volet (1995)’s ‘East Asian students’ were mainly Singaporean Chinese, who spoke fluent English, so it would be problematic to use their research finding on the frequency of this group’ tutorial participation to represent other Chinese groups.

A large number of studies on Chinese students’ approaches to learning are conducted on Hong Kong Chinese learners, such as Kember & Gow’s (1990), Marton, Watkins & Tang’s (1997), Watkins & Biggs’ (1996, 2001b), but, as matter of fact, approximately 96% of Hong Kong people speak Cantonese instead of Mandarin Chinese (Biggs, 1990b). Some other studies also involved mixed Chinese groups from Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, China, Taiwan (see Smith, Miller & Crassini, 1998; Smith & Smith, 1999; Volet, 1999), disregarding the fact that English is an official language in Singapore, and most Malaysian Chinese students can speak at least three languages (Lê & Shi, 2006).

While scholars tend to agree that learning approaches result from different social and

educational experiences (Riding & Sadler-Smith, 1997; Sternberg & Zhang, 2001; Vermunt, 1996), recent studies observed important differences in learning approaches among different Chinese groups (Lê & Shi, 2006; Leung, 2003; Smith, 2001; Wong & Wen, 2001). For example, Smith's (2001) survey showed differences in the learning approaches adopted by three national groups of ethnic Chinese: Malaysian, Singaporean and Hong Kong Chinese.

Wong and Wen (2001) found differences between Hong Kong Chinese students and Mainland Chinese students in learning conceptions: mainland Chinese students are said to share more sophisticated view of learning: learning is viewed as applying, and seeing things in different ways and changing as a person are highly valued among mainland Chinese learners; whereas their Hong Kong counterparts show more diverse learning conceptions and no clear consistent pattern is identified.

Similarly, Littlewood's (2000) cross-cultural survey of students' attitudes and learning styles showed that Hong Kong students were more similar to German students than the Mainland Chinese students in terms of deference towards their teachers. Moreover, these two groups of Chinese are dissimilar from each other on the item relating to autonomy vs. reliance on the teacher. The researcher further concludes that there is much less difference between the average group responses of students in Asia and Europe than there is between the individual responses of students within the same country (Littlewood, 2000:33-34).

Therefore, in light of the heterogeneous nature of the Chinese-speaking world and the differences existent among the different Chinese background groups in learning approaches and learning conceptions, Cross and Hitchcock (2007) object to the use of the single unified concept of 'CHC learners' or 'Chinese learners' for fear of the danger of stereotyping. Instead, they suggest using 'the learner from China' to de-emphasize the inherent cultural characteristics and to allow for the contextual factors in explaining that the learner from China is 'perfectly capable of adapting to the demands of an initially unfamiliar education system' (Cross & Hitchcock, 2007: 5).

Considering this controversy over the terms and great caution against forming fixed conceptualisations of cultural characteristics, 'Chinese students' is used to refer to the participants in this study to avoid the conceptually and culturally loaded 'Chinese learners'.

4.2.7 Summary

In summary, earlier research on students' learning mainly adopted either qualitative phenomenographic methodology (Marton, 1981) or quantitative questionnaire (Biggs, 1987; Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983; Meyer, 2000, 2004). Both methodologies are operating in an *etic* paradigm, which presumes a universal system of constructs, regardless of cultural nuances of the meanings attached to them. Later research employs cross-cultural comparison questionnaires to identify the cultural differences in learning beliefs and values of the learners of different cultural backgrounds. Recent prototype approach (See Li, 2001; 2002; 2003) and longitudinal ethnographic approach to sojourning Chinese students' culture of learning in Western educational settings, have shown the advantage of offering a more *emic* point of view from the participants. Having pointed out the merits and defects of different approaches, a more *holistic,* contexualized, longitudinal ethnographic approach is called for to fulfill the purpose of this study.

4.3 Assumptions and Rationale for Ethnography

The choices of research paradigms are determined as much by the researcher's beliefs about the nature of reality and the function of knowledge as by disciplinary tradition. LeCompt & Preissle (1993) contrast quantitative with qualitative research designs by making the distinction that those who assume that reality is fixed, that knowledge consists of explanation and prediction, and that the goal of research should be verification of outcomes will be attracted to the quantitative/explanatory paradigm and its associated designs----experimentation, survey analysis, standardized observational research, and simulation models; in contrast, ethnography, case study analysis, etc. of

qualitative/hermeneutic paradigm only appeal to those who assume that reality is ever changing, that knowledge consists of understanding, and that the goal of research is examination of process (LeCompt & Preissle, 1993:46).

As a researcher, I subscribe to the view that neither culture nor society is fixed; they are an ever changing entity that is constructed and reconstructed by people living in it, so the knowledge of the social world should include the description and inductive analysis of the meanings of the people's life world. However, unlike postmodernist or feminist views of reality, I believe that the reality of people's inner world can be accurately, ethnographically, represented, through systemizing research procedures and standardizing instruments. Therefore, this research is intended to strike a balance between the natural science (positivistic) and humanistic (naturalistic) models of social research.

The purpose of this study is to make sense of overseas Chinese students' learning culture in a Western academic setting. It is concerned with investigating the participants' attitudes, values, and beliefs about learning from their own perspectives. In view of the exploratory and interpretative nature of this study, it is essential to collect qualitative time- and context-sensitive data to capture the dynamic meanings given by these Chinese students to their intercultural learning experience. Therefore, qualitative research paradigms are more desirable to match the nature of this study to ensure the research results are 'understandable, credible, and relevant' (Patton, 1990: 149).

Since the mid-1980s, ethnography as a qualitative research paradigm has moved from marginal or merely complementary methods to a position of assured legitimacy especially in social sciences and educational research (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) since the central aim of social sciences is to 'understand people's actions and their experiences of the world, and the ways in which their motivational actions arise from and reflect back on these experiences' (Brewer, 2000: 11). However, as Agar points out, 'ethnography' is an ambiguous term, 'representing both a process and a product'

(2000: 53), and Brewer makes a useful distinction between ethnography as method and ethnography as methodology (2000: 2). In this research, the ethnography is used in the sense conforming to Brewer's 'little' ethnography, or 'ethnography-as-fieldwork', which is interpreted as follows:

> *Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally*.
>
> (Brewer, 2000:10)

In my study ethnography should be understood as a process of 'doing ethnography', instead of a product, in the sense of 'encyclopaedic ethnography' (ibid: 8), which is the shared knowledge. 'But ethnography isn't *just* about shared knowledge; rather, it's about the *practices of everyday life'* (ibid: 9). The assumption of a product view is that people just do things by implementing this shared knowledge. But people now are not living in isolated or insulated, timeless, stable, communities any more as centuries ago, 'one no longer reports fixed traditions; one deals with on going processes of change' (ibid:11): studying culture today is like studying snow in the middle of an avalanche (a line attributed to Roy D'Andrade, cited in Agar, 2000:11) is not overstating at all. So this study, though striving for a consistent pattern, is not overlooking the complications, subversions and ambiguities of the reality under study.

4.4 About *emic* and *etic* Approach

Qualitative inquiry cultivates the most useful of all human capacities --- the capacity to learn from others (Patton, 1990: 7). That was why Agar was thinking of changing the title of *The Professional Stranger* to *The Informant's Apprentice* (Agar, 2000: 243). According to Agar (2000), the student-child-apprentice learning role of the ethnographer is one of the defining characteristics of ethnographic studies. In other words, the cultural and behavioural patterns described by the ethnographer must be

learnt from the group under investigation, and the categories reconstructed by the ethnographer are also the ones that the participants use to conceptualise their own experiences and worldview. Using the participants' own constructs to frame a study is *emic*, from *phonemic*, representing those sound distinctions, which contrast words and meanings in a specific language, and are deemed significant by the speakers of the specific language. *Emic* study is phenomenological and subjective; it contrasts with objective *etic*, (from *phonetic*, representing the set of all the possible distinctions in human speech) approach that uses 'universal' conceptual categories and explanatory relationships created or identified by the researcher to structure the analysis of particular population (Pike, 1967; Harris, 1976; Pelto & Pelto, 1978, cited in LeCompte & Preissle, 1993: 45). Perhaps it is not coincidence that ethnography derives its terms from linguistics. These two share a similar process in developing principles and theories (see Agar, 2000: 237-9).

However, the line between *emic* and *etic* is not as distinct as many ethnographic studies claim. The blending of the two is implied in the original sense of these two terms:

> *It is difficult to imagine any ethnographic statement that is not a blend of these. A statement would almost always contain assumptions about perception or intent on the part of group members, but it would also be constructed by the ethnographer in terms of his own professional context and goals.*
>
> (Agar, 2000:239)

Therefore, it is hard to tell explicitly where *emic* starts or *etic* stops. These two perspectives keep interacting and are complementary to each other in the real research.

4.5 Vantage Point of Native Ethnography

Traditional ethnographies are conducted by researchers who assume new roles and

study unfamiliar groups in unfamiliar settings. In this study, neither the researcher role nor the studied group is new to the researcher, who is herself a 'Chinese student'. However, the research setting is new to both the researcher and the informants, and Brewer made a useful distinction between 'participant observation' and 'observant participation' (2000: 61-62) according to whether the setting is known or unknown to the researcher and whether the researcher needs to adopt new roles or not. In participant observation, the researcher needs to acquire a new role, while in observant participation the researcher uses his or her existing role, either a familiar or unfamiliar setting. The complication in my study is that the new researcher, using her existing role as Chinese student, is to study a familiar group in an unfamiliar setting. It is like a doctor who becomes a patient himself to observe and to understand the patient world from 'inside'; or as a policeman with both criminal record and new offence, he himself is in prison now and researches the other inmates. This kind of study, i.e. the native studies the natives themselves, is termed 'native ethnography', a 'betwixt-and-between speaking position' (Kraidy, 2002: 192).

The vantage point of native ethnography is not only 'as a sub-genre of critical ethnography with an imperative to excavate power vectors from cultural matrices', but also marked by the hybrid nature of culture and the fluid cultural identity of native ethnographers (ibid). Kraidy also suggests that the speaking position of the native ethnographer is 'located on the borderline between two worldviews: that of the 'native' culture, the culture of intimate, taken for granted, quotidian knowledge, and the worldview of the ethnographic, academic, systematic, and, therefore, instrumental knowledge' (ibid)

Familiarity with both Chinese and Western modern academic culture privileges me to have a better understanding of informants' culturally contextualized words, their newly acquired behaviours, and even their inexplicable subjective world in an adjustive period. As a native, I have the advantage of having an intimate knowledge of the culture under study, 'grasping a proverb, catching an illusion, or seeing a joke'

(Geertz, 1974:45). As an academic in a Chinese university and PhD student trained in a Western institution, not only do I share much lived experience of the participants under study, but also can articulate this intimate native knowledge with global discourses and commonly-used language. When such study is done by 'a native' on the native in an intercultural context where people's worlds are no longer or never exclusively bounded, the distinction is not clear cut, and the line between ethnographer and informant is blurred as well, if not disappearing. This hybrid or betwixt-and-between status should not be taken as flaw, but a commanding vantage point. Moreover, with time passing by, I found my participants were moving to become more an ethnographer in actively discovering the rules than a voice of informant in passivity.

4.6 Data Collecting Instruments and Justification

I take the view that there can be various ways to address the same research topic; however, some social research methods may enjoy the preference or privilege and more effectiveness to study certain topics. In this research, I am concerned about people's attitudes, beliefs, interpretations and meanings given to their learning experience in a new cultural setting. Considering the complexities of cultural and intercultural phenomena, no more effective ways than participant observation in the setting and in-depth ethnographic interview enable the researcher to get better access to this group of people's real life and meaning world. They are better suited than survey and experimental research to capture the ever-changing reality and voices of 'lived experience', and so in this sense, as long as they are conducted in a systematic and rigorous way, they are scientific, if not more scientific than quantitative methods.

a. Participant Observation:

The objectives of interpreting and understanding the social meanings and behaviours of people in a given socio-cultural setting make it imperative that the researcher should keep close association with the researched group and be involved in their daily

activities or practice. Participant observation is such a method to access the social meanings held by individuals and groups. In other words, social meanings of everyday processes cannot be studied in depth without the researcher's participant observation. According to Agar, participant observation means that the researcher enters the world of the people rather than bringing people into his world, so 'participant observation is a *diagnostic* feature of ethnography' (Agar, 2000: 9). Participant observation, to some extent, is covert and surreptitious in nature, since co-participants are unaware that they are being observed and studied, and their behaviours and opinions will not be affected by the so-called reactive effect. By close familiarity with the people in the setting, an insider's account can accurately capture social reality and unambiguously represent it in textual form with an outsider's rigorous analysis.

As a mature student with years of teaching background in my home country, I was treated more as a colleague than a student so that I could assume a role of both insider and outsider to observe closely the Chinese students' learning behaviour and the practices of British teaching and learning culture. The insider status put me in close proximity to the individuals involved and could offer 'thick description' deeply embedded in the setting for study. But, in the meanwhile, as a participant observer, I constantly reminded myself to keep a fine balance between the status of being "insider" and "outsider". On the one hand, as a participant observer, I had to identify with the people under study and enter their world to share in the lives of other people and understand the meanings on their own terms; on the other hand, I needed to exercise personal skills to jump out of setting and maintain a professional distance or sufficient detachment to allow adequate observation and interpretation.

The classic criticism of participant observation is that the researcher is an intervening variable in the research and the introspective data from the researcher are unscientific. For example, both naturalistic and positivistic ethnography are accused of 'naïve realism' (Brewer, 2000: 38) by postmodern reflexive ethnography, which 'abandoned both the claim that reality could be accurately represented ethnographically and the

criteria by which ethnography's truth claims could be assessed' (ibid: 55). The research here is a combination of the naturalistic, which emphasizes 'insider' status, and positivistic ethnography, which recommends the standardization of research procedures and instruments, aiming at an accurate representation of the participants' inner world, or the so-called 'subtle realism' (Hammersley 1990: 61; Miller and Brewer, 2003: 101).

b. Observations in the Field

I attended various social gatherings and sought out opportunities to observe informants' interaction with other people in natural settings. The degree of participation varied across settings and cases as well. Gold (1958) categorizes participation according to the kind of interaction in which the researcher engages and how aware participants are that they are being studied: the complete participant, the participant-as-observer, the observer-as-participant, and the complete observer. I can say that I have assumed these four roles on different occasions and in different settings.

(1) The complete participant is a researcher who assumes an insider role in the group being studied, his or her research identity being not known to the group. As a full-time Chinese PhD student, I was myself a full member of the studied group and engaged with complete participation in the research setting. In our Bible studies group –which will be explained below— I was also entering into the social life of my participants as a full participant, though with an observant mind-eye. This covert observation allowed my participants comfortable interactions without feeling being observed. And I myself, more often than not, was so involved that observer's role receded into the background. Under these circumstances, I never requested to audio-record or engage in any purposeful data-collecting activities. But I would use other opportunities to seek feedback from my participants on what was observed and stimulated their recall to see how it was interpreted.

(2) I assumed the role of participant-as-observer when I was sitting in on the modules

that my informants took. As a full-time PhD student, I was entitled to sitting in on any taught courses if they were agreed (by the supervisors) to be helpful to my thesis. In these situations, I was known to be a researcher to the teacher, but not to the students. I did not negotiate any obtrusive data collecting facilities, like video camera or audio-recording, but simply immersed myself in these situations and deliberately sat nearer to my informants so that I could join in their group discussion.

(3) I also sat in on two lectures offered by the Law School. During the lectures, I was also known as a researcher to the teacher, but not to the other students. I was an observer-as-participant in this sense, not engaging in any interactions with participants. Data collected in these lectures were not very productive, for almost no participation pattern could be observed. And the teacher, whom I interviewed after class, admitted that there was no time for discussion in class, for the former lecturer, a German professor, wasted too much time on that, and they lagged behind in their teaching schedule. So she had to catch up and finish their teaching plan before the end of the term.

(4) There were also the times when I worked as a complete observer in some settings. Even at that time, the participants might have been used to my presence and treated me as a full participant, though I did not perform or participate. Perhaps Adler & Adler's (1987) categorization of researchers' memberships in groups being studied as peripheral, active, and complete can also categorize my field observation roles.

c. Ethnographic Interviews

'Conversations with a purpose' is an accredited means to access reality from the 'inside' (Burgess 1984: 102). Agar also advocates interviews as the core of ethnographic fieldwork (2000: 160). In this study, informal ethnographic interviews served as the main data-collecting instrument, with observation in a supplementary role. As for peoples' learning beliefs and conceptions, it is more effective to learn those meanings though eliciting them to talk about what they do and how they interpret what they do and what they perceive.

(1) Storytelling/ Narrative Interview (Riessman, 1993)

Human beings are storytelling creatures who 'think in story form, speak in story form, and bring meaning to our lives through story' (Atkinson, 1998:1). So they serve effectively the purpose of studying people's perceptions and conceptions of the phenomena under investigation. Narrative studies have been widely used in the educational research to investigate students' learning experiences and process from the students' own perspective (Wengraf, 2001). In an initial session, participants were encouraged to tell their stories and learning experiences with minimum interruption from the interviewer. However, I have to admit that some participants were not used to monologue narratives, and felt more comfortable with question-answer format. Moreover, the stories told or narratives were not only the representation of the past experiences, but mixed with the participants' own interpretation and reflection, which might not correspond to the objective reality. In this study, what is more valued, as in other qualitative research, is the participants' own perspectives on the phenomena of interest instead of the ultimate *truth* (Patton, 1990: 484; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The stories they told detailed their perceptions and conceptions of their overseas learning experiences and shed better light on understanding their learning behaviours and strategies adopted. In addition, when they were describing their overseas learning process, their accounts were not strictly confined to 'learning' in its narrow sense, but extended to various aspects and levels, which could not be simply filtered out if we want to understand and interpret their overseas forms of learning culture holistically.

(2) Stimulated Recall Interview

The purpose of a second round of interviews was to elicit the participants' explanation and elaboration on the themes that had emerged from the first round of interviews in order to generate more data from their related comments and reflections. As I mentioned above, I also took this opportunity to check the accuracy of their narrative accounts and my interpretations of the earlier interviews. So this procedure turned out to be more complicated than expected. It seemed that three months of intervals

between the first and the second rounds of interviews created an unexpected truth crisis in terms of data interpretation within or across the cases.

The questions in this round were still very tentative and general to invite their unbiased comments and supplementary examples. Having drawn lessons from the pilot interview, I familiarized myself with the techniques of asking the informants for their views in such a way that they could speak in their own terms and endow meanings in their own words, without imposing views from outside. Though I had to ask the informants in depth, since the meanings assigned to their experiences were often complex, sometimes problematic and even ambiguous, I never used 'adversary and discombobulating tactics' that Douglas (1976: 178) first described. I think the aversion to them is as much my personal inclination as a Chinese national trait. Confronting, doubting, or instigating are not good probing approaches when interviewing people from a culture where interpersonal harmony, understatement, implicitness are held more valuable than stark facts or reality.

(3) Semi-structured Interviews

The semi-structured interview has been extensively adopted in the studies on learning issues in tertiary educational research (Chapple, 1999; Li, Lee & Kember, 2000; Säljö, 1981). In ethnographic study, Agar argued that a better model of fieldwork would be a 'funnel' (Agar, 2000:184). This 'funnel approach' was elaborated as:

> *One first takes an involved, humanitarian position, striving for breadth of understanding in a student-child-apprentice position. As the field work progresses, one in part takes a detached scientific view, focuses on some specific issues, and designs systematic approaches to formally document the experience from the perspective of a stranger.*
>
> (Agar, 2000: 251-252)

During the first two rounds of informal interviews, I started with a broad horizon, open to all aspects of learning issues in the participants' interest. By mutual checking on the data obtained from observation and participants' accounts, I came to the narrow

end of the funnel and focused on certain themes of common interest articulated by most if not all the participants. These themes were formulated into hypothesis-testing statements for further systematic testing in the format of semi-structured interviews, but still with ample room for the participants' own understanding, modifications or even falsifications. In fact, by the time of this stage, the themes of interest were multilevel: from their general life aspirations—not separable from their learning beliefs—to specific essay writing techniques, but the main thread running through their narratives was their constant reflection on their overseas learning and re-negotiation of their cultural beliefs about knowing and learning. The format of semi-structured interview was necessary and essential so as to help strengthen the comparability and transferability of the data, acquired from systematic questioning.

4.7 Data Collecting Procedures

I have justified the adoption of the ethnographic research instruments in this study in the last section, and now I will delineate the procedures of data collection in a chronological way, on the one hand, to demonstrate the genuine and rigorous process of the study to establish its trustworthiness and authenticity, and on the other hand, to expose false starts and pitfalls experienced by the researcher to the reader so that they can make their own judgment on the validity of the study.

(1) Access to the Field

The selection of Durham University as research setting is based on the consideration that a considerable population of Chinese students is studying in Durham University at present. Negotiation of the access to the setting was made possible with the help and connections of the staff. After one year's familiarizing myself with the setting, my access to the field was quite straightforward, without meeting gatekeepers or any other obstacles. In fact, the research was quite a welcome one both to the institution and to the participants. Following the normative research procedures outlined by the university, I filled out an Ethical Approval Form and obtained approval to do

classroom observations during the coming term.

(2) Pilot Study

Generally speaking, Chinese students tend to put trust in the people who are older and more experienced, and even a blind trust in their teachers. Because of my age, teaching background and personality traits: amiable, considerate, caring, sociable, these students would come to me for advice in various aspects of life and I was always ready to share my opinion and experience with them. This co-national network started in October of 2004 when I was a visitor, funded by China's Scholarships Committee, at the School of Education of Durham University and lasted till the summer of 2005. I thought this would become my group of informants, but when I reported this rapport and trust to my supervisors, I was advised that my practice was not sound due to unintentional intervention. So I had to review my own epistemological stance on ethnography. Through familiarizing myself with various strands of ethnographic methodology, I distanced myself from the postmodernists' view of researcher's reflexivity to the conviction of the feasibility and desirability of rigorous and systematic ethnography. I decided to start all over again in October of 2005 when a new academic year started and I was officially placed on the PhD program. I accessed a new group of Chinese students, who were in their first year overseas study, either on Master or PhD program, and had never been abroad before, relatively diversified in their backgrounds of region, gender, age, discipline, etc.

My pilot interview was conducted in November of 2005 when my former student came to visit me. At that time she was studying mass media in another university in England. She stayed a couple of days at my place and I told her that I was interested in her learning experiences in the UK. She happily agreed to be interviewed and did not mind being audio-recorded. After transcribing and translating the interview, I brought it to my supervisors for discussion. The main purpose of the pilot interview was to identify the pitfalls in interviewing techniques. For example, the suspicious leading questions were identified; where and when I should probe a bit to clarify the meaning

of the terms used; and the techniques of eliciting, encouraging the interviewee to talk more without committing myself to any views. In addition, several implications or flaws of the study were also pointed out. First, the interviewing place was my house, which could be an inhibiting factor for the interviewee to express herself fully. Second, the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee was that of teacher-student, which would generate a power relationship and affect the quality of the data. The consequences of these nuances might be evidenced from her positive comments on her university life in Beijing where I taught her for two years and she might have understated the academic difficulties confronted to avoid the implication that the teacher or the home university did not prepare her well for the new learning setting.

Though the pilot interview was flawed in many ways, it was a very valuable exercise to polish my interviewing techniques, which helped me overcome or be on guard against my own research biases in the following study. The pilot study proved that interviewing was an effective way to investigate informants' beliefs system about teaching and learning, for the student could verbalize how and why she was studying in a certain way, what strategies worked for her and what not.

(3) Participants Recruitment and Their Profiles

It is particularly true with Chinese students that informal networks are often trusted more than official channels, for they are more likely to respond positively to direct, interpersonal appeals or from acquaintances. Recruiting participants for this study was initiated informally through a Bible studies group, led by a British couple and regularly attended by newly arrived Chinese students, mainly from Mainland China or Taiwan, on alternate Friday evenings. I realized the importance of the diversity of participants because different informants represent different groups of constituents and associating with only one group on a field site means forfeiting information about the life experiences of people in other groups. My participants in the Bible studies group viewed the research purposes as valuable and my research motives as benign, so they

voluntarily introduced me to their classmates or flatmates who were not involved in the Bible studies group.

Purposive sampling was adopted to identify information rich students and to make the participants' demographic features more diversified by taking into the factors like gender, age, discipline, etc. The previous investigations were insensitive to the disciplines of the participants, but, as reviewed in Chapter 3, students' beliefs about knowing and learning are not unrelated with their disciplines. For example, students majoring in well-structured 'hard' science fields viewed knowledge as more certain than did students majoring in 'soft' areas of study, such as social sciences; students in applied fields are more likely to believe in simplicity and certainty of knowledge as well as the quickness of learning as compared with students majoring in pure fields (See Buehl & Alexander, 2001; Kitchner, 1984). I deliberately recruited students from diversified disciplines in order to confirm or disconfirm the general impression that Chinese overseas students who study natural sciences are able to progress rapidly in their research, without much pausing and stumbling; while those who study in the discipline of social sciences are 'weighted down by the system of deference to authority, both dead and alive, which governs their success or failure in their programs in China' (Winchester, 2002: 105-110).

From my initial observation, I also suspected that the academic adjustments varied in terms of mature students and younger ones, male and female, and whether he or she specialized in science or humanities, but, given the qualitative nature of the investigation and the small number of the participants, these demographic variables were not expected to achieve any generalization.

Demographic profiles of the participants:

Participants code	**Region**	**Discipline**	**Degree Program**	**Age group***	**Sex**
F1	Mainland	Education	MA	1	F
F2	Mainland	Education	MA	1	F
F3	Mainland	Social	MA	2	F

		Science			
F4	Mainland	Law	MA	1	F
F5	Taiwan	Law	MA	2	F
F6	Mainland	Law	PhD	1	F
F7	Mainland	Politics	PhD	1	F
M1	Mainland	Business	MBA	1	M
M2	Mainland	Finance	MSc	2	M
M3	Mainland	Law	MA	A	M
M4	Mainland	Engineer	PhD	2	M
M5	Taiwan	Physics	PhD	2	M
M6	Taiwan	Mathematics	PhD	2	M
M7	Taiwan	Philosophy	PhD	2	M

***1: No working experience 2: With at least two years of working experience**

Though I have pointed out the problems of the previous research on 'Chinese learners' with regard to its indiscriminating Chinese ethnic groups (See the section on homogeneity and heterogeneity of CHC learners in Chapter 3), no solid research results so far have shown statistically significant differences existing in terms of culture of learning between students from Taiwan and Mainland China. Besides the common Confucian heritage, all the participants in this study speak the same Chinese language variety, Mandarin Chinese, and explicitly identify themselves as 'typical Chinese students', so it is quite justifiable to study this mixed group as an arguably homogenous cultural entity.

Another two questions need answering: (1) Why postgraduate students? (2) Why first-year experience?

Focusing on postgraduate students is for both practical and theoretical considerations. Those who pursue Master degrees make the biggest component of Chinese international students body, and therefore, they are easily recruited, but most importantly, their intercultural learning experience will be more representative. In addition, postgraduate students' cultural adjustment may experience more hurdles than plastic younger students due to their seasoning experience of the education system in their inherited culture, or more entrenched cultural beliefs towards teaching and

learning; in contrast, British academics may impose higher expectations on the postgraduate students—experienced learners of higher education—to be an independent learner or researcher, capable of critical thinking and other sophisticated academic skills.

In this study, I focus on Chinese students' first-year postgraduate overseas study, no matter whether they take taught courses of Master degree or independent research PhD. As we saw in a previous chapter, research has shown that first year experience is critical in shaping students' perceptions of the learning context and the beliefs about the subject learning (Carroll & Ryan, 2005; Krause, Hartley, James & McInnis, 2005; Ryan, 2000). However, previous research on Chinese students' cultural adjustment did not make this variable explicit, and this might distort the picture of their adjustment, because in the study of intercultural adjustment, the first encountering of new cultures and initial response could be vital in the whole process of their adaptation.

(4) In the Field

The main methods adopted in this study are observation and interview, which mutually interact with each other in the course of the investigation. However, given the nature of this study, I take semi-structured interview data as the primary area or central source of data for systematisation and use observation and informal interviews as either stimulus or a test of the semi-interview contents. The discrepancies between observation data and interview data will be addressed in the within case and across cases analysis chapters.

The first round of interviews was conducted in December of 2005 and January of 2006. Following the verbatim principle, though not fully appreciative of its intrinsic value, I started transcribing the first batch of interview data. I have to say that this mechanical and monotonous work progressed rather slowly and this resulted in the delay for the participants to check their accounts and my interpretations. Had it not been the fact that the second round of the interviews was set during Easter holiday of 2006 the transcribing would have never been finished. So the second round of

interviews had to fulfil two purposes: on the one hand, it is to ask the participants to check the accuracy of their own accounts and my interpretations of their points, and on the other hand, the participants were asked to elaborate on the emergent themes generated from the data set. This routine process of confirmation turned out to be a most complicated one. Not only did they modify their statements, some of them even retracted their testimony flatly. This perplexing results seemingly confounded purposes of the second round of interviews, but in retrospect, they proved invaluable for this study. The inconsistencies or conflicts in the data were the true reflections of their ambivalent reactions to the new learning experiences.

I didn't transcribe the second round of interviews immediately. Because I needed to go back to my teaching post in my home university in China in early October of 2006, I had to budget my time in England and made the best use of it. I started re-reading more systematically the learning theories and the literature on Chinese students' learning, and, in the meanwhile, listening to the interview recordings to sensitise my understanding and interpretations. At that time I was preparing for a conference presentation, so I translated some excerpts from the recording directly into English without transcribing into Chinese text first, and I thought that I could have a better grasp of their meaning by listening to their talking, as recordings could revive the scenario and also provide more contextual and paralinguistic information than written form. It did not occur to me that using translated data might affect the process of interpretation and hence the result of data analysis particularly in cross-cultural or intercultural qualitative studies (Robinson-Pant, 2005) until I was referred to a recent PhD thesis (see Chen, 2009). Moreover, González y González and Lincoln (2006, also cited in Chen, 2009) advocate the importance of making the data accessible in original language so that the reader has the option to examine the original language of the data along with the presentation language. As a response to this call, I present the original Chinese interview accounts (quoted in the thesis) in the Appendix II for Chinese readers to judge the trustworthiness of the data and interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Though the interview contents were not fully materialized into texts, I was fully convinced of their meaning and interpretations and generated some statements from the data for the participants to comment on in the third round of interviews. In this stage, the research interest was becoming more clearly defined, but was not sufficiently discussed in the earlier rounds of interviews. For example, there were some information gaps that needed filling in. The statements abstracted from the analysis of the last two rounds of interviews were more focused, but I still made room for the participants to make modifications to the statements.

Considering the different nature of taught degree and research degree programmes the participants were involved in, not all the statements were equally applicable to all the participants. The order of the statements was also flexible, depending on the interviewing context. Question wording would be discussed and explained to make sure that they understood the questions or statements. Thus, on the one hand, the semi-structured interviews in this study were 'systematic in questioning' (Marshall & Rossman, 1999:108), which is necessary in multiple case studies; on the other hand, they could seek further interpretations on the topics from the participants and verify or rectify my interpretations as well.

(5) Researcher Role and Identity Handling

'The myth that ethnographers are people without personal identity, historical location and personality, and would all produce the same findings in the same setting, is the mistake of naive realism.' (Brewer 2000: 99). This resonates with Burgess's view that the main instrument of data collection in participant observation is the researcher (1982: 45). The personal characteristics, however, most affecting conduct of qualitative research, are the investigator's identity as the 'essential research instrument' (Wolcott, 1975: 115). The identity of the data collector mediates all other identities held and roles played by the investigator.

Erickson (1973) suggests that the task of the ethnographer is to make the familiar strange—to try to look at events, behaviour patterns, interactions, and artefacts as if

they were occurring on a different planet. In that way, we may be able to look at them afresh and understand them and their consequences in a new light. As a teacher having been at a university in China for more than ten years and a new PhD student in a Western educational institution, the biggest challenge I was facing was to de-familiarize myself from the familiar regularities and the routine learning experiences. In fact, to keep an open mind is more achievable than 'emptying the head'. Constant reflection and playing naive are effective means of de-familiarizing the phenomena and keeping a critical distance in the field.

As an 'observant participator' (insider status), I had no problems in winning their acceptance and trust, but it might reduce my capacity to achieve professional distance from the group ties. Therefore I had always been consciously warning myself to maintain enough detachment. In fact, I quite enjoyed this 'double agent' identity, living simultaneously in the tension of 'insider' and 'outsider', member and non-member, experiencing while reflecting; participating while observing.

In short, as a full-time student, I could experience the full range of the events and activities in the new setting to familiarize myself with the practices and values of it. In the field, I managed to maintain the balance between 'insider' and 'outsider' status by getting close to my participants enough to identify with them, but, in the meanwhile, maintaining a professional distance permitting adequate observation and objective analysis. Being a native enabled me to fully participate and share in the lives and activities of the participants, to interact with them in different social situations and to have a deep understanding of how they made sense of the new learning setting and living environment. Of course, the danger of losing critical faculties and sharp perception of the familiar phenomena was always threatening.

(6) Other Issues in the Field

Traditional ethnography has been struggling with the fact that there is no third language which could mediate between the native language and the ethnographer's own (Gellner, 1970; Asad, 1986), but native ethnography reverses this order in that the

native language is the ethnographer's own whereas the language of the final record is not; and, unfortunately, there is little literature about how to negotiate this linguistic labyrinth to translate lived stories into English data while 'keeping alive the meaningful nuances imbricated in them'(Kraidy, 2002: 195). Therefore, focusing on the words the participants used and analysing the meanings they were attaching to them was one of the important analytical tools in this study as well.

a. Interview language

The choice of interview as a data collection method is based on the assumption that the participants have the ability to verbalize their thoughts and feelings. So it is important that the language the participants used should fulfil the research purpose. In this study, it was the participants who chose in which language he or she would be interviewed. Except for one interview (F5C) in the third round conducted, all the interviews were conducted in Chinese. I believe participants could better express themselves in their mother tongue. However, code switching was quite common among some participants in their accounts, but mainly on word or phrase level. These linguistic matters themselves are treated as data, from which more data are generated.

b. Recording data, transcription and translation

I found taking notes during the interview was obtrusive and affected the effectiveness and natural flow of communication, though usually before the interview began, I would tell them that I might take notes to help me recall later. I used MP3 to record the interviews, but altogether three times the device failed for an unknown reason, and I had to recall from memory and take down the points for further confirmation from the participant.

All the interviews in this study were transcribed verbatim in the original interview language, but not with the detailed notations for conversation analysis, except for longer pause than expected and important body language indications, which were marked in brackets. The transcripts were printed out and labelled with the participant's

code, venue and date of the interview, and other accompanying contextual factors. The data analysis was done manually, due to the relatively small size of the data set, which was considered a valuable experience for a novice like me to get closer to the process.

Only those portions, which were to be presented in the data analysis, were translated into English. Researchers suggested rendering interview excerpts into a more readable textual form, where it is not essential to keep the exact linguistic forms as in sociolinguistic studies (Kvale, 1996; Roberts, 1997). So the translation of the data bits quoted in this thesis is in a reader-friendly version, which means minor editing suggested by Atkinson (1998: 55-56) and Rubin and Rubin (1995: 271-273) was done to improve the readability but 'without mispresenting the meaning' of the participant (Rubin &Rubin, 1995: 273). For example, all the sentences were rendered as grammatical and complete as possible; conversational fillers, such as 'erm…', 'humm…' false starts, unnecessary repetitions and other redundancy, were all left out for the sake of clarity. The original Chinese version of the presented data bits was also attached in Appendix II for the reader's examination or possible alternative interpretations.

4.8 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is recognized as central in ethnographic study (Bryman and Burgess, 1994; Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Dey, 1993; Huberman and Miles 1998). Brewer defined 'analysis' as the process of bringing order to the data, organizing what is there into patterns, categories and descriptive units and looking for relationships between them (2000: 105). This process is similar to Huberman and Miles' (1998) processes of data reduction and data display. In this study, grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) serves as the general principles in analysis.

One of the distinguishing features of ethnographic analysis is 'data analysis is simultaneous with data collection' (Brewer, 2000: 107). This means data analysis is not a distinct or separate stage of research process, but continuous and iterative.

However, although data analysis is intertwined with and permeated into the data-collecting procedures, some key stages could be characterised and described as the following steps:

(1) Organizing the data into manageable units by index coding storytelling data and field notes into themes;

(2) Establishing patterns in the data by looking for recurring themes and the relationships between them;

(3) Developing a classification system of 'open codes' based on developing typologies and taxonomies from the data;

(4) Categorizing the main themes according to the intensity or frequency of the themes on different stages;

(5) Examining variations and generating new concepts;

(6) Examining negative cases or deviant cases using Becker's terms (1998: 207);

(7) Constantly comparing and contrasting with existing theories in the literature and theorizing the patterns emerging from the data set.

In the initial stage of analysis, the first thing I did was immerse myself in the transcripts in their entirety format and details, to get the feel of the interview as a whole. Having familiarized myself with the whole set of the first batch of transcripts, I was index-coding the segments of the talk and seeking the similar pieces of the same code, which were put together in one pile with the assistance of pencil and scissors. Index coding, though not exactly an analytic process, is an indispensable step in searching for patterns of thought and action recurring in various situations.

Through perusing the range and depth of the data, I could identify a wide range of ideas and themes which seemed too much for one project, so a decision had to be made which themes and ideas were more promising and worth further exploring. I was advised to go back to my research questions to see if the data collected were

substantial and rich enough to answer those questions and then identify recurrent patterns underlying the seemingly amorphous data. When I was selecting those important core themes, I also took into consideration the foreseeable linkages among the selected themes and the perceived significance to the field of intercultural learning. Once this list was generated and the links among the items were grouped thematically, I began sorting them according to the level of generality into a hierarchical framework of sub-themes, which stayed close to the terms and language used by the participants themselves.

When the themes and correlations between them were identified, I set about delineating sub-groups of taxonomies within a general category. Classification is a conceptual process (Dey 1993: 44-45). To classify is to break down the data into bits that relate together as classes that comprise concepts. Again, this stage of data analysis turned out to be very tricky. The whole process of data-collecting fieldwork was ethnographic in the sense that participants' words and behaviours were truthfully recorded and described without imposing any external constructs. But when came the analysis of this batch of raw amorphous data, the available theoretical concepts would stand in and seemingly fit well with the data. The mistakes I committed at this stage were, first, that I didn't feel confident or secure about the data collected and couldn't resist the temptation of labelling them with existing categories from the literature that I started to review at that time; second, the categories from the existing literature relating to the topics were too abstract for the following analytical process to be fully grounded in the data. These problems, fortunately, were pointed out by my supervisors, and were rectified in time. It was gradually getting clear that some phenomena and issues were not covered in previous literature and needed new concepts to categorize them. In Appendix IV, I use charts to illustrate this analysis process and the thematic structures in the fashion of hierarchical categories, which led to the development of the next chapters of this thesis.

Ethnography and hypothesis testing are often contrasted in terms of inductive and

deductive reasoning. 'In both cases the research system is *closed* with reference to the theoretical system' (Agar, 2000:35). According to Agar, ethnography should be abductive, a term invented by Charles Peirce, one of the founders of American pragmatism, around the turn of the century (Hookway, 1992, cited in Agar, 2000: 35). Abduction is about the modification or development of frames that explain Agar calls what 'rich points', which are the problems in understanding and need resolution. So abduction emphasizes the development of new theoretical propositions to account for material that the old propositions didn't map onto. 'No abduction, no ethnography' (Agar, 2000: 40).

4.9 Trustworthiness, Authenticity and Credibility

The nature of qualitative research makes the quality of the study not rely on the criteria of validity, reliability or generalisability (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990:7) but on trustworthiness and authenticity, which are judged by the criteria of 'credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability' (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985:189; also Patton, 2002).

As for ethnographic study, Brewer (2000) uses 'ethnographic imagination' to describe the 'imaginative leap necessary to recognize the authority of ethnographic data'. '[I]t is a call to openness in people's attitudes towards ethnographic data, in which their validity, usefulness and import is not immediately dismissed out of hand' (Brewer 2000: 51-53). Nevertheless, verification procedures are necessary to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the study. The following steps and verifying measures adopted in this study are expected to achieve this goal, which are not independent of but built into the rigorous research process:

1. Ten months of prolonged engagement with the participants and systematic data collection in various settings should be an important criterion in judging the trustworthiness and credibility of this study.

2. The sound rapport and mutual trust established between the researcher and the

participants and maintained throughout the study in the field guarantee the authenticity and authority of the data collected.

3. Internal data triangulation among multiple data collecting methods and three rounds of interviews themselves can ensure consistency and confirmability of the study.

4. Member-checking with participants and colleagues, which was done both informally and formally (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985: 314), have ensured maximum accuracy in description and interpretation.

5. Four UK lecturers were interviewed to serve as another kind of data triangulation. Among the four lecturers, two were the supervisors of the two PhD participants under study; they are both Chinese. The other two are British academics, who have extensive exposure to Chinese students in their teaching and have had supervised quite a number of Chinese students before.

6. Theory triangulation (Denzin, 1978) was attempted in this research interpreting the same set of data from multiple theoretical perspectives, i.e. developmental epistemological beliefs theories and intercultural adjustment theories.

4.10 Ethical Choices

Conventional research design assumes that the less participants and subjects know about what is going on the better, because the underlying assumption is that the more participants and subjects may know about the research, the less naturally they may behave. Thus the debate between the relative values of overt and covert research has been going on among researchers who disagree on the extent to which they condone covert research (see Bulmer, 1982). Some believe that no covert designs are acceptable; others weigh potential benefits against the harm such designs may incur. My two supervisors represented these two views respectively and I adopted a relativistic and eclectic approach to this ethical issue. First, the information disclosed

to the participants was tentative and general, which intended to minimize the research effect and conform to the research ethical norms as well. As a matter of fact, in view of the exploratory nature of the study, the research purpose itself was not quite clear yet, and I, the researcher, could not be certain what I would be up to and what exactly I was seeking out. In other words, I did not deliberately hide my motives from my participants and they were assured that they could opt out from the research process any time they want. However, none of the participants was much concerned with this ethical aspect of the research. The presentation of the ethical consent form for their signature often perplexed the participants and complicated the situation. One participant spent more than five minutes reading the every line of the consent form, and remarked, 'This practice is so Western!' Therefore, oral consent was obtained from the participants first and some ethical consent forms were not presented for the participants to sign until the end of the last round of interviews.

As mentioned in the section on participant recruitment, Chinese students tend to place great trust in teachers and show great desire to solicit teachers' opinion and advice on their studies. As a teacher, it goes against my own ethics not to provide help when it is badly needed. And it was also a torturing moment when I refrained from disclosing or committing myself for fear of any intervention and influence on their learning culture formation. I had no way to know how my participants took my reservation and reluctance in counselling and giving advice and I hope that wouldn't discourage them from turning to other sources for help.

4.11 Limitations of the Study

The legitimacy and advantages of native ethnography have been expounded in Section 4.5. However, as a native, I am so familiar with those quotidian words, concepts, and practices grounded in everyday life that some of them may inevitably escape my conscious attention, despite efforts of distancing myself to make the familiar unfamiliar. But I have to admit that what the participants told me about their

university life, home and abroad, sounded both familiar and fresh. Moreover, loyalty priority has been given to my participants, so there must be moments of over-identifying with them, of advocating or speaking for them, and the presentation of the data might seem too intimate and sympathetic to some audiences.

Although I was a qualified insider both in the group and in the setting, I didn't attempt to involve myself in PhD participants' supervision meetings, or master students' tutorials. On the one hand, I deemed it important to maintain a harmonious and comfortable relationship with my participants, so I discouraged myself from any obtrusive or intrusive manners, especially in a privacy-sensitive cultural setting, for, when asked whether my presence would make them feel uneasy during their supervision or tutorials, they were more concerned with their supervisors' or tutors' acceptance than their own uneasiness. Therefore I did not manage to observe their communication with their supervisors on the spot or their performance in their tutorials. Nevertheless, ample observation on informal occasions of various gatherings and 'bump-into' casual observations in the library will, to some extent, compensate the lack of direct observation to cross-check their interview accounts. In consequence, the study relies heavily on the participants' own account of their learning experiences and perceptions.

Furthermore, the advantages and disadvantages of a specific data collection method must be taken into consideration along with the nature of each kind of studies. As I have mentioned before, learning beliefs, conceptions, strategies, and expectations, are all in people's mind, and cannot be directly observed. Though the truth value about the interviewees' verbal reports has been widely discussed in the literature (Brenner, Brown & Canter, 1985; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Robson, 2002), for example, Robson said that it was difficult to rule out the biases caused by participants' psychological or emotional conditions, or simply memory failure in the participants' verbal reports (2002: 273). However, in the nature of this study, I was striving for the subjective reality of this group of Chinese overseas students as they experienced and

interpreted what happened, which might not exactly correspond with the objective reality. From their own perspectives, the participants were not only recounting their experiences, but might also construct new meanings, and 'develop new insights and understanding of their experiences' during the interviewing process (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998: 98).

To investigate students' learning experiences, participants' diaries and learning journals would be effective instruments, which, however, were not available in this study. The main reason is that most of them simply did not keep diaries at all, and it would be a huge imposition, or rather an intervention, if I asked them to keep a learning journal only for my reference or research purpose. And I could not rule out the probability that the participants would project a more academically desirable image by consciously or unconsciously manipulating their mental world. Some participants said that they wrote blogs in the beginning to share their new experiences with their friends at home. But with the accumulation of academic pressure, most of them had no time to keep it up. Apart from jotting down some titbits of campus news in their blogs if they had one, they would mostly rather use mobile phones—more direct ways—to confide their sweets and bitters of overseas life to friends or family members at home.

Finally, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, it is important to be aware that the data of this study reflected only a transection of the adjustment process of a group of 'after 80s' Chinese students to a British learning setting. Any attempts to generalize the findings of this research should be cautioned.

In the following chapters I am going to present the main findings emerging from the data corpus of this study, which are, for analytical and heuristic purposes, delineated into the following interrelated aspects: participants' inherited beliefs about knowing and learning (Chapter 5), their perceptions of British learning culture and their adjustment (Chapter 6), and changes in their beliefs about knowing and learning (Chapter 7).

I shall try to present each in a chronological way so as to embody the features of the present longitudinal study, but in the meanwhile, we should bear in mind that these categories are not independent of each other but interrelated and cast light on one another, for beliefs, perceptions, and the corresponding approaches and strategies adopted are all simultaneously present and constantly interacting in the participants' awareness, and therefore, the synchronizing nature of the participants' learning experiences will be compromised by any attempt of linear presentation. Nonetheless, I will try to compensate by contextualizing the interpretation of the data with ample quotes from the participants.

4.12 Summary

This chapter has critically reviewed the methods and methodology of previous research on Chinese students and restates the purpose of the study and the rationale of ethnographic research design as the best approach to answering the research questions of this study. Furthermore, the researcher's epistemological stance in conducting this research has been explicitly expounded and native ethnography is argued to be a legitimate and valuable approach to intercultural studies. After emphasizing the importance of an *emic* approach to investigating cultural issues and justifying the effectiveness of ethnographic research instruments of this study, I have devoted much space to detailing the research process, including participants recruitment, data collecting procedures and methods of data analysis, etc. without failing to report the trials and errors occurring during the process. Finally, the authenticity and credibility of the study has been argued and ethical issues of the research discussed. The chapter has concluded with an acknowledgement of the limitations of the research.

Chapter 5 Chinese Inherited Beliefs about Learning

5.1 Introduction

As has been stated in earlier chapters, the main purpose of this thesis is to establish an *emic* interpretation of the participants' experience since much previous research has adopted an *etic* approach, even if the distinction in practice is not always clear-cut, and the practice of 'phenomenography' is also compatible and relevant with my approach since the object of research in phenomenography is to describe the world as it is seen from the point of view of the learner. Before analysing participants' perceptions of the new learning environment and the changes in their beliefs about learning during their sojourn this chapter will focus on their conceptions and beliefs about learning with which they started the sojourn.

As elaborated in Chapter 3, students' conceptions of learning in higher education have been researched with the methodology of phenomenography, an approach 'driven by an attempt to replace the abstract and empirically unverifiable conceptual frameworks, such as those which implied that people 'process' or 'store' information in various processing devices of dubious ontological status' (Säljö, 1976, cited in Entwistle, 1997b: 128). In this sense, my approach to the participants' inherited conceptions of learning has much in common with phenomenographic research, departing from traditional psychological conceptions of learning by focusing on the learner's own understanding of their learning experiences to categorize qualitative differences in their conceptions of learning. However, unlike phenomenography, the aim of my study is to investigate how their perceptions of new learning culture interact with and impact their inherited conceptions of learning, not to attempt to exhaust the description of the conceptions *per se*, or the relations between the categories and the delimitations which distinguish one category from another. The purpose of probing the participants' inherited conceptions of learning is to discover the constructs in their folk beliefs and conceptions of learning, against which the later changes and modifications in their

learning beliefs (reports in Chapter 7) can be compared.

5.2 Participants Inherited Conceptions of Learning

In the initial stage of commencing their overseas studies, the participants tended to understand 'learning' in the sense of formal academic learning, which took place in educational institutions, i.e., school or university. Despite demographic and disciplinary differences, the participants' answers to the prompting question 'what is learning?' or 'what does learning mean to you?', though somewhat fragmentary, did show a general consensus and consistent pattern in their conceptions of learning. Three dimensions were manifested across the data set: A. What-dimension: Objects of learning; B. How-dimension: Manner of learning; and C. Why-dimension: Purposes of learning.

A. What-dimension: Objects of Learning

According to the participants, to increase knowledge, to master skills and methods, and to develop abilities were deemed the most basic objects of learning, or the content of learning in their conception system.

(1) Accumulate Knowledge

When the participants were asked about their understanding of 'learning', they automatically associated learning with acquiring knowledge. The definitions of knowledge by the participants included:

'what people know about things' ('人们对事物的认识')

'people's understanding of the world' ('人们对世界的理解')

'the summation of experience by predecessors' ('前人经验的总结')

'the crystallization of peoples' wisdom' ('人民智慧的结晶')

'the theories that have been tested in practice' ('经过实践检验过的理论')

(Fieldnotes-Oct.3-2005)

From their definitions, we could see that knowledge in their mind was endowed with a discrete and factual nature, something collective instead of individual, and not to be easily challenged, questioned, or repudiated. In other words, they tended to believe in the certainty of knowledge from authoritative sources.

To absorb and to accumulate knowledge was perceived to be an essential component of learning, serving as a superordinate construct in their conceptions. The phrases they used regarding knowledge accumulation included:

'to acquire/ gain knowledge' ('获得/获取知识')

'to absorb knowledge (like a sponge)' ('像海绵一样吸收知识')

'to increase knowledge' ('增长知识')

'to accumulate knowledge' ('积累知识')

'to enlarge knowledge system' ('扩充知识体系')

'to build up a sound knowledge structure' ('建立一个完善的知识结构)

'to lay a solid knowledge foundation' ('打下一个良好的知识基础')

(Fieldnotes-Oct.3-2005)

From the verbs used by the participants, we could see that their conception of learning was much of quantitative one. A popular adage that 'Without accumulating small steps, one cannot reach a thousand miles' was widely endorsed among the participants. It seemed that knowledge was taken as a discrete entity, waiting to be acquired and known, something that could be retained and stored in the brain. Moreover, the participants would also use 'basic', 'foundation', 'broad', 'solid', 'deep', 'systematic', 'advanced' or 'useful' to modify 'knowledge':

[1] ***Learning is no other than acquiring knowledge.*** *We came here to learn advanced knowledge in our field.* ***Without a solid knowledge foundation, everything is just a castle in the air.*** *As it is said, only when your* ***accumulation is enough in quantity can you have a***

qualitative leap. (M6A)[20]

The emphasis on foundation and accumulation revealed that the participants believed that accumulation in quantity would lead to later qualitative change. In other words, quantity and quality were not juxtaposed in their mind but interact on a continuum.

Further analysis of the data showed some other features of participants' understanding of knowledge.

a. Knowledge is a system: orderly process of learning

The participants tended to view knowledge, especially their subject knowledge, as an established system and the student's task was to acquire, step by step, from the simple to the complicated, and eventually to master this system. This conception of orderly learning was prevalent among the participants, and could be exemplified by M2's words:

> [2] *Formal learning is mainly about* ***absorbing your subject knowledge****, from shallow to deep, and gradually (you) acquire* ***the whole system*** (M2A).

Since knowledge was conceived of as a system, so the participants had a strong belief in 'systematic learning', which is similar to the construct of 'orderly process' in epistemological beliefs reviewed in Section 3.3, and expected more structured learning activities in the formal educational institutions, as F5 said,

> [3] *I think we should have* ***a sound knowledge system in university.*** *We learn common sense prior to university; at university level, we begin to have majors and disciplines. In university, I think what is important is to* ***lay a solid foundation for subject knowledge****,* ***the basics are important.*** *So I think the teacher should provide* ***a whole framework for the discipline.*** *I think*

[20] All the extracts from the participants' interview accounts, except F5C, which was conducted in English, are my translations and the original Chinese versions of the quotes are provided in the Appendix II so that a Chinese speaker can judge their faithfulness of my translation. As for the referencing system, I add A, B, C to the participant code to indicate the 1st, 2nd and 3rd round of interviews respectively and FN stand for filed notes. For example, M6A is M6's first interview, M6B is M6's second interview, M6C is M6's third interview, and M6FN is the fieldnotes about M6's. The bold emphasis has been added to the quotations to identify the key words which are important in supporting the interpretation being made. Word indicates that the word(s)—mainly English words—are used by the participants either for lack of Chinese equivalent for established translation. This code-mixing is worth probing in future studies. As for other notations in transcriptions include, see Appendix II.

that is very important. ***Basic knowledge is the foundation*** *to do research or critique, to be critical. It is like shooting without aiming at a target unless you have* ***a basic framework****. You should have strong academic background before you can criticise or persuade people'.* (F5B)

The participants tended to think knowledge had a hierarchical structure, and the student was supposed to learn in a proper order and progress gradually. One of the mottos internalised by the participants was '*xun xu jian jin'* (循序渐进, meaning that 'in studying it is imperative to follow the proper order and advance step by step'). Therefore, in climbing the pyramid of knowledge, the student, who was at the level of basics, was not supposed to criticize the people (teachers) of higher levels.

This strong belief in systematic learning made them impose high expectation on the teacher to provide such a knowledge framework.

b. **Knowledge is from teachers, books and experience**

As to the question 'where knowledge is from', participants would consider teachers and books as most important channels of gaining knowledge, which were considered as indirect knowledge. That *'the teacher should impart the essence of knowledge to the student'* (Pilot-FN) was taken for granted in Chinese learning culture. The participants believed firmly that the teacher should be knowledgeable, but they also agreed that a teacher's knowledge was also from books. But with teacher's understanding, explanation, and discernment, the student would learn more efficiently:

[4] *It makes a huge difference whether you've got a teacher or not.* ***What teacher lectures in class are the key points, the essentials of the subject, so you can learn quickly.*** *Of course, you could learn by yourself, but that will be much slower. Perhaps, it will take you four or five times for you to grasp the points.* (M3B)

The terms of 'key points', 'essentials', and 'condensation' make the participants' belief clear that one of the roles of the teacher is 'the filter' of knowledge. In the participants' mind, textbooks performed similar functions—extracting and refining the 'jumbled' knowledge of particular discipline:

[5] *Textbooks are essential, because they are comprised of* ***the best selective texts, the condensation of the whole subject knowledge.*** *They must have been tested in practice and undisputable* (M3A)

And since the knowledge in the textbooks should have been tested in practice, it must be real, true, and undisputable. So in terms of the nature of knowledge, they tended to view knowledge as certain; if it was controversial, not certain yet, it should not be put in the textbooks. One example about this unfailing belief in the textbook was from F5:

[6] *I feel that the reading list the teacher gave is too long, too hard to finish. In Taiwan, we advocate* ***'one textbook '****practice:* ***the whole knowledge framework of the subject matter is based on only one book. The framework and concepts are from one book, which provides the whole guideline,*** *then you can read other journal articles and the books by others.* ***You should have one leading textbook. If you have too many books, you won't have systematic knowledge and concepts,*** *and you will feel tangled and confused. The teachers here list too many readings, to the contrary, we do not know which should be read, for you can't finish all. After reading some, your head is full, chaotic, and then you feel nothing there. So I think the workload should be reasonable.* (F5A)

F5 felt the workload of her course was overwhelming. The reading list was too long to be finished. That worried her a lot. In her opinion, the teacher had the responsibility to rate/rank the importance of those articles. Furthermore, the participants got tangled in the multiple perspectives from different books, which made them unsure of where to turn. In their mind, basic concepts should be consensual and consistent, and too many views or voices would confuse the matter, and the people as well. That was why F5 advocated 'one-leading (authority) textbook', so that the student could have' a whole guideline' and 'the systematic knowledge' of the subject matter under study. In Chinese language, the teacher's job was 'teaching books' (*jiaoshu*, 教书), meaning impart the quintessence he/she learned from books to the student, who in turn should study diligently to understand what was taught and commit it to memory.

Besides emphasizing indirect knowledge from the teacher and book, the participants

placed high value on *jianshi* (见识)，which refers to the direct knowledge usually obtained through informal learning settings, such as by travelling or other personal experiences. Therefore, to increase *jianshi* (‘长见识’) meant to ‘widen one’s knowledge and broaden one’s horizon’. The sources of knowledge identified by the participants include books, teachers, classroom learning, personal experiences and practices, etc.

The participants expected their new learning experiences would add to their knowledge structure, which consists of both subject knowledge and informal knowledge, *jian shi*, which also implies worldly knowledge from what one hears and sees, outside the orthodox, but would become part of a person’s autobiography, so it is very personal and social-oriented.

c. Understanding and Memorization of knowledge

Understanding and memorization were the most important concepts closely associated with what the participants did with the knowledge they acquired. The most frequently used phrase by the participants about the reading materials and subject knowledge was ‘to deepen *lijie’* (加深理解, ‘understanding’), ‘to enhance *lijie*, understanding, and *jiyi*’ (记忆, ‘memorization’). Both the Master students and the PhD students tended to systematically work through the reading materials in order to understand and then commit the important points to memory. In their mind, knowledge learnt from the teacher and books was supposed to be retained in memory; otherwise, all the efforts would be in vain. For example, during the first round of her interview, F4 complained that she couldn’t recall what she had learnt:

> [7] *I told my classmate that I was very forgetful. I couldn’t* ***remember*** *what I have learnt, and returned them to the teacher. And that Korean student told me that it was also important that we forgot, for we have to* ***empty our heads*** *to learn something new (…) like you pick a watermelon and have to put it down to pick up anything else.* (F4B).

The ‘container metaphor’ of head was very common among the participants. For

example, a Finance PhD student once said,

> [8] ***I think memorization is important.*** *They (Western students) do not memorize the multiplicity table, and they use the calculator all the time, so we are much faster than they are in mental calculation. They say that the head is used to do more important thinking, not to be occupied with hard facts, but I say since you don't know how large is your brain's capacity is,* ***why don't you try to store something****?* (Fieldnote-Feb-2006)

Here, in her mind, memorization was a facility in effective learning and problem solving, so it was considered as more a learning skill than a learning conception. A similar view was held by M5:

> [9] *I memorize less and less now when I am here, because we have Google. But* ***memorization is essential***. ***I never heard anyone who learned things without memorizing them***. (M5A)

The changing of learning behaviour from memorising the content of subject knowledge to using high-tech tools to look up or get access to knowledge did not play down the role of memorization, which was considered as both the process and the product of learning.

Their emphasis on memorization was certainly not devoid of understanding. Actually, the word 'memorization' denotes both the action, 'to memorize', and the result, similar to 'retention', which has no negative connotation of being mechanical or rote learning. The participants' understanding of the relationship between these two concepts could be illustrated by the following comments:

> [10] *I think you should* ***understand the material first before you can memorize*** *it. Of course, you could* ***memorize something without understanding****, but it won't last long. You will forget soon. Like what we were taught in the Politics class, we would start memorizing those notes one or two days before the exam, and transferred them to paper during the exam. But as soon as out of the examination room, they would be purged out of your head completely.* (M1B)

Rote learning was not a preferred way of learning, though almost all the participants admitted that they once used rote learning as a coping strategy to deal with the exam

questions, because they perceived that was the only way to pass the exams or get high marks. They called this practice 'throwing up' (呕吐式), meaning reproducing the required stuff at the exam without the need of digesting or understanding. But the participants did not conceive of this rote learning as 'real learning' but as a skill, as F1 said,

> [11] *I am good at* ***rote learning*** **('bei'背)** ***before the exams,*** *just two or three days in advance,* ***but that is not real learning****, because out of the exam room, I couldn't recall anything* (F1B).

The participants' negative attitudes towards 'rote learning' were expressed via their phrase '*si ji ying bei*' (死记硬背), literally meaning the approach is 'dead and rigid', implying this approach was forced on them, against their will.

Another common response concerning memorization and understanding was:

> [12] *Sometimes I will memorize those important points of view and* ***wait for a 'sudden enlightenment' later on*** *after I read more about them.* (F7A)

M7's 'sudden enlightenment' (*dunwu*, 顿悟) found resonance with other participants as well:

> [13] *You can't understand for the first reading most of time, but it makes an impression in your mind. With more knowledge you get about the subject, you will* ***suddenly see the light*** *sometime later.* (F4B)

So memorization could be practiced either before or after understanding. Both ways—memorization after understanding or memorization before understanding—were common among the participants. The latter seemed to be taken as more a contingency strategy in learning. But the participants tended to admit that understanding might not be accomplished at once, so they consider it a legitimate way of learning to commit what was taught to memory first and understand it later.

d. Multilayers of understanding

Another issue about understanding was the different senses conveyed by the

participants. The three most commonly used words by the participants, meaning 'understanding', were 'knowing' (*'zhidao',* 知道), 'make sense of' (*'ming bai'*, 明白 *'dong'* 懂), and 'understand'. (*'li jie'* 理解). The question 'how do you know that you have achieved understanding' often invited puzzlement among the participants at first. A frequent answer was 'if you understand a theory or principle, you know how to **apply it**' or 'if you **really understand**, you **won't forget**'. Again, understanding and memorization go hand in hand. Another type of common answer to this question was exemplified by a PhD student's comment:

> [14] *If you **really understand** something, you can retell it to others or explain to those who don't know it and make them understand. Sometimes, I thought I understood and when I was trying to explain to others in my own words, I suddenly found that I couldn't' do it, because actually, I did not **really understand** it.* (F6 B)

Their use of 'really' before 'understand' indicated that 'understanding' was a word with multilayered meanings in their mind. One could 'really' or 'not really' understand a phenomenon. For example, an MSc student from the Business school said,

> [15] *The textbooks we used here were exactly the same as we did in our home university. But I came to realize that I did **not really understand** the content though I'd already studied and passed the exams (at home university). We just took in what was in the textbook and never analysed what assumptions or arguments were behind their theories, what contextual factors were involved.* (MSc student from the Business School)

This MSc student thought he had understood the materials in the textbook until he re-learned it a second time. He said he could remember those concepts, but that did not mean that he thoroughly understood them. The conclusion he drew was 'you can't expect to understand something by learning it once'. In other words, the participants in this study did not hold the unsophisticated belief in quick learning.

According to the participants, 'understanding' could be achieved at different levels. On the surface level, 'understanding' was achieved through 'making sense of the text,

much as language was concerned; on the deep level, 'understanding' was focused on the meaning dimension of the materials. The two meanings of 'understanding' could be exemplified by F1's comment:

> [16] *I **understood** every word of their sentences, but I did not **understand** what they were talking about, for example, they would talk about eleven-plus…you simply do not know what they talked about, to say nothing of **understanding** the issue.* (F1A)

The first 'understood' simply meant 'knew the word', and the second 'understand' emphasized 'to make sense of' or 'to know the meaning of the talk'; only 'understanding' in the last sentence meant 'real understanding' of the issue.

In summary, the emphasis on accumulation of knowledge was a salient construal in the learning conceptions of the participants, who acknowledged that the transmission model of knowledge was the legitimate way of teaching and learning. Quite a few of them even recalled the ancient text, which they learnt during secondary schools, to express this established point of view:

> [17] *Our (Chinese) educational tradition is of **sheer knowledge transmissio**n. 'From ancient times, scholars always have teachers. It takes a teacher to transmit wisdom, impart knowledge, and resolve doubts.'* (F6A)

Most participants were aware of the defects of the transmission model in Chinese education:

> [18] *I feel that the output of Eastern and Western education is different: they (Western educators) teach children **how to think**, **how to critique.** When reading something, you need to think why, what holes can you find in it; but our education does not emphasize on this. **We emphasize knowledge transmission and do not teach children to criticize what they have learnt,** and **this attitude will make a big difference after university level.** Western students will far surpass Eastern students.* (M6A)

The participants were aware of the different practices existing between the Eastern and Western educational systems and tended to see this difference not only as the

results of previous learning experiences but also the characteristics of Eastern and Western cultures, and intuitively, they knew that the new learning environment would offer a profound change in their learning experiences.

(2) Master Skills and Methods

To Chinese learners, skills are separate objects of learning, always going with knowledge, side by side, but not included in 'knowledge'. So, apart from accumulating knowledge, mastering skills and methods was another important aspect of learning in their beliefs system, though they laid different emphases on the skills and methods due to their different disciplines, such as lab skills, calculating skills, language skills, research skills and methods, or even skills in operating machines.

Examining the participants' words, I found that sometimes 'skills' or 'methods' were used in the sense not restricted to the concrete skills or methods mentioned above, but conveyed an abstract sense of 'approach'. For example, one of M2's conceptions of learning was 'to seek a correct **method** to look at the world' and the ultimate result of learning is 'to form a correct outlook on life and on world' (M2B). Apparently, the 'methods to look at the world' were more in the sense of a philosophical approach to existential problem than the concrete occupational skills mentioned above. It may also be related to Xu' (2004) disciplined-oriented concept WTP, i.e. 'ways of thinking and practising' (Entwistle, 2005), encompassing not just knowledge and skills but also acquiring proper attitudes and values of the discipline, such as how to view the world like a financer, or to think like a mathematician, so as to establish a professional identity. In short, for the participants, learning has both epistemological and existential meanings.

(3) Applying what is learnt to develop abilities/competences

The participants said that simply accumulating knowledge, though important and essential, was not all learning was about. Applying what one had learnt to practice was deemed more important. The close relationship between learning and applying was explained by M4:

[19] ***Knowledge is for use.*** *If you don't know how to apply, it means that you have not really mastered it; if you have a command of it, then you know how to apply it.* (M4B)

The participants would also use the phrase *huo xue huo yong,* (活学活用, literal translation is 'lively learn and lively apply', meaning 'not to stick to one way of learning and apply what is learnt in ingenuity'), a criterion to measure or judge the quality of the learning outcome, and often used as the opposite to *si ji ying bei* (死记硬背, meaning 'rote memorization'). Moreover, the participants tended to take 'applying' itself as a kind of ability, and also a means to develop abilities and enhance competences:

[20]***Applying means practice,*** *to use the principles or theories to solve concrete problems, and during the process of applying,* ***one's abilities and competence would be enhanced and developed****.* (F7A)

In fact, when the participants mentioned 'applying', they always emphasized 'abilities' and 'competences'. Therefore, the development of abilities and competences was considered as equally important outcomes of learning if not more important:

[21] *You are not only learning knowledge; you should also* ***know how to apply it (to practice).*** *During the process of applying, your abilities will be developed too.* ***And I think developing abilities/competences is more important*** (M1B).

It was interesting to note that 'book/textbook knowledge' was often devalued when compared with 'developing abilities'. On the one hand, they showed reverence to the established knowledge in the textbook; on the other hand, they regard book knowledge might be divorced from reality, hence, impractical or inapplicable in practice. Those who majored in sciences put much emphasis on applying and creative abilities, which, however, could not be achieved without a solid foundation of knowledge:

[22] *Applying capabilities and creation are more important than knowledge.* ***Knowledge should be put to use to solve problems.*** *In our field (physics), we are aiming at solving*

problems. Of course, ***creation is coming out of your knowledge accumulation****. (M5A)*

In summary, in the participants learning belief system, knowledge is highly valued, and to accumulate knowledge, to master skills and methods, and to develop abilities constitute the content of learning. The participants tended to define knowledge as facts or factual information that is learned or acquired as a result of formal education and tended to believe book knowledge had been tested and proved in practice. This finding seems to show that these students are still in the stage of 'dualism' (Perry, 1970) or 'surface learners' (Marton, *et al.*, 1993a), but the high value on knowledge, which may not be defined as the same as in phenomenography research, also shows Chinese cultural specificity. The participants' conceptions about sources of knowledge are consistent with Pratt *et al.*'s(1999) qualitative findings that Chinese students tend to treat texts and instructors as highly authoritative sources of knowledge and assume that the first steps of learning is to reproduce what is taught by the teacher and the book, but that is certainly not all about learning.

The findings of this study resonate with those of previous phenomenographic research in that Chinese students do not take memorization as an end in learning but a means to understand and to consolidate or retain knowledge. This finding echoes Marton, Dall'Alba and Tse's (1993) and Wen and Marton's (1993) that Chinese learners distinguish memorization with understanding from mechanical rote learning. However, that understanding was taken to be the sum of 'all the pieces of knowledge that are remembered or memorized' (Marton, Dall'Alba and Tse, 1993: 4) did not appear in this study. But Chinese students do distinguish the different layers of 'understanding' , from 'knowing the linguistic meanings of words' to 'making sense of the sentences' and then 'to grasp the essence of the meaning', so Western construct 'understanding' could be easily confounded by the different interpretations of the term in an inventory or questionnaire.

B. How-dimension: Manner of Learning

'How to learn' or 'what proper manner and attitude towards learning' constitutes essential aspects in the participants' beliefs system about learning, which could be summarized into (1) *kuxin*: effortful learning, (2) *xuxin*: respectful learning, and (3) *yongxin*: reflective learning. These *emic* concepts are similar to the constructs identified by Li (2002, 2003) through prototype approach.

(1) *kuxin*: effortful learning

To all the participants, learning was always associated with difficulties and hardships: 'Learning is painful' (F2A). So, in order to achieve successful learning, one must *xia ku xin* (下苦心，literal translation is 'make up bitter heart'), meaning to making up one's mind to embark on a journey of hardship. All the participants endorsed the following sayings:

> *No pains, no gains.*
>
> *Ten years of learning enduring bitterness (poverty and obscurity) behind a cold window (十年寒窗苦)*[21]
>
> *Industriousness is the road to the mountain of books and the painstaking effort is the boat to cross the boundless sea of learning.（书山有路勤为径，学海无涯苦作舟）*

But they also believed that efforts and perseverance would lead to success. As M5 said,

> [23] *Nothing in the world is difficult as long as you set your mind on it.[….] It is good if you have interest in your major; if you don't, you* ***have to endure and study harder,*** *because you have no other choice, and it is a part of your growth. […] I don't know whether all hardworking people can succeed, but I firmly believe that* ***those who can succeed must be hardworking people*** (F6A).

[21] 'Cold window' in Chinese metaphorically refers to the window of the study, because ice and snow is the common pattern themes of such windows in the past.

Being diligent and perseverant was an essential indicator of a model student. One of the measurements of industriousness and diligence was the hours spent on studies. If they spent more time on a piece of work, they would expect higher grades. In other words, they believed that efforts should be rewarded:

> [24] ***Attitude is most important.*** *If they (the teachers) see you work really hard, they have no heart to fail you.* (F2FN Nov 01-06)

In addition, closely related to effortful learning, most of participants held the view that learning involved a lot of revisions and reviewing. They tended to believe that repetitive learning was necessary in order to acquire and deepen their understanding of the subject. This could be reflected from the two popular admonitions which the participants embraced with no reservation: 'Meaning appears after a hundred times of reading' (读书百遍,其义自见), and 'to gain new insights by reviewing old materials' (温故而知新), which were consensually acknowledged among the participants as well.

> [25] *I think examination is very important, because it urges you to* ***do revisions constantly.*** *And this* ***repetition helps memorization and understanding****.* (M5B)

So here we see the link with memorisation and this repetitive learning manner was reinforced by the fact that learning in a second language involved more times of reading the same piece of material in order to make sense of it. Nearly all the participants expressed the view like the following:

> [26] *As for Chinese materials, perhaps you needn't read many times before you could have a better understanding. But* ***reading in English will be much slower,*** *and sometimes I need read four or five times in order to understand the main points.* (F3A)

So the repetitive reading was their approach to deepen their understanding of the materials, from making sense of the text to understanding the points or meanings. Moreover, 'new meanings would emerge from repetitive reading, the implied meanings embedded between lines, like reading novels, every time is different, for

you have different reflections' (F7FN-Jan 15-2006). This finding echoes Biggs' statement that repetition is not the indicator of rote learning but a tool for creating meaning (1996: 57).

In the previous section it became clear that the participants had certain beliefs about learning and abilities. The verbs the participants used to talk about 'abilities' included 'to acquire', 'to foster', 'to develop', 'enhance', 'to improve', 'to extend'. From some of these – e.g. 'to extend'—we could see that 'abilities' were not thought as fixed attributes but rather something malleable and extendable. The participants' belief in effort was shown in their understanding of the dialectical relationships between ability and effort and the latter was believed to be compensatory for the former, i.e. *qin neng bu zhuo* (勤能补拙, meaning 'hardworking can make up one's deficiencies'). This finding is consistent with other research on Chinese learners' characteristics and their attribution patterns (Li, 2001; 2002; Salili, 1995, 1996, 2001; Tweed and Lehman, 2002).

(2) *xu xin*: Respectful learning

It was a consensus among the participants that as a student one should always be modest in seeking knowledge and respectful of the teacher. This humility, both intellectual and interpersonal, was one of the key attitudes embraced by the participants who regarded themselves as always in need of learning and improving:

> [28] *The sea of learning has no boundary.* ***No matter how knowledgeable you are, you are still in need of improving.*** *Knowledge is infinite. […]* ***We came here to learn from others*** *so that you (we) can improve.* (M5A)

To a great extent, modesty or humility was taken as a defining characteristic of a student:

> [29] *You are a student and your duty is to* ***study humbly*** *and constantly…* (F2A).

F2 used phrase '*xuxin xuexi'* (虚心学习, literal translation is 'to learn with an empty heart', meaning 'to learn from others with modesty and humility'). Chinese sayings or

admonitions against complacency are numerous, which serve as effective tools in socialization practice. Several participants recalled how their self-confidence was cruelly crushed in their early schooling and admitted that in China the teacher believed in *cuozhe jiaoyu* (挫折教育, 'setback education', aiming at fostering strengths of characters and strong willpower to overcome future difficulties), taking the keen edge off the spirit of the student in order to temper the willpower and guard against self-inflation. 'Poor students have no capital of confidence', as F2 said. Perhaps, because the line between 'confident' and 'conceited' is hard to draw, those who show confidence overtly are likely to be frowned upon unless they are the top students and do come up with brilliant ideas in the class. Furthermore, all the participants believe that Chinese teachers like docile students, and to project a good impression to the teacher is very important. So, be respectful, be modest, and be humble are the basic characteristics of a good student in China; inquisitiveness, curiosity are second important. Speaking from her own experience, F1 said that inquisitive and assertive students are considered nuisances in Chinese class (F1B).

Respectfulness was perceived to be the proper attitude towards learning and the teacher, and this respect was also linked to the traditional notion of 'to respect knowledge', 'to respect the seniors', 'to respect antiquity', and was expected to reciprocal. As F2 said,

> [30] *We were* ***brought up to be respectful of the elders, parents, teachers,*** *etc. That is our national virtue. Of course,* ***the teacher should also respect students****.* (F2A)

So humility and respectfulness seem to originate from two notions. One is that learning itself is endless, so one should learn insatiately with 'an empty heart' and never stop; the other is from traditional value on the teacher's authority status, which demands humbleness and respect of the student. The mutual respect between teacher and student is emphasized in modern education in China, however, that does not mean the institutional authority status of the teacher is weakened.

From various stories the participants told about their learning experiences in their

home schools or universities, I could feel that they believed learning took place in an interpersonal relationship. They emphasized the affinity and harmony between the teacher and the student in successful learning. For example, several participants said that their likes or dislikes of a subject and the efforts spent on it, to a large extent, depended on their likes or dislikes of the teacher who taught that subject. As F1 said,

> [31] *Seeking earning is also a kind of 'yuanfen'* (缘份, a superstitious concept, meaning a predestined relationship or the lucky lot by which people are brought together—my comment). *It is a life-fortunate thing to meet* ***a congenial teacher***. (F1FN-Dec 30-2005)

M6 also emphasized the importance of choosing the right supervisor to guide one's research:

> [32] *Of course to whom you* ***go apprentice*** *will make a huge difference. The* ***masters*** *vary in power and skill and their* ***disciples*** *will naturally come out different*. (M6FN-Feb-2006)

In terms of teaching and learning, the participants would like to use the terms analogous to master-disciple as in martial arts[22], which emphasize sects or schools and also the bonding relationship between the master and the disciple.

Paradoxically, though the participants were very teacher-reliant in their high expectation of the teacher, they were ready to take responsibility for their own learning. The popular saying recurring in their daily speech was 'The master initiates the apprentices, but their skills depends on their own efforts'('师傅领进门，修行在个人'). The strong belief in attainability through efforts made the participants attribute their failure more to themselves, i.e. '*bu yong gong*' (不用功, 'not making enough efforts') than to other external factors.

The findings of this section about humility and respectfulness conform to previous research results on Chinese learners' characteristics (Lee, 1996; Li, 2002; 2003; Tweed and Lehman, 2002), but relating them to Chinese students' passivity and

[22] See Su's (2008) Metaphors in English Learning in *Intercultural Communication Studies* 17 (1). The author found that one of the prevailing conceptual metaphor of English learning among Chinese students is practicing martial arts.

teachers' authoritarianism may be far-fetched. The participants' views on the teacher-student relationship in this study lend support to the observations (Biggs, 1996a; Ho, 2001; Scollon & Wong-Scollon, 1994) that teachers were respected for being able to exercise authority in formal learning setting as well as having an affectionate relationship with students in daily life: i.e. 'Asian concepts of authority are set within a context of the part-whole relations of Confucian thought' (Scollon & Wong-Scollon, 1994: 21), which is ascribed and accepted by all parties concerned.

(3) *yong xin*: Reflective learning

The participants agreed that learning and thinking were inseparable. Some of them referred their beliefs to Confucian saying 'Seeking knowledge without thinking is labour lost; thinking without seeking knowledge is perilous' ('学而不思则惘，思而不学则殆', *Analects* II: 15). However, when they talked about how they reflected on their learning, they would more often focus on metacognitive strategies in learning than on cognitive approach to the meaning of what was learnt. For example, they kept emphasizing *yong xin* xuexi, (用心学习, 'to use your heart/mind to learn'), meaning 'putting one's heart in one's studies'.

> [33] ***I believe successful learners must be very yong xin (reflective), good at discovering things****; they know their shortcomings and have consciousness to learn from others and make up for what one is lacking.* (M5FN-Nov 20-2005)

In fact, the participants' reflective learning seemed metacognitive in nature, for they were more reflective on the aspects of engaging with the learning-related activities, i.e. 'cue-seeking', 'be observant', and 'monitoring one's progress or diagnosing one's problems', etc.

Closely related to *yongxin, zhuanxin xuexi* (专心学习, to concentrate one's heart on the object of learning), meaning to study with consistent resolve and dedication, was another desirable learning behaviour, emphasized by the participants:

[34] ***Learning entails concentration.*** *There are always distractions, so you must have strong will power, not be affected by the disruptive factors, such as emotional issues, social activities, even financial problem.* (M7FN April-2006)

In summary, how to obtain knowledge and what are the appropriate manners of and attitudes toward learning constitute an essential aspect of the participants' conceptions of learning. Efforts, *ku xin (苦心)*, humility, *xu xin(虚心)* and reflection, *yong xin (用心)*, are the essential ingredients of learning behaviour. In the participants' mind, learning is not fun, but a difficult journey, demanding diligence, willpower, perseverance, concentration and endurance of hardships. They also believe that efforts and diligence can compensate the inadequacy of abilities. In other words, one's abilities, like competences, are acquired, not born with. They also emphasize reflection or *'yong xin si kao'* (用心思考，meaning 'to use one's heart to think') in one's studies to deepen one's understanding, though not necessarily to challenge the established knowledge. In fact, their discourse about reflection is, to much extent, on metacognitive level, i.e. monitoring one's learning behaviour. To some extent, the belief that learning should be engaged with the attitude of humility and introspectiveness is a core belief in Chinese learning culture and transfers well across cultures. In other words, these social-affective aspects of learning beliefs are fundamental features of Chinese students and continue to be their valuable cultural resources when studying in a new learning culture.

The participants' learning beliefs in efforts confirm the statement made by other researchers in the field that learning in Chinese tradition is rarely thought of as a fun activity but rather as a disciplined activity that presents challenges and difficulties, even an 'ordeal' for developing one's character (Chao, 1996; Lee, 1996; Li, 2001).

The participants in this study show a dialectical understanding of the relationship between ability and effort. They believe that working hard will not only lead to academic success, but also increase one's ability. High innate ability or smartness may make one learn quickly, but the ultimate outcome is achieved through effort. Their

strong beliefs in the role of efforts and practice in successful learning confirm the depiction about Chinese learners from previous research (Lee, 1996; Li, 2003; Salili, 1996; Tweed and Lehman, 2002).

These findings are consistent with the research results about the attribution pattern of Chinese learners, who tend to make external attributions for successes and internal attributions for failures (Bond, Leung, & Wan, 1982; Crittenden, 1991; Salili, 1995). This means they would like to attribute their success to the teacher or other external factors and their failures to their own problems and is in line with their modest and respectful learning conceptions as well. Humility or modesty is a key attitude toward learning in the Confucian model (Lee, 1996; Li, 2001, 2002; Tu, 1979). The participants share this humility norm and regard people as always in need of improving themselves in learning. This humility comes not only from the respectfulness of the teacher's authority status, but also from the conception that knowledge is boundless, which defies complacency. Therefore, Chinese students' humility means both intellectual humility and interpersonal humility and presents itself throughout the whole process of learning.

However, unlike Lee's (1996) description of Chinese learners, the participants in this study do not give much emphasis to being reflective on what one has learnt as long as they have understood what has been taught. Although they do mention 'thinking' when talking about learning, it is much in the sense of metacognitive reflection on their learning attitude, behaviour, or strategies, rather than cognitive reflection on the contents of what has been learnt.

C. Why-dimension: Purposes of Learning

(1) Access to desired career and social status

The instrumental orientation of learning was common among the participants and manifested in their expectation of studying abroad. By 'instrumental', I mean the participant prioritised their vocational concern and took the degree award as the

stepping stone to the desired vocation or an access to his or her future material benefits and upward social mobility. For example, M3 was from a prestigious university in Beijing and seeking '*gao qi dian*' (高起点，a high starting point) for his future solicitor career.

> [35] ***I just want to finish my education as soon as possible***. *People say only 20% of what you learned in school would be useful in your future work.* ***So papers (degree) are only the 'knocker' (qiaomenzhuan 敲门砖,* literal meaning is the brick used to knock at the door-my comment*). It only entitles you to pass the threshold of this field***. *You learn from practice. You are learning while doing. Textbook knowledge is hard to put into practice.* (M3A)

With the inflation of certificates and degrees in the employment market, Master degree is the minimum for entering most prestigious companies in big cities in China. Initially, the participants also tended to think that the major they chose in the university was their future career as well. So, to some extent, they were learning for their future occupation; though they did not quite believe their academic achievements in the university could guarantee their career success, the certificate was the stepping-stone to it.

> [36] ***Learning means to be proficient in a particular line, to be specialized in one field.*** *If you study physics, then physics is your 'rice bowl'* [a metaphor in Chinese, meaning one's occupation or profession by which one makes a living—my comment]. *To a law student, degree certificate is his/her license to practice* (M5FN Nov. 11-2005).

To instrumentalists, learning was always associated with changes in outward conditions: a desired job, wealth, fame, and upward social mobility. In Chinese society, education has been a form of investment into one's future to acquire human capital. Studying abroad costs a fortune to most students and their family, so it is quite justified for them to hope that their investment will pay off in the short term. Therefore, it is the Business School of UK universities that attracts the largest number of Chinese students to do MBA or Finance, because the expertise in these areas is

badly needed in China, and so they can easily secure a well-paid job when they are back home. M1 was one of them following this trend. M1 frankly claimed that his life aspiration was 'to become a millionaire or even a billionaire' (M1C) and, according to him, in order to realize his life ideal, 'it was a necessity to have a good background', by which he meant 'to have both good educational background and working/professional background in your CV' (M1FN Dec-12-2005).

The participants from other than the business school expressed both intrinsic academic interest in their subject matter and the value in learning itself. Having fully acknowledged that learning led to wealth and fame, F2 pointed out that these gains were somehow the by-products of human beings' higher attempts:

> [37] ***Receiving education has been a road to fame and wealth, to governmental officialdom***. *But learning, in the first place, is human beings'* ***spiritual aspiration.*** *I do not deny that nowadays people are getting more and more practical* (F2FN-Oct 25-2005).

From either spiritual or pragmatic motivation, most participants attached great importance to academic achievement. In other words, despite the instrumental motivation in learning, they thought highly of academic achievement, which was taken as an indicator of their intellectual power and confidence boost mechanism. One of the reasons might lie in that they tended to think there was a correlation between what one could achieve externally and one's inner personal growth and self-worth, as elaborated by Taiwanese M7:

> [38] *To learn is to learn well, no matter what you learn. The score you get represents your achievement and proficiency.* ***When you learn well, you'll naturally feel confident in yourself.****[..] From not knowing to knowing is your own growth.* ***I tend to believe that your academic achievement is also the manifestation of your competence/abilities***. (M7FN Jan-05-2006)

But the participants from Mainland China did not think academic achievements could accurately reflect the student' real competences. This discrepancy might result from

the different assessment modes that the participants experienced.

(2) Improve oneself as a person: self-perfection

The participants conceived of learning as a process of personal development leading to self-perfection, the ultimate purpose of learning. To unpack the concept of 'self-perfection', the participants would use modern terms and values to illustrate its components rather than stick to the narrow moral core of this Confucian concept.

a. to improve suzhi (素质)

To improve *suzhi* (素质) is the pet phrase or a slogan in the mouth of both educators and the students themselves in China. However, the concept is still less defined after more than a decade since Chinese State Council advocated '*suzhi* education' in 1991[23]. The main rationale behind this initiative is to divert or check the tendency of putting undue emphasis on academic achievements and rat-race in entrance examination. The goal of *'suzhi* education' is to produce talents of all-round development, not only in intellectual aspects, but also in moral, physical, and aesthetic aspects. Since the term *suzhi* was a much-emphasized learning outcome through their whole schooling and university life, it came out easily of their mouth when the mainland participants were asked about the purpose of learning. However, it was not that easy for them to unpack the term and identify the attributes meant by the term. Nonetheless, most participants could name the following elements: knowledge, including subject knowledge and general knowledge; skills, mainly about vocational skills; ability and competence, including communicative competence, conducting oneself appropriately in society, solving problems in a calm manner, etc. They made a special point of psychological 素质 (*xinli suzhi*), which, according to them, included 'resilience', 'willpower', 'perseverance', 'calmness', and other qualities entailed when a person was facing a difficult or emergent situation.

***b. 'xue zuo ren'* (学做人，learn how to make/become a person)**

[23] Chinese State Council issued resolution to call on educational sectors to implement *sushi* education: '实施素质教育就是要造就'有理想、有道德、有文化、守纪律'的德、智、体、美全面发展的社会主义事业建设者和接班人'。

Participants tended to see learning lead to a change of both mind and behaviour, besides outward life conditions. Although the instrumental orientation was apparent in their conception of learning, the ultimate purpose of learning was person-oriented, i.e. to achieve self-perfection. Taiwanese participants would like to use 'whole person' education (*quanren jiaoyu*, 全人教育) to indicate this educational purpose. The conception of learning as a means to improve oneself as a person was embraced by all the participants, however, their interpretation of change as person was more focused on behavioral change in the moral domain than in intellectual or cognitive aspects.

> [39] *Education is dealing with people.* ***The fundamental function of education is to cultivate people, so the ultimate learning outcome should be a cultivated person.*** (F1B)

According to their understanding, a cultivated person should possess the fundamental desirable qualities in three dimensions: knowledge and competences, good manners and behaviour, and lofty values and moral standard.

These conceptions of learning correspond with their conceptions of teaching, which foregrounds a holistic view of teaching that teachers do not only impart knowledge and skills but also cultivate the person (*jiaoshu yuren*, 教书育人). This moral dimension emphasises the development of students' correct outlook on world, wholesome values, and good conduct inside and outside the classroom so that the students will behave with the designated role in socially acceptable ways.

(3) Contribute to Society

According to Confucianism, 'to cultivate oneself, then regulate the family, then govern the state, and finally lead the world into peace' was the ultimate purposes of learning (*The Great Learning*, IV). And this conception was prevalent among the participants as well. The following account made this vocational aim quite clear:

> [40] *Studying law is related to my life ideal. I wanted to study law as early as I was in primary school. Even at that time I wanted to study abroad. I am an idealized person, and had a blueprint for my future life when I was quite young. In fact, I study law because I want*

to go in for politics. […] ***This ideal is derived from Confucianism***. ***We are educated to make contributions for society and people.*** *I like reading ancient Chinese classics. I hope to take the road of politics to make our country better. That is it. The reason why I study law is that almost all the politicians in Taiwan are Law majors. You will find that is the case not only in Taiwan, everywhere in the world. That is why I chose Law as my major.* (F5A)

F5 was set on going in for politics, and studying law was her access to this career. We see here F5 adopted a very conscious and planned instrumental approach, arguably even stronger than previous ones but supported it with the Confucian ideal. She unequivocally identified with Confucian educational ideology, '*xue er you zi shi*'(学而优则仕), which means when students find that they can do well in their studies, then they can take office. In other words, learning is the way to officialdom, only a means to an end, as she further claimed:

[41] *Talking about my nature,* ***I don't think I am intrinsically interested in any discipline***. *But as long as I choose a subject I will do as I am expected. That doesn't mean that I am not interested in Law; I am fairly interested in it, but I have other interests as well. I am good at math and other science subjects, for example, I am interested in accounting, medicine as well. Choosing Law as my major is my personal ideal and I will do it in a down-to-earth manner*. (F5A)

Here, we see studying law is not related to her intrinsic personal interest, but to her life aspiration, to contribute to society, which is also an intrinsic goal (Sheldon, et al., 2004). Studying Law is a means to an end, the access to her future political life, though an instrument in certain sense, which is not serving her own personal interests, but the common good of her country and its/her people.

In fact, the conception of 'making contribution to society' was closely related to the conception of 'improving oneself as a person'. If one has cultivated him/herself to achieve self-perfection, he or she should strive to govern the state and work for the good of people. This notion was summarized in the phrase 'sagehood within and king without' (*nei sheng wai wang*, 内圣外王, Chang, 1976:293; Lee, 1996: 37) and learning was seen as the means to this end.

Some of the participants found ‘to contribute to society’ high-sounding, and asserted that ‘the realization of personal worth itself is one’s contribution to society’ (M1B, M3B). More than half of the participants articulated that ‘learning will make a useful person for society’. In fact, the old national mentality of ‘to learn the advanced technology from foreign nations with the purpose to contain/control/conquer them’ (师夷长技以制夷, a Chinese saying) was not uncommon among these young people. For instance, M2 said, ‘Not to exaggerate, in the area of Finance, we far lag behind Western countries, maybe a decade or even two decades, but we are learning from them and we are learning fast, so we can overtake them sooner or later’ (M2A).

In short, both instrumental and personal orientations are working in their conceptions of learning. It might seem contradictory that aspiration for outward benefits sits comfortably with the ideal for internal personal growth, but the participants have integrated these two aspects in their inherited learning conceptions and are looking forward to double gains in their coming overseas studies.

We can see that there is not much overlap between the results of this study and the established learning conceptions system from previous phenomenographic research. Though the most sophisticated conception in Marton *et al.*’s (1993a) list, i.e. ‘change as a person’, does show an existential dimension and sounds similar to the participants’ conception ‘to improve oneself as a person’, these two conceptions, in fact, put emphasis on completely different aspects. To Chinese students, as we saw above, ‘improving oneself as a person’ refers to a change of both mind and behaviour, more focused on the moral domain than on cognitive aspects. As Marton, *et al.* (1993a) interpreted, Conception F, ‘change as a person’, ‘provides an explanation for how studying books can change one’s way of seeing phenomena in the world around: through learning the person changes, hence phenomena will appear differently to that person’ (ibid: 298). This change is further explained as ‘the experience of a transition from having been the object of events (things happened to one) to becoming the agent of events (one makes them happen or at least has a full grasp of why they happen)’

(ibid: 298). So we can see that Marton *et al.*'s 'change as a person' is still in the cognitive domain, while the participants' conception of 'improving as a person' implies enhancement in moral standing, therefore, it has more existential meaning.

5.3 Summary and Interim Discussion

Learning is a multilayered concept after all. The analysis of the data showed three dimensions existing in the participants' conceptions of learning: What-dimension, How-dimension, and Why-dimension. These three aspects are integrated and constitute the system of Chinese students' conceptions of learning.

The emphasis on knowledge accumulation and transmission is deep rooted in the participants' conceptions of learning. In their mind, knowledge, especially subject knowledge, is a systematic structure, like a pyramid, made up of discrete entities, and the student is supposed to be guided by the teacher to climb up, step by step, to scale the heights. Apart from accumulating knowledge, to master skills, both professional and social, and to develop abilities and competences are deemed equally important.

To the participants, learning also means to engage one's mind as well as one's heart and to be prepared to invest time and effort and endure pains and hardships. All the participants share the dialectical and interactive view of ability and efforts, with the latter as an essential factor in academic success. This emphasis on personal effort is rooted in their belief in human malleability and improvability. Consistent with the cultural values on modesty, learning implies the spirit of intellectual humility and respectfulness. Effortful learning and respectful learning are taken as the defining features of a student who is worth teaching. It seems a paradox that the participants are very teacher-dependent in their conceptions of relationship between teaching and learning, but they tend to attribute their academic failure to no other external factors than themselves. On the whole, the participants attached great emphasis to 'learning virtues' (Li, 2006: 485), the desirable internal qualities (not intellectual or cognitive abilities) of a learner, and thought highly of a sense of agency and achievement in

learning.

Though the instrumental orientation of learning is explicitly expressed, it is only taken as a means to a moral end. The participants believe that learning brings about mobility of social status outward and, simultaneously, self-improvement inward. The Confucian ultimate learning outcome 'sagehood within and king outside', though sound old-fashioned, is generally endorsed, but formulated in varied ways among the participants. Generally speaking, their purpose or goals of learning were more personally-oriented than socially-oriented.

In the following part of this section, I shall discuss these findings via comparing with those from existing research on Chinese culture of learning and argue for the *emic* approach to cultures of learning which were introduced in Chapter 4.

The conclusion drawn from the phenmenographic studies about the cultural influences on learning conceptions of non-Western learners is 'the conceptions of learning described originally for Western countries are recognizable elsewhere' (Mugler & Landbeck, 1997: 230). In this study, all the constructs in Marton *et al.*'s (1993a), except Conception D, 'see things in a different way', have appeared in the first round of data set, but the meanings and values attached to these constructs are not the same. In other words, the differences may not be just in degree, but also in kind. For instance, 'memorization' is used by the participants to refer to both the action of 'committing to memory' and the product of this action, i.e. retention of knowledge. In fact, however important memorization is in the process of learning, Chinese students do not consider memorization alone as an independent or valid conception of learning.

Marton *et al.*'s (1993a) characterization of the conceptions of learning encompasses two main component parts: a way of seeing *what* is learned and a way of seeing *how* it is learned. But to Chinese learners, there is always a *why* dimension when they conceptualise their learning. This external horizon of learning has seldom been mentioned in the research conducted in the West.

In Marton *et al.*'s (1993a) hierarchical structure of learning conceptions the first three make an unsophisticated group and the last three the sophisticated one. But to the participants in this study, these three constructs of conceptions are not hierarchically exclusive but coexist, with equal value, in their mind. In other words, both the lower level and the higher level of conceptions are present simultaneously in their conceptions for their own rights. In Marton *et al.*'s framework, sophisticated conceptions of learning are taken as atypical among university students, but in this study, the transformative conceptions of learning, such as changes as a person, are common to Chinese students.

Comparing and contrasting with phenomenographic research results, the participants' learning conceptions in this study manifest the following distinct characteristics:

1. Knowledge is highly valued; accumulating knowledge is essential to learning and to self-perfection.
2. Memorization and understanding are not separate conceptions, but interlocked in dealing with knowledge.
3. Understanding is a multilayered word, including '*mingbai*'明白, *dong*, 懂, and *lijie* 理解.
4. Learning is an orderly process, from surface to deep;
5. Learning entails proper attitudes and appropriate manners towards knowledge.
6. Learning and teaching are in unison; the student and the teacher are in an interdependent relationship.
7. Learning entails changes in both inward (self-perfection) and outward conditions, i.e. social mobility.
8. Learning is not just a cognitive activity; it has a moral dimension.

This study supports Brownlee *et al.*'s (2002) holistic conceptualization of epistemological beliefs—beliefs about knowing and beliefs about learning are inseparable. In the meanwhile, the semantic analysis of the key constructs cautions against the temptation to take them as equivalents in different languages and assign them universal values. The participants seemed to believe that knowledge is relatively certain, imparted from an omniscient authority, which demands respect or humility

from the learner. However, the high value accorded to the term 'knowledge' by the Chinese students renders the connotation of this concept maybe not the same as the English word 'knowledge'. In the participants' mind, knowledge is not just an existing body of information, but a vehicle for self-worth, indispensible in one's life. In fact, in their belief of 'knowledge changes one's fate', 'knowledge' is metaphorically equal to education or learning itself. In addition, these Chinese students neither believe in quick learning nor the ability to learn is innate, therefore, they cannot be easily categorized as surface/unsophisticated or deep/sophisticated learners by the existing Western conceptual framework.

Apparently, the participants' conceptions in this study, unlike Marton *et al.*'s cognitive-focused hierarchy, are much more comprehensive in dimensions and make it unrealistic and unjustifiable to delimit the conceptions of learning to the cognitive aspects only. Since conceptions of learning, as a tacit metaphysical system, are much influenced by the given sociocultural practices, with direct attention to certain aspects of the phenomenon at the expense of others, there must exist some cultural characteristics in students' conceptions of learning.

The study provides support for the distinction between Chinese 'person orientation' or 'virtue orientation'[24] and American 'mind orientation' in terms of cultural models of conceptions of learning (Li, 2001, 2002, 2003). In Li's study, American students tend to emphasize internal learner characteristics including cognitive skill, intelligence, and abilities on the one hand, and thinking, communicating, and active engagement on the other. Motivational factors such as interest, curiosity, willingness, and commitment are also a part of the internal make-up of a person that serves to facilitate the learning process; whereas to Chinese, learning includes not only the externally existing body of knowledge but also tacit social and moral knowing. This means knowing the world is not the ultimate purpose. Moreover, the study also shows Chinese students'

[24] As a critique to Tweed and Lehman's (2002: 91) assertion that Confucius' purpose of learning was 'pragmatic', Li reiterated that the terms *ren* 仁 (benevolence) and *junzi* 君子 (good gentleman) occur 111 and 104 times respectively across 55 pages of Confucius Analects (2003: 146).

instrumental orientation in learning. The participants endorse utilitarian benefits as part of their motivation for learning, but, to them, learning purposes do not end there. This confirms the previous research results that Chinese learners seek learning to cultivate themselves as a whole person in the moral domain toward self-perfection (Lee, 1996; Li, 2001, 2002, 2003; Yu, 1996).

In summary, the cognitive-oriented constructs developed from the Western setting could not precisely or adequately describe Chinese students' comprehensive system of conceptions of learning. As a tacit metaphysical field, affective, behavioural and moral dimensions of conceptions of learning have not received due attention in earlier research. Moreover, the meanings of the same construct used in describing the students' conceptions of learning may be conceived and valued differently, which foregrounds the importance of an open and *emic* design to reveal the complexities about Chinese learners' beliefs system. In general, the findings of this study echo the previous research results on the Chinese learner and support the claim that there exist certain Chinese cultural inherited characteristics in the participants' conceptions of learning, and that the participants are more personally oriented and showed strong sense of agency in this specific domain.

Chapter 6 Initial Perceptions of British Learning Culture and Adjustments

6.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to answer the research questions: How do Chinese students perceive the British learning culture? And how do they adjust themselves in order to achieve a fit between their inherited culture of learning and the new learning culture? The function of the chapter is to show the process of adjustment which leads from the set of beliefs inherited and brought with them as analysed in chapter 5 to the new beliefs analysed in Chapter 7.

Cultural influences on people's perceptions have been analysed in the studies of anthropology and cross-cultural psychology through schemas and scripts, cognitive maps, belief structures (See Chiu, 1972; Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Nisbett & Miyamoto, 2005). As an active sense-making process, human perception is not neutral or objective, but subjective and value-loaded. In other words, people from different cultural backgrounds tend to vary in the meaning given to what is perceived, and the meaning of others' behaviour is usually derived from one's own previous experience and cultural frame of reference. Theories of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) predict that people will be biased to interpret new information in a way that confirms one's own preconceptions and avoid information and interpretations which contradict prior beliefs (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Selmer & Lauring, 2009). The subjective nature of perception implies its partiality, insufficiency, or even inaccuracy, especially when a person being put in a new cultural setting loses familiar cues of interpretation and criteria of evaluation. Since the participants came with their own inherited learning conceptions, including cultural beliefs and values concerning knowledge acquisition, proper attitude towards and manner of learning, and also the ultimate purpose of learning, their initial encountering of different cultural practices about learning and teaching were likely to result in misunderstanding or even temporary 'learning shock',

the overcoming of which was a cultural learning process.

In this chapter, I shall present how the participants perceived the new learning environment, what difficulties they identified, and what coping strategies they adopted in response to the new learning challenges, with special attention to the participants' constant adjustment during the dynamic process of the interaction of the two cultural beliefs about teaching and learning practices.

As argued in Chapter 2, Anderson's (1994) cross-cultural adjustment model was suitable to describe first-year intercultural experience and therefore, used in this study to structure the sequence of the data, i.e. Cultural Encounter—Obstacles—Response Generation—Overcoming. In fact, few participants in this study felt that they had confidently overcome all the obstacles and within the duration of the study, there seemed not to be sufficient evidence to single out this phase. Moreover, as Anderson (1994) contends, the adjustment process is 'cyclical, continuous, and interactive' (Anderson, 1994: 307), it can never be completely accomplished, so I use Adjustment (Section 6.3) to capture this dynamic process of response generation and overcoming (or not).

6.2 Cultural Encounter: Learning Shock?

Despite psychological preparedness for the new learning experience as mentioned in the introductory chapter, most participants reported certain symptoms of what Ballard and Clanchy termed 'learning shock' (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997: 28) or 'study shock' (Burns, 1991), which, in this study, is understood as a cultural shock in the learning environment, arising out of any mismatch or conflicts between new modes of teaching and learning and one's inherited schemata or beliefs system about teaching and learning. However, the degree of emotional disturbance varied from person to person via personal factors, including expectations, previous experiences and preparation before departure. Before examining the areas where learning shocks arose, I would present the participants' initial perceptions towards what they encountered in the first

place.

When commencing their study in the British learning environment, the participants felt more or less a sense of loss or disorientation, followed by 'uncertainty' and even 'fear'. This was exemplified in F4's account:

> [1] *From primary school on, I have been a good student, if not topping the class…. But, suddenly, you (I) found yourself (myself) sitting in the class like 'a dumb duck listening to the rumbling of the thunder'* (a Chinese phrase, meaning 'listening but not understanding anything'—my comment), *and* ***I got very scared; your (my) confidence is gone****…* (F4A).

The sudden drop from a high achiever to 'a dumb duck' deprived F4 of her confidence and generated a feeling of fear, which had much to do with whether she could graduate with the degree, which had been her main objective for studying in the UK. F4 told me that her family was not rich and she made her own decision to study in the UK with the money her parents saved for her dowry. To most Chinese students, 'to graduate with the degree' was given the priority on their sojourning agenda. 'England is an expensive destination for international students (UKCOSA, 2004), so, given the cost and the Chinese 'face', fear of failure is very common among Chinese international students (Ryan, 2005; Barker, 1997).

Similarly, F2 got 7.0 in her IELTS score but she was not accustomed to 'the talking class', which made her uneasy and felt being 'tortured' (*jian ao*, 煎熬) :

> [2] *Those students kept talking and talking. One was not finished, and another started talking again.* ***I was like sitting on a mattress of needles (*****meaning '*****on pins and needles'*****, nervous and uneasy)… very jian'ao*** (煎熬, meaning 'torturing'—my comment), *wishing the class was over as soon as possible.* (F2A)

Like F2, F1 couldn't bear the intensive classes which lasted from morning to evening at weekends:

> [3] *All the modules fall on weekends, very intensive, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Lectures were followed by seminars, and* ***I couldn't speak a single word in class. I was almost in a***

state of collapse. (F1A).

Here, 'a state of collapse' meant both physical or mental fatigue and an emotional discomfort and disequilibrium, resulting not only from long hours of intensive lectures or seminars, but also lack of the discipline knowledge, for, as I mentioned before, these two students' Bachelor degrees were in other disciplines, accounting and Chinese studies, respectively. However, they tended to attribute their disorientation to British way of teaching and learning more than other personal factors.

F6 used a popular term '*zhua kuang*'(抓狂, meaning 'getting crazy, perhaps due to failing to catch or hold something'), coined recently by the young people in China, to express her disoriented state, however, it did not mean that she had lost control of herself, for this state was believed to be temporary and passing:

> [4] *Sometimes it really makes you feel very '**zhua kuang',** **and I would tell myself, 'Calm down, calm down. All will be fine after a while'.** As long as you can survive the first few months, everything will be fine. […]* ***You must control your mood,*** *for once you are trapped into depression, it is difficult to get out of it.* (F6FN-Oct 15-05)

Like F6, most of the participants were fully aware of their disequilibrium state and consciously guarded against the destructive feelings and mood brought about by the new experience. They would exercise 'self-talk' or other self-control methods (Section 6.4 will present their coping strategies in detail). Moreover, they seemed to believe in their self-efficacy that all these symptoms were natural and would be overcome after a while. So, according to the participants, various symptoms of stress and disequilibrium were not totally negative emotional forces if kept under control.

Though male participants might report less emotional symptoms, it did not mean they experienced less. As M3 said,

> [5] *Stress is inevitable. This is a new environment after all.* ***You know you will go through this before you come. It is a good test.*** *[…] Parents sent you abroad with the hope that you can grow up. You know studying abroad is called 'yang cha dui'* (洋插队, meaning 'to endure

hardships and pains at abroad'--my comment*). I share with my parents only good news, no bad news, such as maladaptation, unable to follow the lecturer, no appetite, insomnia, for I don't want them to worry about me too much.* ***Anyway, it will be OK after a while***. (M3A)

In Chinese tradition of learning, suffering is part of personal cultivation (Tu, 1993), and the capacity for bearing pains is essential for a person's developing into maturity. Though being the only child in an affluent family, M3 was prepared to 'take pains and endure hardships' in order to grow up. It seemed that studying abroad was deliberately chosen as a way to maturity and independence. The tension between loss of equilibrium and regaining became the important motivation to improve and advance oneself, and to overcome these emotional obstacles was taken as an inseparable part of their overseas learning.

Not all the participants experienced initial uneasiness. As a Christian, M5 said that he 'felt at home as soon as he set foot on this Christian land', though, he confessed it was a great pity that most of time he couldn't make sense of the conversations in the office where he worked with other PhD students as well as the staff, but he felt free and eager to learn new things.

In fact, participants' initial 'learning shock' was more or less concerned with 'language shock', arising from participants' perceived inadequate language proficiency; but after a while, this concern was apparently decreasing in intensity in their accounts. Considering the focus of this study on cultural beliefs about teaching and learning, language proficiency, though an important variable in intercultural adjustment and academic success, is not a salient object of investigation in the present research.

All the participants in this study demonstrated their awareness that the British culture of learning was very different and distant from Chinese culture of learning, and the level of acculturative stress was assumed to be higher as well. However, one thing worth pointing out was that the perceived cultural distance and initial emotional disturbances did not mean they were averse or resistant to the new learning culture.

From previous general theory about sociocultural adjustment and extensive empirical studies, the main conclusion was that the perceived similarity was the best predictor of positive attitudes and strangeness incurred negative attitudes (Brislin, 1981: 77). However, academic adjustment may be different. In this study, these participants were expecting new things from the new learning setting, not just in subject matter but also in ways of knowing and learning. In confronting the new learning culture, 'not be used to' or 'not adjusted to it yet' were the most common response among the participants, and strong desire to 'fit in' the new learning culture was explicitly expressed. These learning shocks, unlike general cultural shocks described in the literature, which were usually considered as traumatic and negative, were more taken as 'eye-openers' and challenges, and to experience the unusual practices and overcome the challenges was deemed an essential part of their intercultural learning experience and believed to bring about positive results for their future. Therefore, to the participants, the learning shocks were more 'harbinger of growth' (Gilligan, 1982: 108) than sheer acculturative stress.

Research on international students' academic adaptation has been more focused on negative experiences and maladaptation; positive experiences are given less attention. Both the 'problematic approach' (see Ballard & Clanchy, 1997), which takes shock as a disease calling for a cure, and the 'learning approach' (See Skyrme, 2005), which takes it as an opportunity to modify one's internal disposition by overcoming the negative effect of the shock, failed to report the pleasant shock perceived or experienced by the students. In this study, the participants felt quite exhilarated to encounter some 'deviant' classroom behaviours and lenient rules regarding exams, and relaxing atmosphere, as F2 exclaimed, 'I've never expected the atmosphere could be so relaxing!' (F2A). M7 experienced a pleasant surprise and felt much honoured when he was introduced as 'a colleague' by his supervisor to the visiting academics. He recalled the incident as:

[6] ***It was quite a surprise.*** *I didn't expect that.* [Int.: How did you feel?] *At first, <u>buhaoyisi</u>*

(不好意思, meaning to feel shy and a bit embarrassed); *on second thought, you (I) feel you are respected, and therefore, you should live up to that.* (M7FNJan20-06)

Participants also gave positive comment on the facilities and human-centred operation of the university, such as library, IT service. For example, Mainland participants would recall their experience of '*zhanzuo'* (占座, 'race to seize a seat' in the library everyday due to shortage of study space) and '*xideng'* regulation (熄灯--electricity is cut off after 11:30 in students' dormitories) in their home university and felt the new learning environment more delightful. These positive incidents made them feel fresh and librated and increased their sense of self-control and curiosity to explore in the new learning culture. As F3 said,

[7] *I often study in the library the whole day, from 9:00 or 10 a.m. to 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. and read everything you (I) want without feeling tired. (…)* ***And you will understand why they* (British students—my comment)** ***can learn independently***. (F3B)

Change of the learning setting led to the formation of new study habits, and new experiences of the learning setting led to better understanding the new culture of learning.

6.3 Obstacles

As defined by Anderson (1994), Obstacle is an acculturative 'stressor', which puts a person in a state of disequilibrium and exceeds the person's adjustive resources. The participants could explicitly identify the areas of obstacles, which were perceived as academic hurdles, with salient differences from their inherited Chinese learning schemata and classroom scripts (Agar, 1972; Casson, 1983), which are the knowledge a native has of how an event is intended to unfold in the normal course and how to behave to be accepted as a community member. From the analysis of Chinese students' culture of learning in Chapter 3, we may easily see their learning scripts composed of expectation of a well-structured classroom controlled by an experienced teacher who transmits the essence of knowledge effectively to the students, who are

supposed to be listening and absorbing respectfully. Deviational practices confronted in the new learning culture will be easily perceived as Obstacles.

Emerging from a thematic analysis and quantitative distribution (see the chart of Data Analysis in Appendix III), the Obstacles were subsumed into the following four categories: (1) Independent learning; (2) Verbal participation; (3) Critical learning; and (4) Teacher-Student role relations. However, their initial accounts of what they thought of these characteristics of the British teaching and learning culture revealed much variation of understanding of the norms of learning in the new learning culture.

6.3.1 Independent Learning: A Troublesome Term?

Variations in understanding of 'independent learning' ('独立学习')

Quantitatively speaking, the first and the most frequently mentioned obstacle by the participants was '独立学习'('independent learning'), advocated and practiced in the British learning culture. To most participants, the term 'independent learning' was not new at all, but their understandings of this term varied, based on their own conceptual schemata.

a. 'study alone' and 'self-study' (自习)

Some participants took 'independent learning' simply as 'study alone', 'self-study', or 'self-teach'. For instance, M3 said, 'You are left alone. Just learn by yourself'. (M3A)

> *'You should 'dip' yourself in the library' ('泡图书馆')* (M2FN).

To 'dip oneself in some place' is a new expression in Chinese, meaning spending much time or immersing oneself in a certain place.

b. 'free' and 'relaxing'

Both M1 and M5 associated 'learning autonomy' with 'relaxing oneself', 'free of management of the teacher'. M5 was very delighted at this mode of conducting his PhD project:

[8] ***I have much freedom here**, like when I arrived, I went to see my professor and asked him when we would start and he said 'you can start whenever you are ready'. It is like that it is me who decides when to start. Our team are very free. You can plan your holiday and take a holiday **without the need of getting the permission** from the department. Like last week, a guy on our team went to France to go skiing. He simply went skiing to enjoy himself, and that is ok. **Everybody enjoys much freedom here**. It is not like in Taiwan, since I once worked in a research institute in Taiwan, and if the boss was at work, nobody dare leave early. Here it is different. **The professor won't keep an eye on you**.* (M5A)

In M5's account, he called his supervisor 'boss' in Taiwan, and 'professor' in England. He said in Taiwan, the PhD students 'are just like the boss's (supervisor's) hand, do as you are told what he has no time to do himself' (M5A). The term 'boss', obviously, implied the supervisor's high status and controlling authority, which demanded obedience and less autonomy from the PhD students. M5 constantly compared what he experienced here with his previous Masters experiences in Taiwan and indulged himself in this newly acquired freedom by frequently visiting his girlfriend who was studying in Germany at that time.

c. 'conscientiously learn' (自觉学习)

In Chapter 3, we have seen that one trait that has been cultivated among Chinese learners is the conscientious attitude in learning, emphasising what Li (2001) called '*hao xue xin'* (好学心, 'mind and heart wanting to learn'), an autonomous state of learning, even without the supervision and urge of the teacher or parents. Some participants naturally associated 'independent learning' to this Chinese folk concept:

[9] *The teachers won't watch you, so you must **be wanting to learn from your heart and conscience.*** (F2A)

*Nobody will urge you; all depends on your own **initiative/self-conscientiousness.*** (F4FN Dec 05-06)

This conscientious learning is the affective dimension of learning, much emphasized

in Chinese culture of learning. It does not encourage the 'independent learning' which is divorced from teachers; instead, it emphasizes willingness in following the teacher' guidance without being pushed and spurred.

d. Independent learning implied responsibility and obligation

The participants' association of 'independent learning' with 'freedom' also acquired a sense of responsibility and obligation:

> [10] *It turns out that **I can decide on everything**. If I need something (for my experiment) I just fill out a form, and they will buy for you (me). But in Taiwan, you need a written application and do a lot of talking to persuade your boss that you need buy the instruments or materials. […] But **since you are free to do what you want, you must be more careful;** otherwise, you are wasting other's money.* (…) *They give you much freedom, because they trust you. So **you must be conscientious to do your part**. […] I find that if I don't do anything, then nothing will be accomplished. And **if I am active, then I can achieve a lot**.* (M5A)

To science PhD students, such as M5, learning meant doing, so they tended to think there was little difference in ways of 'doing' in their field in different parts of the world. They spent most of their research time doing experiments in the lab instead of taking courses in the classroom. Compared with their counterparts in Social Sciences and Humanities, they felt they had more control of their PhD studies. As for 'independent learning', M6's understanding was:

> [11] *Few people in the world are researching in this area, so **you have to be lonely**. Perhaps only your supervisor knows what you are up to. You want people to help you, **but nobody can**. **I only talk about my research with my supervisor…*** (M6FN April 20-2006).

According to M6, PhD stage of learning had to be independent, which was more a state of loneliness, as expressed in the saying 'highbrow songs find few singers (to join in the chorus)', but it was by no means independent of the supervisor.

e. ***'self-direction'***

M7 said that the main reason why he came to the UK to do his PhD was that he was fed up with the rigid system in Taiwan where he couldn't 'do things according to his own schedule':

> [12] *I found here, in our department, all the courses are open, so* ***you can decide for yourself*** *whether to take or not, you can choose the seminar or lecture you want to attend. So I think you should know what you want, what you lack, and then you go and pick up.* ***I am used to managing my own business, according to my own schedule.*** *I wouldn't like to follow other's arrangement.* (M7A)

M7's 'independent learning' emphasized not just freedom in what to learn, but also personal agency, choice, priorities, and agenda. However, again, the supervisor's role was highlighted. He strongly acknowledged the help he received from his supervisor, who respected his choice and provided tailored help for his research.

> [13] *What makes me feel good is* ***my supervisor told me that his role was a facilitator.*** *While we were talking—of course,* ***he knows much better than I do, so he always knew what material I should read.*** *[…]* ***He never made decision for me. I made all decisions myself.*** *Then he would help me analyze […]. So in this respect, my supervisor is great.* ***He made it clear what I need do, and gave me much freedom to make my own decision. I think it is a training process for independent research.*** *If I do as told by my supervisor, I am afraid I could not think in this way.* (M7A)

M7 made it clear that the supervisor should help his/her student to be independent in learning by providing both freedom and advice; 'to be independent in learning' was a training process. In other words, students need to be facilitated to be independent in their learning, and the process is an interdependent one.

From various comments on 'independent learning', we can see that the participants would interpret it within their own frames of reference, not necessarily correspondent with the intended meaning in the British learning culture. The partial understanding of this learning mode would result in their either indignant or hilarious response to it.

However, as we will see in Chapter 6, new experiences would render it new understanding and interpretations, expanding the participants' existent cultural reference frame.

The following table is a summary of the participants' understandings of what 'independent learning' means:

a. *'self-study'/self-teach* (competence in cognitive sense)

b. *'study alone/private study'* (manner, library learning)

c. *'independent learning'* (psychological sense, emphasizes mental dispositions and capacities)

d. *'learner independence'* (learning outcome, independence from the teacher, empowerment)

e. *'self-direction'* (freedom in learning, emphasis on agency, choice, priorities, personal agenda, but interdependent in nature)

f. *'study conscientiously'* (learning attitude, with will, willingness, without being supervised or urged/pushed)

g. *autonomous out of class* but not in class

Variations in response

Due to partial understanding or misunderstanding of the term, the participants made various responses as well.

For some Master students in this study, formal learning meant 'to be sitting in the classroom from Monday to Friday' (F2) and 'to be taught by the teacher' (F1); it was by no means a monodrama directed by oneself. In some departments, the modules were scheduled at weekends, which puzzled the participants as well. As F2 said,

> [14] *I couldn't believe that we only have classes at weekends,* ***like part-time adult education in China. That's not full-time education.*** *I even suspected that their degree program was not a proper one, you know, like in China, some universities fabricate certificates to make money. We really had a sense of being cheated* (F2A).

In fact, her doubts and disappointment mainly stem from the values Chinese

educational system places on the different modes of engaging a degree program. In Chinese tertiary educational system, the elite or the cream part of the student body are 'young, single, full-time students' (Turner, 2006: 38), who receive formal or systematic learning from attending subject lectures everyday from Monday to Friday. In contrast, continued education or adult education as part-time education is considered as informal learning and less valued, partly due to the compromised quality of teaching, partly to the fact that those on continued education program mostly failed to secure a placement for him/herself in the university to receive proper education when they were young. Thus, the value of the certificate for full-time and part-time education carries quite different weight in Chinese mind.

F2's perplexity and distrust echoed F1's frustration. F1 was enrolled on the same program and was also puzzled and disappointed at this mode of education in the beginning. In addition, independent learning encouraged in British learning culture was misunderstood by some participants as 'private study', 'self-study' or 'self-teach' out of class, as reflected in F1's complaints:

> [15] *To think of spending more than 7,000 pounds, I felt that we couldn't get the worth of the money. Even the American student*[25] *felt it strange. It is almost 'fangyang' (*放羊, graze the sheep, meaning a state of laissez-faire—my comment*). **If we can self-teach, why do we come here? Only by attending lectures from Mondays to Fridays, do I feel that I'm learning**.* (F1A)

F1 said these in a worried and perplexed tone. She admitted that she did not know whether MA students went to class everyday in China, but she did not think '*fang yang*'—similar to the state of 'laissez-faire self-directed learning' (Hammond and Collins, 1991: 15) was right, because she believed that without adults' or the teacher's supervision or control, students would idle about, not engaging with their studies. This finding is similar to that of previous studies that the sudden shift of responsibility makes some students 'worried, intimidated, confused' (Gu & Maley, 2008: 231).

[25] According to F1, the American student in her class was not used to this mode of learning, either. And even the American student, who had no problems in English, was quiet in class and felt puzzled about the lecture.

However, not all the participants perceived this mode of learning as problematic in the first place, but their acceptance was not necessarily based on appreciation or full understanding of this mode of learning. For example, M3 said,

> [16] *The teachers here are very* ***busy with their own research****, so* ***they can't give much time to the class****. In China, teaching is important, but here* ***research is more important a task to the university.*** (M3B)

M3 provided a sympathetic reason why less contact hours and independent learning was practised and expressed understanding with this new way of teaching and learning. He seemed to agree that the main task of university lecturers was to do research, so it was quite excusable not to be able to give much time to their teaching, though they should have taught more or it was desirable for the students to have more classes or contact hours.

Some participants accepted this way of learning in the very beginning as the appropriate mode of learning for postgraduate level. As F3 said,

> [17] *We were used to seeing the teacher everyday. Once the teacher is not around, we'll* ***feel at a loss.*** *They (British lecturers) think* ***you are a Master now,*** *so you should have had independent learning ability* (F3A).

Applied social science was a totally new discipline to F3, who chose to study it purely out of interest. So she had more difficulties than other Masters students in subject matter. In fact, the reading materials, books and articles, were too difficult for her to study independently, but she thought that it was her own problems and shouldn't bother her supervisor with that. She also said,

> [18] *Most of time, it is not because I don't know the new words; it is the meaning of the words that I can't grasp, for we don't have that meaning in Chinese.* [Interviewer: For example?] *For example, 'social inclusion', or 'social exclusion' are their common terms. Even you can literally translate them into Chinese '社会包容', '社会排斥', but what these terms refer to you (I) don't know.* ***So at this stage, nobody can help you. You have to grapple with these***

problems by yourself' (F3A).

It seemed that she had a clear awareness of the capacity of the teacher and the role of the student, i.e. what the teacher could or could not do and what responsibility the student should take in their studies. F3 did not feel seminars helpful either, because 'most of time you (I) don't understand what they are talking about'. 'You should have passed the threshold of language before you came here to study. If you haven't, the teacher can do nothing about that.' (F3A) So she did not expect to receive additional help in her studies. Though independent learning left her 'at a loss', she interpreted the rationale behind this unfamiliar practice empathetically and was willing to accept the difference and challenges. She kept insisting on 'grappling on one's own' and considered it as 'the right way to learn on this (postgraduate) level'.

So it was possible that the response of the participants was a reaction to the change to postgraduate courses as well as a reaction to new modes of teaching and learning, and that they did not recognize the change in transition to postgraduate level, attributing all their difficulties to a culturally different education system. As the data were not conclusive, this would remain an issue for further investigation.

Some Masters students said that they were told explicitly 'not to count on the teacher' on the one hand and 'not to hesitate to ask the teacher questions' on the other, so they felt quite puzzled as to when and what questions they should bring to the teacher, or rather whether to bother at all: M1 described this loss of the learning scripts as follows:

> [19] *On the first day, the teacher told us* ***'don't count on the teacher. You should learn to learn by yourselves'****. And they also said* ***'Don't hesitate to ask your questions'****. So when we've got problems****, we don't know whether we should solve them by ourselves or go to see the teacher****.* (M1A)

Being bewildered, they likely turned to other Chinese students for help in the first place instead of consulting their teachers.

In short, the affective responses to ‘independent learning’ from the participants ranged from feeling ‘not right’ or confused, such as F1, F2, F5, to being acceptant in partial understanding (M3, M5), and to accepting in willingness and confidence, such as M7. The complexities manifested by the findings about the participants’ perceptions of ‘independent learning’ confirm the existence of ‘immense variability’ among Chinese learners (Pilcher, Cortazzi, & Jin, 2006) and that along with inherited cultural schemata, a host of other personal and contextual factors were influencing the participants’ perception of new cultural ways of teaching and learning (Gu & Maley, 2008).

6.3.2 Verbal Participation

‘互动’ and ‘参与’ (‘interaction and participation’) were also the words of high frequency in the participants’ account about the new learning environment, but the meaning of ‘participation’ seemed to be only restricted to verbal participation: to raise questions in class, to speak up in group discussion, to join in group work and give presentations before the whole class. The participants understood ‘participation’ more in the sense of ‘classroom performance’ instead of a way of learning, i.e. ‘talking to learn’. Nearly all the participants felt they spoke less than their British or European classmates and tended to attribute that to both Chinese culture of learning and inadequate English proficiency in the first place. However, the analysis of their interview accounts show the factors inhabiting their verbal participation were not of culture or language alone, but contextual as well. In terms of prevalence and frequency, these factors could be categorized into: (1) inherited classroom scripts, (2) language (English) inadequacy, (3) ‘face’ concern and beyond, (4) lack of necessary background knowledge and biased curriculum (5) perceived less supportive classroom atmosphere.

(1) Inherited classroom scripts

The structure of the British class was not in accordance with the participants’ inherited

classroom scripts acquired from earlier formal learning experiences. The most frequent expressions used by the participants were 'be used to Chinese way of …' or 'be not used to' certain British form of classroom behaviour. For example, they were used to 'listening to learn' in China, but not 'talking to learn' in Britain:

> [20] *We **are used to listening to the teacher in class**. I'm scared of speaking up. That is my personality. I don't think speaking up has anything to do with how much you learn.* (F2A)

F5 took students' participation in class as 'interruptions' of the teacher's lecture, disrupting the pace of the class:

> [21] ***We are not used to interrupting or interruptions.** I feel that Eastern people think it is rude to do that. Secondly, **if you ask questions, then the pace of the whole class will be affected.*** (F5A)

According to F5, 'the pace of the class' meant the smooth progress and effective delivery of the lecture from the teacher. Discussions among the students were after-class activities, not in-class tasks. Moreover, students' questions would be better addressed privately after class as well, for asking questions in class would waste others' time:

> [22] *You can e-mail teacher your questions and get answers **without wasting others' time**. I'm for this way. The teachers here do very well. They put important questions on DUO, accessible to everybody. This is a good way, **very efficient, not wasting others' time.** This is the best way.*'(F5B)

In fact, the participants' perceptions of classroom discussion were rather ambivalent in the beginning. Generally speaking, they agreed that it could be a good way of teaching if the teacher organized well, but somehow they did not feel it was effective because the students level was not high enough to be engaged in meaningful discussion yet, as M2 said,

> [23] ***I think it is good to conduct discussions on the issues at class. But the teacher should organize it well**. The students are on various levels, and they can't give valuable comments on*

the topic, because they don't have the knowledge reserve yet. Anyway, I don't feel group discussion very helpful. […] ***The teacher's answer is also equivocal. You see the class time is very limited,*** **so** ***sometimes, I do feel it (classroom discussion) is a waste of time***. (M2A)

M2's comment seemed to partly support Woodrow and Sham's (2001) finding that Chinese students show a preference for working alone rather than in groups and place little value on peer-group discussion. But the reason why M2 considered the classroom discussion fruitless was not because of his disregard of this form of learning, but that the students lacked the necessary knowledge to engage in meaningful discussion. Moreover, M2 expected the teacher to exercise more control over the classroom discussion and provide unequivocal answer or judicial feedback.

F5 had a similar impression that classroom participation could be superficial, thoughtless:

[24] *European students just like asking questions. They would ask if they have one.* ***Some questions asked indicated they didn't read textbooks. If they had done, they wouldn't have asked those questions****. Seemingly,* ***they are active in class, but they are not necessarily good students and get good marks.*** *Of course, you can know from their questions that some students have read the book. They are really remarkable. I admire them. They are industrious students.* (F5B)

F5 appreciated 'real' questions, which should be thoughtful and could only be asked after reading the book seriously. She admitted that most Chinese students were not active in class, but that did not mean that they were not good students; likewise, actively participating in class was not an indicator of academic achievements, either.

F5's comment on the 'real questions' and 'good question' support Cortazzi and Jin's (1996) assertion that Chinese students are not passive but reflective and that Chinese students value thoughtful questions, which are typically asked after sound reflection. However, we should be careful not to interpret the data in such a way as to idealize the Chinese learners. In fact, the participants' own accounts echoed the Western

stereotype that Chinese students tend to be more passive, less participative and less creative in class compared to those from other countries:

> [25] *We **Chinese students are not good at asking questions,** because we think narrowly. It is quite obvious in class, Western students can often provide an original answer, but **Chinese students usually give a conventional answer to the teacher's question***. (M1B)

They also frankly admitted,

> [26] *We Chinese students are **less creative, quieter in class, more dependent on the teacher** and lack of independence*. (M6FN)

This self-ascription or self-stereotyping was rather common among the participants, which lends evidence to earlier research on the features of Chinese students (see Chan, 1999; Bamford *et al.*, 2002; Bamford, *et al.*, 2006). Though they knew they were expected to talk and some felt uncomfortable if the lecturer's questions were left unanswered, they also believed that '*they (*British lecturers) *know Chinese students do not like speaking up'* (M3A).

It is worth arguing that this 'mutual understanding' and British lecturers' accommodation might deprive the sojourning Chinese students of the opportunities to experience the otherness, which is, after all, one of their expectations of studying abroad.

(2) language (English) inadequacy

Language inadequacy was usually considered one of the main obstacles preventing the participants from actively participating in class. The participants in this study also admitted that in the initial period English proficiency, especially oral English, was one of the major obstacles in effective classroom participation. As F6 said,

> [27] *At beginning of our seminars, I found they had a lot of misunderstanding about China and **I was very angry and eager to correct them, but my English was not good.** I couldn't get my ideas across successfully; therefore, I couldn't convince them* (F6B).

Some participants said that they really felt oppressed or even depressed that they couldn't make themselves understood and get their brilliant ideas across, due to their poor English. Some had other concerns about their English, like their speaking pace, which was felt to be discordant with the tune of the class:

> [28] ***They spoke very fast,*** *and finished quickly with slight pauses. I really wanted to say something, but I had to organize what to say. When I had done, they'd already moved to next topic…and* ***I doubt anyone would like to hear my ideas.*** *Because when I spoke up, obviously,* ***the pace would slow down,*** *and the rhythm would be disrupted. […]* ***When I tried to speak as fast as they did, even myself didn't know what I was saying. [****…]. So I would sit down there, just be a listener*' (F1A).

Obviously, F1 had strong desire to express herself, to participate in the classroom discussion, but she was restrained by various factors, ranging from language inadequacy to perceived hostile atmosphere, and involuntarily reduced to a listener.

The following account showed although F5 was confident in the quality of her questions, she dared not speak up in class, partly due to inadequate English proficiency and partly because of being constrained by Chinese 'face' concern:

> [29] *My English is not good, and oral English is not strong, so I dare not ask in class. I'm afraid to be laughed by others, because we have a live example in our class.*[26] *If you can't speak well, other students will laugh at you. And the teacher will frown as well. After all, I have already studied law for 10 years, so, personally,* ***I think the questions I want to ask are all good questions. But I'm concerned about my English expressions, so I don't dare to ask. I don't dare to ask teacher, and I don't dare to ask other classmates either, those European students.*** *So language problems do have some effect on me.* (F5B)

[26] The 'live example' refers to an overactive Chinese student, who kept asking questions and making comments in class and incurred European students' laughter, and the teacher's frowning. For the whole year, he had become a laughing stock in their class. Her reaction to this incident was twofold: on the one hand, F5 was very angry at European students' behaviour and took it as 'European arrogance', 'their looking down upon Chinese students', and the professor's discrimination against Chinese students as well; on the other hand, she felt upset about this Chinese student's indiscreet behaviour, for he had lost 'all the Chinese people's face' in front of European students. Several other Chinese students from their class made similar comments about this hyperactive student and noticed their German professor was annoyed but did not think the professor was prejudiced against Chinese students.

Some participants were more concerned with teachers' time than their own face when asked why they did not ask questions in class:

> [30] *I don't think it has much to do with 'face', but I try not to ask questions in class, for if your English is not very fluent,* ***you are wasting others' time.*** (M3FN Feb-14-06)

Obviously, oral English proficiency seriously affected their classroom participation and performance. This is consistent with the findings of earlier research on Chinese students' class room participation (see Chalmers & Volet, 1997) that language and its nuances are a major inhibitor preventing Chinese students from contributing to classroom discussion (Mullins *et al.*, 1995), therefore attributing less verbal participation to passivity in learning is not supported (see Barker *et al.*, 1991; Ballard & Clanchy, 1991).

(3) 'face' concern and beyond

'Face' concern as a cultural value has been explored extensively in the literature on Asian students (Cortazzi & Jin, 1997; Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998; Holmes, 2004; Ouyang, 2004). Half of the cases in this present study confirmed this cultural inhibitor. But they did not take it as a good cultural characteristic but something that ought to be overcome, as M6 said,

> [31] *I do not like asking questions, just because of* ***being afraid of losing face****. I think* ***this is a common problem among all Chinese****.* (M6A)

M6 said he never asked questions during the seminars held regularly in which world-renowned professors were invited to give lectures, because asking (silly) questions at seminars ran the risk of not only losing his face but also his supervisor's face. In his words,

> [32] ***I don't want to lose my supervisor's face,*** *because my supervisor is usually there as well. He would ask questions, and I can ask him after the seminar.* (M6B)

This is based on what participants see a Master-Apprentice/Disciple bond between the

supervisor and the student in Chinese culture of learning, which would mean that students' poor performance would disgrace the teacher. But the other half of the participants said they were not restrained to ask questions or even engage in fierce argument if necessary. Both M3 and F7 said that they belonged to taciturn type in China, but sometimes they felt that they had to speak up. M3 said,

> [33] ***I am not afraid of asking questions***. *Actually, you don't have many questions in China, for the teacher teaches very well and covers everything. You needn't think much, and just follow the teacher's thought.* ***Here, you have to ask (questions)****, because the teacher doesn't teach much, as a result, he leaves many 'blind spots'.* (M3B)

'Asking questions' seemed to be the result of inadequate teaching: since many points were not covered in class, the student was justified in asking or even forced to raise questions.

The change of environment would likely encourage or discourage certain behaviour, and when the participants felt that certain behaviours were expected, especially by the significant others, i.e. teachers or peer students, some would like to adopt new behaviour to fulfil the role. For example, M1 said,

> [34] *The teacher hopes the class could be more active, but Chinese students are all silent.* ***That is a bit embarrassing****. Sometimes, if no Chinese student speaks up, I will.* ***Just not to lose too much face***. (M1FN Feb-22-06)

However, M1 did not feel that participation was an effective way of learning and did not believe it was related to one's achievements or grades in his studies either. To him, to participate was to claim his cultural identity and win not 'personal face' but 'national face' on the one hand and to please the teacher on the other hand—or in his words, 'to make a favourable impression on the teacher' (M1FN Feb-22-06).

(4) Lack of necessary background knowledge and biased curriculum

The participants were well aware of their 'outsiders' status in both the large host culture and the small classroom culture. And most of them tended to attribute this

marginalization or periphery to the language barrier in the first place. However, F1 pointed out that even her American classmate felt being excluded from classroom discussions, so she emphasized that it was not the language but the British-centered teaching materials and even the whole curriculum blocked international students from actively participating and achieving:

> [35] ***I felt that language competence is not the biggest problem***. ***The biggest problem is you do not have the background knowledge,*** *so you don't know what they are saying. Now I know eleven-plus and everything, but I come here not necessarily to learn British educational system (…) Whenever I say "In China", those students were not interested in at all….. I could feel that they are only talking about what interests them.* ***They are not interested in China.*** *They only care about British education. Probably, that is a bit subjective, but anyway that's what I feel.* ***I just play the role of a listener***. (F1A).

This finding echoed Mullins *et al.*'s (1995) that the feeling of being ignored by the local students discouraged Chinese students from full participation.

Similarly, all the three Law Masters students among the participants (F4, F5 and M3) admitted that their courses though titled 'International XXX Law' actually were very European-American centric, because all the cases discussed in the course were either American or European, and of which British cases were in prominence. They all reported the same incident that had happened in class: a Chinese student, who had some working experiences in a solicitor's office in China, consulted the lecturer about a law case he and his partners dealt with, and the lecturer snapped him by the conclusive remark, 'This kind of thing never happens here'. This anecdote convinced them that 'they (the British) are not interested in China and only care about their own issues' (F5B).

The incidents in the two classes were similar, but individuals' reactions and attitudes to them varied. F4 and M3 did not show much disapproval of neither the lecturer nor the course materials. They held the view that 'we came here to learn others' practice; if you only want to know Chinese law, you needn't sojourn abroad' (F4FN April

20-06). F5 made a negative comment on the lecturer's disinterest in China's affairs. F1 felt hurt, smouldering with indignation at the insensitivity of British class, or rather the Brit-centred curriculum:

> [36] *As an international student, I come here to learn something universal, the universal theory on education. I don't want to study what happened to British educational system, and I'm not much interested in British education. What interests me is education, as a discipline.* ***I'm not prepared to come here to discuss the British education, but all their discussion is centered on the British system*** (F1A).

Apart from the curriculum reason, being a minority group in the class also made Chinese students feel intimidated to speak in class, as shown in Volet and Kee's (1993) study.

In short, all the factors mentioned above may inhibit a Chinese student from actively participating in classroom discussion or interacting with the teacher or peer group in class. Much as research has documented the difficulties Chinese students experienced with English language, which has been identified as a major source of stress in their academic adjustment (Parker, 1999; Wan, 2001) and easily perceived to be the chief culprit causing academic unfitness in the first place; nonetheless, as Ballard (1991) warned, the major problem for overseas students may have less to do with difficulties in language than with ways of learning and studying. The participants' longitudinal interview accounts in this study also supported the statement that the complexities of the learning issues might be easily disguised by the apparent language problems in the initial period. Considering the difficulties reported about participating in classroom over time it is evident that other factors are interacting with each other, encouraging and discouraging the students to verbally participate in the classroom activities, which make their participant patterns rather unpredictable.

In addition, previous cultural approaches and contextual approaches to Chinese student's classroom participation largely failed to identify and report such cognitive obstacles, as F2 confessed,

[37] *Sometimes, I really want to join the group discussion. I want to get my voiced heard.* ***It is not that I don't know how to say in English, but, in fact, you (I) have nothing to contribute.*** *You find that you lack ideas, and you know that your thinking is too shallow.* (F2FN Jan03-06)

As we shall see below, many obstacles in effective verbal participation, seemingly arising out of language problems, are nonetheless much related to cognitive abilities, higher order thinking skills and thinking patterns, and academic discourses as well.

6.3.3 Critical Learning

In the first round of interviews, most participants knew explicitly that 'critical thinking' was what was required of them in this new learning environment. However, their understanding of this practice varied, being fraught with misunderstanding and bewilderment. They expressed either disapproval or incompetence to engage in this mode of learning in their studies. For example, F5 felt the British way of writing was quite perplexing and even ridiculous:

[38] *They Western people like writing those rubbish words. For instance, we say the earth is elliptical, and they will ask you why you think the earth is elliptical? From what facts can you say that it is elliptical? But we think that everybody knows that and why you need prove it? It seems* ***they emphasize these aspects, but I can't imagine why*** (F5B).

Trapped in the misunderstanding of the referencing practice of the British learning culture, F5 did not think that the British academics encouraged personal ideas, therefore, discouraged originality:

[39] *Personally,* ***I don't think they emphasize originality. Being original, you need to come up with a new solution****. Up to now, all the articles I read are mainly critiquing other scholarships, pointing out shortcomings of each practice. What is wrong with this idea, and what is wrong with that idea. In the end, none is good. And they have no solution either. Then people will go panic, won't they?* (F5B)

According to F5, 'being original' meant 'to come up with a new solution', so, if an

article was simply criticizing others without putting forward a new solution to the problem, then the article had no originality to speak of.

If we say F5 seemed unconsciously incompetent (Ting-Toommey & Chung, 2005) in the new way of learning, then most participants started at the stage of 'conscious incompetence' in engaging this new requirement in their studies. As M6 admitted in a second round interview,

> [40] *They don't like description parts; they want to see your arguments.* ***Since we are not used to critical thinking, which needs training,*** *we are not good at that* (M6B).

However, acknowledging their incompetence in critical learning did not mean they took it as an impossible mission. Confronted with new learning norms, most participants' reaction was 'we are not good at…' or 'we are not used to it…' which, on the one hand, revealed their belief in malleability of thinking skills; on the other hand, it also showed their desire to acquire this ability.

Regarding critical learning, terms frequented the interview accounts include 'critical thinking'(批判思考), 'referencing'(引用), 'originality'(原创性), 'argument'(论据), 'assessment criteria'(考核标准), and 'plagiarism'(剽窃), and it was easy to find that their understanding of these terms were partial and varied. Interesting to note, these terms often appeared in their accounts in English form instead of Chinese translations, which might imply that these terms were newly acquired from the new culture of learning, and their understanding of these practices also presented a developmental pattern among those reflective learners. For example, in the beginning of their overseas studies, some of them attended a pre-sessional language course, which had a strong EAP (English for Academic Purpose) orientation. During the course, they were explicitly told what British academic look for in their essays. F4 said,

> [41] *Our teacher of the language course told us that she had taught many Chinese students and she found that Chinese students' essays would cover a wide area, too general and like citing others' opinions as arguments. Or they* (Chinese students) *just want to show what it is.*

She said, 'in the UK we don't like those essays. We like shorter, narrower and specific articles. ***We want <u>arguments</u>*** *to prove why it is the case. We don't want you to write what's your understanding or knowledge on a general topic, but* ***to <u>argue</u> and show your own ideas and opinions*** *about other people's ideas. You'd better* ***<u>deepen your arguments</u> in one point'****.* (F4A)

However explicit these statements were and how strongly she agreed with them, F4 confessed it was difficult for her to 'deepen the argument in one point' and 'often committed old mistakes of touching on too many and not focusing enough'(F4FN Feb-25-06). Though the participants acquired the declarative knowledge what was required of written academic work in the British learning culture, they were not necessarily equipped with the procedural knowledge and skills of how to actualize those requirements in their academic writing.

a. Critical thinking

Perhaps, influenced by the negative connotation of the Chinese corresponding word '批评/批判', most of the participants would take 'critical thinking' at the face value of the term in the beginning. The typical understanding of 'being critical' is 'to criticise', 'to point out the shortcomings', 'to refute others' ideas and present yours', etc. Based on this understanding of this concept, the participants' acceptance of this academic practice was not without reservation, at least in the early stage of encountering this approach. M3's reaction was quite typical among the participants:

[42] *They would like you* ***to criticise others,*** *to say what is wrong with this theory and what is wrong with that, then give your own opinion.* ***I find it very difficult, but you have to follow their way.*** *We are accustomed to commenting on a theory favourably,* ***not critically /negatively,*** *so, we are not used to this way yet*. (M3FN Jan 28-06)

Since this was what required of them, the participants would like to follow the way. However, their practice was still quite reserved, probably still constrained by their inherited learning conceptions, such as their deference to authority, textbook

knowledge, or teacher's power, as reflected in the following account:

> [43] *Critical thinking is quite* ***encouraged*** *here. But you shouldn't go too far to be off the point when you are being 'critical'. You should focus on the theme, and then you put forward you own opinion, but* ***don't go too far. Just move within the circle***. [Int.: What circle?] *I feel this circle is drawn with a list of readings, which are suggested by the lecturer as kind of backup, and if you choose certain topic, your tutor will encourage you to read those literature to follow (his /her thinking line), and you are expected to incorporate them, to* ***cover those points (caidian,踩点) in your essay. I can feel that is what the tutor wants, though he/she never said that explicitly***. *If your essay can* ***touch upon those points,*** *then you know you have done right.* (Pilot Study)

'To cover the points', 'to touch the points' ('踩点', its literal meaning is 'stepping on the point') seemed to indicate that the student believed that those points, that is, the answer, were definitely available to the teacher. Not only the knowledge was certain, but also known to the teacher. Like the grading criteria (评分标准)for the exams taken at the home university (in China), no matter whether achievement tests or proficiency tests, the marks are given against the points listed in the sample answer provided by the teacher.

Some participants accepted the notion of 'critical thinking', but with their own interpretation of its meaning. For example, F5 showed disapproval of the concrete practice in Western academic writing and thought that referencing or citing others was at odds with the spirit of critical thinking:

> [44] ***I don't think the British scholar promote the critical thinking.*** *No, I don't think so. Because you have to quote so many refer (references), now I just think about how can I quote as many if I can. If I don't agree with some professors' opinion, you know,* ***if I criticize him, criticize their opinion, I have to find somebody else's opinion to criticize him.*** *I can't find.* ***I can't criticize (him) myself.*** [Interviewer: Why not?] *Because you have to quote so many references, so what you can do is just organize the references,* ***organize all the opinion words, and that is all you can do***. *You can not have your own opinion. You can only do that way.*

> ***Because, I don't want to criticise,*** *because, I mean this is the part I don't like.* ***Why can't I just have our own opinion, because*** **[PAUSE]** ***They maybe new, you create it, nobody knows, nobody thinks about it.*** *I think that way.* (F5C)

Obviously, her interpretation of critical thinking was to criticise without necessarily referring to others' opinions; critical thinking was somehow compromised by citing others' work. She also admitted frankly that she did not like this part, that is, to criticise others' opinions; instead, she preferred to 'create' new ideas from scratch, saving the trouble of referencing or searching for others' opinions on the topic. In fact, F5 was the only one among my participants who had such explicit interpretation of critical thinking and referencing practice, but other Chinese students gave the impression that this view was not uncommon among those who just commenced their MA programs. Academic discourse, metaphorically termed 'the mystifying labyrinth' (Belcher & Braine, 1995: xv), has been accused of serving a gatekeeping role, preventing students from progressing educationally (Farr, 1993). In his case study of a Japanese student's acquisition of academic literacy, Spack (1997) critiqued Western rhetoric by citing Farr (1993) and Pennycook (1996) and suggested,

> *Until further research provides information about the ways in which putting other writers' ideas into their own words can help students develop their own way of thinking, we should reflect on our own role and responsibility in asking students to fulfil the seemingly conflicting goals of borrowing ideas and being original, especially when the students have not spent a lifetime immersed in a Western academic system.*
>
> (Spack, 1997: 53)

The findings about the participants' initial perceptions of 'critical thinking' are consonant with those of previous studies that Chinese students are not familiar with this academic requirement (Ballard, 1989; Ballard & Clanchy, 1991; Samuelowicz, 1987) and felt both intimidated and ambivalent about this practice (Durkin, 2004).

b. plagiarism and referencing

Another area full of uncertainties was the participants' understanding of what counted as plagiarism[27]. All the participants seemed to agree that Chinese and British criteria of judging plagiarism were different. As we noticed in the following account, the term 'plagiarism' itself was new to the participants, for whenever they articulated this word, they would say it in English, often with equivocal pronunciation:

> [45] ***We have different definition of what is called plagiarism.*** *In China, nobody will say it is plagiaristic if 600 words are lifted from others' text in a ten thousand essay; but, here,* ***more than consecutive three words which are not yours will be considered as plagiarism.*** *[…] It is not easy for me, and* ***I even don't want to continue (writing the essay), for I find it is still hard for me to handle plagiarism.*** *It's hard for Chinese students to handle.* (F1A)

F1's quantitative understanding of the criterion of plagiarism almost paralyzed her essay writing. She said during her undergraduate course (Chinese literature), as a student in Chinese literature, she was trained to follow the fixed poetical meter to compose poems by imitating the classics. This practice is called *'tian ci'*, 填词, in which poetic ambiguity and allusions are much appreciated. So using the brilliant words or phrases of some distinguished masters and embedding them as allusions in one's own work without formally acknowledgement is not associated with plagiarism, but an indication of a person's knowledge reserve (知识储备) and literary cultivation and accomplishment(文学修养功底). However, F1 was clear that she was expected to write argumentative essays, which were totally a different genre and she was not trained in this respect at her home university.

Like F1, most participants talked about plagiarism mainly with the discourse of skills, and intentional plagiarism was condemned as misconduct with the discourse of morality. Among the Master participants, proper referencing was commonly regarded as a new skill, which they lacked but were aware that they needed to learn quickly to

[27] In Chinese students' discourse, *zuo bi* (作弊, cheating at the exams, including copying from books or others' papers) is more frequently used than 'plagiarism'(剽窃), which is more connected to research study or creative literature, in which others' findings or works are presented as one's own. Another phrase used in Chinese academic discourse is *'xueshu zaojia'* (学术造假, 'academic forgery') and has raised people's awareness about plagiarism in Chinese universities.

avoid being accused of plagiarism and failing to get the degree. According to the knowledge of the participants, quite a number of Chinese students deliberately plagiarized in order to meet the deadline. M3 said, 'I know there are such (Chinese) students, not a few. They commit (the offence) knowingly. Just leave it to chance of not being found out' (M3FN May04-06). F4 said her flatmate was thinking of various improper ways in order to '蒙混过关' (meaning getting by false pretences) due to time constraints.

In addition, almost all the participants in this study knew the existence of plagiarism detection software, which created strong deterrence on the one hand and caused much puzzlement on the other. M1 expressed his bewilderment as follows:

> [46] *I really don't know how they use plagiarism detection software.* ***It is impossible not to use others' words and ideas.*** *I am a bit worried, but I don't think they will accuse me of plagiarism,* ***for I know what I've written.*** (M1B)

In M1's conception of plagiarism, it meant not understanding what was copied from other sources, and if the copied material was fully understood, it would become part of his own knowledge base. In other words, using or copying others' words and ideas was considered a necessary stage in the process of learning, a movement from absorbing the canon and experts' insights to knowledge creation, which shouldn't be expected to be achieved by a student, as reflected in many Chinese students' rhetorical question 'what originality can you expect of a student?'(F2FN April22-06)

However alien the criteria of plagiarism might be to the participants, they were all anxious to conform to the rules and accepted its legitimacy. According to F4, her Bachelor thesis, though awarded 'excellent thesis' ('distinction', 优秀论文) at her home university, would be a plagiarized work if assessed against British academic criteria. She was not hesitant to depreciate her previous learning experience and outcomes and wholeheartedly embraced the new academic norms:

> [47] *I can remember what I wrote in my Bachelor thesis, and* ***it would be worthless if***

> ***assessed here.*** *What I did in my thesis was put all the previous literature about that topic in my thesis in a systematic way. Suppose I brought it here as an assignment it would be definitely unacceptable to them.* ***That's plagiarism***. (F4A)

F4 cited her pre-sessional teacher's words to reinforce her belief in the superiority of the British academic norms over the Chinese ones. And her caution against plagiarism exceeded her concern about effective learning, i.e. exchange of ideas.

> [48] *Our tutor also reminded us that our paper should be an independent work, not be produced by a team.* ***So we should avoid sharing opinions with others.*** *Since we all work on the same topic, during the discussion it is hard to judge whose ideas are they, and when they appear similarly in the essays, you are susceptible to plagiarism, and you have no way to prove that who is copying whom. You will be in trouble.* (F4A)

It seemed that F4 began to develop a sense of ownership of ideas and authorship of intellectual work. She also said that lawyers were supposed to be working independently, so team work or collaboration among the students was not encouraged in the law school. However, the participants from other departments seemed to have no such concern that collaboration might lead to collusion, threatening intellectual integrity.

The findings concerning the participants' perceptions of plagiarism derived mainly from the three aspects identified by Holmes (2004), as reviewed in Section 3.4.1 in Chapter 3. However, though the findings concur with Jiang and Zhang's (2001) survey's results, the participants themselves linked plagiarism less to Chinese learning culture than unfamiliarity of the referencing convention. Therefore, the findings lend support to the claim that 'cultural conditioning is not the major culprit for plagiarism' (Liu, 2005; Phan, 2006) and cultural approach to plagiarism may have less explanatory power in explaining Chinese students' misconduct at their assignments.

c. uncertainties about assessment criteria

The participants were generally uncertain about assessment criteria, as F4 said:

[48] *Many students are worried about whether they could pass or not. You see,* ***nobody knows for sure.*** *I'm not the teacher in charge of marking.* ***None of us has experienced this before, so the panic is spreading, filling the air.*** *I don't like to hear them moaning and groaning. They know I couldn't give them an answer, and their worries can only aggravate my own anxiety. And I have to keep appeasing them. Frankly speaking, I hate this kind of conversation now. Anyway, I have submitted my work, and* ***I don't know if I can pass or not.*** *Unlike those who read undergraduate programme here, we are here only for one year*' (F4B).

Like F4, even after submitting the essay, M3 was still not sure about the level of his work:

[49] *It is not like in China that, after the exam, you will know whether you do it right or not. Against the model answers, you can estimate your marks. But here, who knows? We are the meat on the chopping block (at their mercy).* ***You won't know until you get the feedback*** (M3C).

F5 was totally baffled by the requirements for her module essay. Before she submitted her assessment essays, she was required to hand in a formative essay on the same topic, so that she could have chance to correct any major errors. The feedback she got from the formative essay was she cited too much:

[50] *He (the professor) said that* ***I don't have to quote so many words*** *from other scholars and he just wants to know what are my thoughts for the title. So when I write the assessment essay I think, well, that the teacher wants us to express our opinion…I try to think about all my opinions for the title. So, that is the reason* ***I don't have many references in my (summative) essay.*** *I guess that is the main reason why I failed for my module essay.* (F5C)

Despite trial and error, yet, F5 did not succeed in the end. In her final assessment essay, she just wrote her own thoughts, only listed three references and thought that was what the lecturer wanted. She kept saying that she 'thought really hard' for the topic:

[51] *I think (about) it all the time even I was walking on the street I speak to myself 'oh, I can use this part, and I can use in that part. […] They are all quite good ideas, and I think they*

are quite proper, private (personally). I mean… not so many people could have such thoughts. I mean if they don't spend time in thinking. ***And I think I can try the new style, without any subtitle.*** *I think it is in a very good structure. I think so. But the professor (said)* [IMITATING THE PROFESSOR] ***'maybe you should use the subtitle, because subtitle can help you won't get confused in your essay'*** (F5C)**.**

She was totally confused by the inconsistent requirements from different academic sectors. She said that during her pre-sessional course, she was discouraged to use subtitles, for it was 'a lousy style', which was, obviously, contradictory to her module professor's suggestion of using subtitle to make the essay clearer. So, we can see that though F5 subjectively tried hard to conform to the norms in the new learning environment, her adapting process was fraught with bumps due to misunderstandings of the rules and misinterpretations of the lecturer's feedback. Therefore, her failure was due to as much inconsistencies of the learning environment as lack of skills of discovery and critical awareness about the new cultural norms.

In Section 6.2, I have pointed out that the literature on international students' cultural and learning shock is often focused on the feelings from bewilderment, uneasiness and disorientation to deep frustration or estrangement, triggered by negative perceptions and events (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997) and both 'problematic approach' and 'learning approach' (Kim, 1988), failed to report the pleasant shock perceived or experienced by the students. But, in fact, as the sojourners were getting more experience in the new learning setting, they would report more pleasant surprises about the new learning culture, which were not noted or known in the beginning.

Generally speaking, the participants talked favourably about British assessment system, including anonymous marking, formative assessment practice, more options in assessment forms and testing paper questions.

For example, F4 welcomed the practice of anonymous marking system in the UK, which were taken as 'fairer':

[52] ***Essays are anonymous****. The teacher marks the paper without knowing whose it is. The marking is impersonal. Not like in my home university, it is quite obvious that the students who keep good terms with the teacher would get higher marks, (so)* ***the marking is quite partial*** (F4A)

The participants also perceived that the teachers here were 'fairer' (than Chinese teachers at home universities) in assessing students' work, and anonymous marking practice would prevent the teacher from giving 'sympathetic mark' (*ren qing fen*, the mark given not based on the merits of the work, but influenced by personal preference or interpersonal relations).

All but one participants showed preference for the British assessment systems and abhorred Chinese rigid assessment systems, and admitted that it blocked many real talents outside the threshold of academic success though they themselves had vested interests in it. The participants were aware that the most unbearable thing about Chinese normative assessment system was competition and ranking. So, to most participants, learning not for taking exams itself was a new delightful experience to liberate them from the shackles of the Chinese examination system, so they heartily embraced the British assessment mode and enjoyed the less competitive atmosphere:

[53] *The assessment here is different.* ***There are no exams, so you don't need to remember lots of stuff to prepare for the exams as in China.*** *[…]* ***There isn't much competition here.*** *Nobody cares who ranks the first in the class, and everybody progresses with his own pace*. ***Even the teacher doesn't care who learns well and who learns poorly.*** *He/she won't look up or look down upon you just because you are a good or poor student* (M3A).

The participants found other delightful surprises about the British learning culture. The students from the Business school were surprised at the fact that they were given much wider choices in terms of the topics in the testing papers:

[54] *You are to choose only two topics among eight to write short essays. That is so easy. You know****, in China, the situation is just opposite.*** *Perhaps, you must do the six out of the eight,*

or you have to finish all, no choice at all. (M1C)

In short, the participants reported their both negative and positive experiences with the new learning culture. New learning norms were perceived to be challenging or even overwhelming at first. However, as the term indicates, learning shock was experienced as a temporary symptom and was believed to loose its acuteness with time. As for the pleasant 'learning shocks', Langston (1994, cited in Ramsay *et al.*, 1999: 130) argues that positive experiences also impact strongly on cognitive processes and people may capitalize upon such opportunities to make favourable adjustment and to enhance their learning and development.

One more aspect needs mentioning is that not all the participants experienced this as a 'shock'. Some of them mentioned their earlier exposure and input, mainly indirect declarative knowledge by 'word of mouth' about the Western teaching and learning practices before their arrival at the UK. In other words, they knew of the Western learning norms, but had no personal experience. As F2 expressed:

[55] *(Before coming to the UK) I always heard people around talking about how free and relaxing the Western classroom, and we often see it from movies as well, […] so* ***I really long for the opportunity to study abroad to experience by myself.*** *Personally, I don't like tense and serious classroom. I don't like pressure and competition, either.* (F2A)

F2 was expecting the free and relaxing classroom atmosphere, but on another occasion, she also said that 'she wouldn't proceed with her studies unless under certain pressure' (F2FN Jan02-06). That means moderate challenges or pressure were welcome and conducive to her learning. This contradictory attitude was not uncommon among other participants. On the one hand, they felt uneasy for losing the familiar learning scripts; on the other hand, they were looking forward to fresh ways of learning, distinct from their previous experience. For example, M1, graduating from a good university in Nanjing, seemed a bit disappointed that the differences between the UK classroom and that of his home university were not as much as he expected:

[56] *I can't see much difference in the teaching styles between here and my home university. Some of our teachers (of the home university) are back from the Western universities, and their teaching is pretty much like the teachers here.* ***And (here) not just the students are all Chinese, but many of the teachers here are Chinese as well.*** (M1B)

Most Chinese students from the Business School did not expect to have so many other Chinese students in the class and disaffection was brewing from the start. They complained that 'studying here is just like studying in China with a foreign teacher on the lecture podium.' (M2FN Dec 10-05)

Another Law student, graduating from a prestigious university in Beijing, was informed of what would be like when studying abroad:

[57] ***I don't feel any 'shock'. Our teachers*** **(at home universities—my comment)** ***have told us what it would be like when we study abroad.*** *They say it is not like in China that teachers give you everything and you just listen to the teacher; (when abroad) you will be left to yourself; you just rely on yourself.* (M3FN Nov24-05)

The earlier exposure and input might work like 'a jab of vaccination', reducing the initial shock on students and helping them to develop an affinity to the coming direct experience, but this declarative knowledge alone might not generate effective response to the new learning environment, and, on the contrary, might render them less sensitive to the new learning experience.

6.3.4 Teacher-Student Role Relations

In Chapter 5, I have analysed that in Chinese learning culture, the teacher, as an identifying occupational role ascribed socially, enjoys traditional and institutionalized authority, treated with respect and humility by the student in interaction. The important role of the teacher is to socialize the student into mainstream cultural values by verbal instruction and acting as the exemplar of learning and moral paragon.

The participants in this study acknowledged and respected both kinds of authority.

Although they welcomed and accepted 'the easy relationship' (M6A) between the teacher and the student in the new learning environment, their belief in the teacher's transactional authority was not undermined. For example, F6 said that she must meet her supervisors regularly and get their consent to every step of her thesis writing and design, then she would feel assured and proceed steadily with her thesis. In her own words, 'I won't go on unless they nod' (F6FN Mar 16-06).

Master students expressed a strong desire for a 'teacher-in-charge' approach and showed much concern about transactional effectiveness in classroom engagement. In their learning conception, knowledge absorption and accumulation had been the utmost objective of formal learning (see Chapter 5), so they expected the teacher to teach more and considered the lecturer's humanistic group approach ineffective, as reflected in their comments on classroom discussion in the last section, but this fresh way was not unwelcome. The following account from M3 was illuminating:

> [58] *Of course,* ***lectures are most effective, with a great amount of information.*** *But the teachers here are all different. Some (teachers) are dilatory (in teaching style). He can engage the students with one question for the whole session, so, up to now, one and a half months have passed, and he hasn't taught much.* ***You'll be worried that he could never finish his teaching plan. Yet, it is interesting to sit in his class.*** (M3A)

Unlike the finding from previous research on Chinese students (Cortazzi, 1990; Cortazzi & Jin, 1997) the participants did not expect the lecturer or the supervisor to play the 'pastoral role' in their everyday life, though the concern received from the teachers was much appreciated. As F3 said,

> [59] *My supervisor shows much concern about me.* ***I did not expect him to care about me, for it is not his duty/job after all,*** *so I am quite moved and feel very grateful to him.* (F3B)

M3 expressed similar view that the teacher was not obliged to care about the student's problems outside of academic terrain:

> [60] *You can't expect the teachers here to manage everything for you or hope they will take*

*you to his office for a heart-to-heart talk (谈心, 'tan xin'). **They have neither time nor obligation to do that.*** (M3FN Dec12 -05)

In this respect, the participants had already adjusted their expectations and showed empathy about the cultural other.

Some participants emphasized that the teacher must be 'strict', timely diagnosing and pointing out the student's errors and weakness so that the student would make progress and not 'go astray'. However, in reality, they would complain if their lecturer or their supervisors were too critical of their work. It was interesting to note that the participants felt that their Chinese lecturers or supervisors (in the UK) were even more critical than the British lecturers. For example, F1 complained about her thesis supervisor, who was Chinese and known to the researcher:

[61] ***Don't you think (her Chinese supervisor) is overcritical?*** *My other British teachers are all very tolerant of my English, but he (her Chinese supervisor) never treated my work leniently.* (F1B)

M4 also said that his supervisor, who was Chinese as well, seemed to be stricter with him than with his other PhD students from Turkey, Iran, and Russia and he interpreted it as 'I think he has more expectation on me'. It seemed they also have different expectations on their Chinese teachers from their British teachers.

In sum, the participants' expectation of the teacher's role can be ranked in terms of perceived importance in the new learning environment:

*(1) **Resource and advisor**: knowledgeable expert with high scholarly attainment;*

*(2) **Director and controller**: direct and control the class to move smoothly and efficiently;*

*(3) **Effective knowledge imparter**: give well-prepared and well-organized lecture;*

*(4) **Facilitator**: make the learning easier and effective, find shortcuts, clear away obstacles;*

*(5) **Mentor and friend**: understanding and encouraging motivator, feel happy for students' success;*

*(6) **Moral paragon**: high moral standing (ren pin 人品), with intellectual integrity (xue pin 学品).*

These findings confirm previous research results about Chinese students' expectations of the teacher's roles (see Section 3.4.3), such as 'knowledgeable expert', 'be a model of how to', and 'effective controller of classroom', etc. But, they also disprove certain expectations of the Chinese students as in the studies of Biggs (1996), Cortazzi (1990), Jin & Cortazzi (1997), Ryan (2000; 2005), Scollon & Scollon (1994), which claim that Chinese students expect a hierarchical relationship with their teachers where teachers are expected to play a role similar to parents. In fact, the findings of this study not only support Sarkodie-Mensah's (1998) statement that they value warm, friendly relationships with their supervisors and instructors but also point out that the sojourning students may consciously adjust their expectations about the teacher with the change of the learning environment instead of sticking to the inherited cultural beliefs.

6.3.5 Summary

In summary, the participants' first perceptions of the British classroom were both positive and negative. They could identify the salient features of the new learning environment: independent learning, verbal participation, critical thinking and originality, and perceived them as the main obstacles or rather challenges to be overcome in their overseas learning. Though these alien terms were explicitly articulated, circulated in both the teacher' and students' daily speech about the new learning culture, their understanding of these terms turned out to be partial and biased. They recognized that their reaction and interpretation of these practices were largely constrained by their existing cultural frame and the meaning system acquired from their previous learning experience. However alien these requirements might be, most participants accepted these impositions unquestioningly and tried very hard to conform to these new learning norms. As for the participants' perception of teacher-student role relations, the participants had much expectation on their teachers and placed trust in their teacher's transactional and interpersonal authority (Widdowson, 1990) in the teaching and learning process. However, with the changing

environment, they emphasise teachers' roles as resource and advisor and facilitator, though Master students still thought highly of their lecturers' roles as the effective knowledge imparter and classroom discussion controller, but 'the pastoral role' and the 'teacher as moral paragon' were ranked less important.

6.4 Adjustment Resources and Initial Acculturative Methods

The purpose of this chapter so far has been to analyse the participants' understanding of the teaching and learning in their new environment. We have seen some experienced differences or 'learning shock' more strongly than others, but more or less, they experienced those differences consciously and they were aware of their changes over time. The field of study within which this stage of the analysis has been located is above all the literature on perceptions of teaching and learning combined with the overall structure of Anderson's (1994) approach to adjustment: I have analysed how they perceive encounters and identify obstacles. I now turn to the question of adjustment more explicitly to the third and fourth stages of Anderson's model, i.e. response generation and overcoming, and in this case, the analysis will be located more in the literature on adjustive resources or acculturative methods, which was analysed in Chapter 2.

Adjustment is a dynamic and interactive process that takes place between the person and the environment, and is directed towards an achievement of fit between the two; it involves conscious learning process in which emotions and cognitions are constantly interplaying to generate responses (Anderson, 1994). In the last section, I have shown that the participants could identify salient obstacles or challenges in the new learning environment. According to Anderson (1994), sojourners may 'take flight or fight' when confronting obstacles. However, considering both the financial and affective investment from not only the participants themselves but also their family, returning home was simply 'unthinkable, totally out of the question' to the participants of this study (M4A). The participants knew they had to make adjustments and fight for their

goal. So, in this section, I shall present how they made use of and developed their cultural and personal resources, emotional, social, and cognitive, to meet the demands of the new learning environment.

6.4.1 Emotional Coping Resources: Emotional Capitals

A strong adjustment motivator and affective resource for the participants was their 'emotional capital', a term coined by Cousin (2006) after Bourdieu's (1979) cultural capital to refer to the emotional positioning of the students in terms of the receptivity to the learning of Otherness.[28] Thus, the students with greater experiential proximity to the aspects of Otherness under examination may bring more emotional capital to their understandings of them. Literature on acculturation tends to view 'cultural distance' as a predictor of adjustment to cultural change (Domingues, 1970, cited in Anderson, 1994), while 'emotional capital', argued in this study, seems to be a new variable in analysing Chinese students' adjustment to the new learning culture.

The participants' emotional capital towards Western education was clearly manifested in their view that Western education was deemed superior to what they had experienced before. They acknowledged the merits and value of the British learning culture in the first place: 'There must be merits in theirs (British educational system)' (M2FNNov14-05). This notion was so deep-rooted in their mind that they all subscribed to the view that 'when in Rome do as the Romans do' (*ruxiang suisu*, 入乡随俗).

M2, who graduated from a prestigious university in Shanghai and had several years of working experience in a company, saw the gap between '*haigui'* (the returnees finishing their overseas studies) and '*tuebie'* ('local turtles', referring to those who have no overseas experience) in terms of application of professional knowledge and

[28]Cousin (2006) carefully distinguished emotional capital from emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995). The latter refers to a facility to process emotional issues rather than a set of assets, such as ethnic sensitivities and political awareness in sociocultural circumstances, as indicated in the former.

attributed this difference to different educational systems. So, he quit the well-paid job and was looking forward to experiencing Western education:

> [62] *Well,* ***you have to admit ours (Chinese education) is inferior to theirs (British education)****. In the company where I worked in Shanghai, those 'haigui' do their project more efficiently and in better quality. They have much stronger ability in practice. And we 'tubie' were always thrown into the shade.* ***You are (I am) not their equal.*** *So I made up my mind to come and study here.* (M2A).

To accord desirable value to or even to idealize Western education was rather common among the participants, and this xenophile mentality served as a strong motivator and affective resource facilitating participants' adjustment to the new learning culture. M4 felt deeply that Chinese educational system lagged behind it Western counterpart in producing 'masters' ('*dashi*', 大师)

> [63] ***Nobel laureates (those who have won Nobel prizes for sciences) are all from the West****. Why? Chinese descendents (scientists) wouldn't have had got the prize but for being educated in the West, like Yang Zhenning, Li Zhengdao. (Educational) systems are different.* ***Ours (Chinese educational system) cannot produce 大师（masters）****. But we are learning and we must learn well.* (M4FN May 10-06)

6.4.2 Adjustment in Affect

During the initial period of this study, the participants' affective reactions and appraisals of the new learning environment were varied and mixed. Their first round interview accounts abounded with anxieties, self-doubts, and uncertainties about future. However, they also admitted that these symptoms were natural and temporary and should be passing if kept under control. Moreover, they all shared the belief that learning to adapt to a new environment was an essential part of overseas learning, or rather the overseas learning itself. In their words, 'you have to adapt, whether you like it or not. That is a learning process.' (M1FN Mar 22-06)

Emotionally-focused strategies (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) were prominent in the

participants' interview accounts, which included intrapersonal strategy of 'adjusting one's own state of heart-mind' and interpersonal strategy of networking with co-nationals for emotional support.

A. Adjusting 'the state of heart-mind'

Moving into a new environment, the participants said they would consciously tell themselves that they needed to make adjustment to keep a positive attitude and emotional state. In this study, a most frequent term I heard from the participants was 心态 '*xin tai'*, the literal meaning of which is 'the state of heart', referring to the affective state of people, but not without cognitive factors[29], because Chinese 心 *xin* ('heart') has two counterparts in English: 'heart' or/and 'mind', so the phrase of 'the state of heart and mind' is used to capture the full meaning of the word *心态(xin tai)*.

The encounter with a new learning culture resulted in mixed feelings, which was fairly expressed by M1:

> [64] *When I first came here,* ***the state of my heart and mind (心态) was not right,*** *very ambivalent. On the one hand, you were looking for something new; on the other, you hoped that you could be as comfortable as at home. But you came here for the differences, didn't you? I think many Chinese students were like me.* ***This state of heart and mind is not good, and you have to adjust it****.* (M1FN Mar22-06)

According to the participants, only a good *xintai* could lead to a 'learning state', as F2 said,

> [65] *I tried to* ***adjust my heart-mind to a good state****. Think positively. I will try not to scare myself with the apprehension that I cannot get the degree. I tell myself, if others can pass, I can as well. And I find that* ***only in a relaxed xintai do I feel that I am learning***. (F2FN Feb 14-06)

So a positive state of heart and mind was essential to a receptive learning state. The

[29] The ancient Chinese thought that 'thinking was the function of heart (instead of the brain)' ('*心之官则思*'). That is why many Chinese characters associated with 'thinking', or other cognitive activities, will take *xin* 心 ('heart') as a radical part, such as *思想* ('thinking, thoughts'), *意念* ('ideas').

participants' adjustments concerning the affective aspects of their learning include:

a. to be respectful to learn from others

In line with inherited Chinese conceptions of learning, the participants emphasized 'be respectful' or 'be humble' was the proper and prerequisite attitude of learning to adopt:

> [66] *We came here to learn from others (人家'renjia'), so you (we) must* ***be modest and show your humbleness*** (M6FN).

The humble and respectful attitude was taken as the default state of receptive learning. Consciously feeling incompetent, some took an attitude of compliance, and resigned themselves to the uncertain circumstances. For example, some deactivated their defence mechanism to make themselves more receptive, like F2[30]; some would voluntarily lower their expectation to be realistic (as exemplified in the following F4's quote); some even resorted to kind of fatalism—'Let it be' (凭天由命) (M4A). But, the seemingly fatalistic resignation, in fact, implied much resilience, persistence, and pliability, and not without a sense of self-efficacy in dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity, which came from various aspects of overseas studies, from misunderstanding of critical learning and proper referencing to bewilderment of assessment criteria, from ambiguous learning behaviours to proper teacher-student relationship, as shown in Section 6.2.

In the participants' accounts, they showed great trust and respect for their supervisors and their advice. 'My teacher said we had to change our way of learning…' (F4); 'My supervisor keeps telling me I should communicate with others' (M4A). They followed their teachers' and supervisors' advice and requirements faithfully and conscientiously, which could be taken as their inherited deferential attitude to authority, but this deference to authority did play a motivating role in their adaptation. Therefore, we can argue that respectful learning, which characterized Chinese learning culture as

[30] F2 once compared herself to 'a pebble stone cast into water', and later, the vehicle 'stone' was changed into 'ice cube', to imply that she could be fully integrated after a while of 'warming up'.

analysed in Chapter 5, turned out to be a valuable cultural resource that the participants resorted to in intercultural learning setting rather than an inhibition preventing them from adjustment.

b. to be realistic about one's goals

According to F4, the adaptive pressure was coming as much from environment as from the students themselves, so 'adjusting the state of heart-mind' meant 'to be realistic about one's goals':

> [67] *Before we came here, we expected too much. Perhaps we had overestimated our ability. Most of the time, the pressure is not from others, but from ourselves. So* ***we have to be realistic about our goals*** *and adjust to be in a normal state*. (F4A)

With time passing, Master students were more conscious of the time constraint and wished they could stay longer in British educational system and have more experience of the alternative way of learning. M2's account was most representative in this respect:

> [68] *At first, I chose to study here mainly because it is one-year program, more cost-effective, but* ***now I feel one year is too short.*** *You can't expect to achieve too much, unless you have enough money and experience it* ***in an unhurried way*** *so that you have better understanding about their academic tradition.* (M2FN May22-06)

In fact, he did manage to stay in the system for another year and gained wider experience of the British learning culture. Some participants, like M2, welcomed challenges and sought out new experiences in an active way; some might sound a bit passive, taking the attitude 'Like it or not, you have to conform (to their ways)' (F5B), striving for the instrumental end. But, no matter through voluntary inclination or reluctant resolution, the willingness or determination did not translate into action without a hitch:

> [69] *I do agree that you should 入乡随俗 (*ru xiang sui su, meaning 'When in Rome do as Romans'—my comment*). However, in reality,* ***it is not just what you want to be, because***

something deep inside your bone is not easily changed. Moreover, you don't have the reserve, yet. *Of course, it is very good if you can do as Romans do. But it takes time and may not happen within short time span.* (F6FN Mar 14-06)

Though, subjectively, most participants wished to be adapted to the new learning culture, and endorsed the maxim 'when in Rome do as Romans do', in reality, they had not mastered the knowledge and skill to function 'as Romans'. Moreover, they felt that it was unlikely to achieve full adaptation due to deep-rooted beliefs, or just habits, despite their efforts and good will. F4 said,

[70] *We have been educated in our system for so many years after all.* ***It is impossible for us to be changed completely even if you (we) want.*** *It is like studying language. No matter how hard you try, you can never be as perfect as a native speaker.* (F4FN Feb 02-06)

When they felt their full adaptation was unachievable, they started to be realistic about their adaptive goals and make adjustments in order to survive the system. For example, though she knew the course IP (International Property) would also be useful in China, she did not choose the course because it was in tutorial form and she was not confident in her verbal performance in class. However, later, when she was getting more confident in speaking up in English, she said she regretted not choosing that module. So it was easily seen that the participants were in a constant process of making adjustments and would change certain aspects of their behaviour over time.

c. be comfortable with the differences

The participants were striving for a balance between the demands of the learning environment and personal resources, and in the meanwhile, they also tried to bring a balance between the two learning cultures in their value systems when adjusting the state of their heart-mind. M5's account represented this variation:

[71] *Our* ***state of heart-mind should be open****. We'd like to learn from others sincerely, but in the meanwhile, we should 'bu bei bu kang' (不卑不亢, meaning not to feel inferior to other's* (M5A)

To M5, the two learning cultures were simply different and should be valued equally.

Most participants were clearly aware of their changes in experiencing the new way of learning and gradually accorded genuine positive values to the British classroom practice, even though the difficulties and obstacles were not overcome yet:

> [72] ***I feel involved now, not like in the beginning that I feel 'out of involve(ment)'***. *Now what matters is not whether being involved or not;* ***the most important is learn and to learn in their way.*** *I am not worried about my speaking pace or sentence structure, which might be strange. I don't care about these. I just learn in my own way, step by step*. ***I realize this difference, so I consciously push myself in that direction.*** *I won't tell myself that since I don't need this in China I won't learn these. I should push myself, for I have seen the difference between Masters and unders*. ***This is my learning process and I've learnt how to face my 'difference'*** *and decide what I should do*. (F1A).

F1 had seen the value of the British classroom through comparing the undergraduate class and Masters class and voluntarily pushed herself to adapt to the new learning environment. She stopped complaining about the limited contact hours and voluntarily 'dipped' herself in the library and showed genuine appreciation of autonomous learning. As for classroom participation, she was not eager to express herself to show 'I am not inferior to you' but accepted the differences and faced squarely her inadequacy. This change can be seen as the evidence of her intellectual maturity and growth:

> [73] ***I think my ideas are changed and updated***. *Now I like to follow their learning approaches to read books, to engage in discussion, and to be a listener at seminar. I needn't be talking all the time, for I learn a lot just by listening. I like to change my role.* ***I know that it is important that I should talk, but for the time being, at seminars, to be a listener is more important.*** *What they are talking about are totally new to me, and by reading books, I learn a lot and when I listen to what they are discussing, I will feel suddenly enlightened.* ***I can't make myself a speaker, because I'm not equipped with that stuff.*** *Moreover, they are all teachers and they would talk about their students, their schools, but I have none* (to talk

about—my comment)…. *They would talk about their treatment, with clear focus and close examination. I feel involved as if I was experiencing their cases, though very short.* ***It is fine to be just listening****. When we are on Bilingual module, I would like to be the speaker, because I have more experience.* ***So I feel that I'm changing, in terms of ideas and learning approaches.*** *I have this awareness. Now I'm feeling very good. I don't feel frustrated any more.* ***I don't feel frustrated that I am just a listener****.* (F1B)

In the beginning, F1 was striving for changes in ideas and action in order to fit the environment by actively participating in various classroom activities for fear of being considered inferior. After a while, she started to face her weakness and inadequacy squarely in claiming full membership in the new learning culture. She started to attribute the gap to cultural differences, which were not easily reconcilable, so she told herself to 'take it easy':

[74] *I can't ask them to treat me as they do their folks. You can do nothing about it. Now I'm interested in cultural identity. I feel as long as you were born with an Asian face you would be treated differently by the foreigners […]* ***When I recognize this difference I find I feel less upset and I should take it easy in my studies.*** *I shouldn't be haunted with these thoughts. I am different, and the weakest as well, for I don't know about English educational system. I don't know what SEN is.* (F1B)

Acknowledging inevitable difference and both cultural and disciplinary outsider status, F1 began 'to take it (difference) easy', which implied arguably an ethnorelative stance (Bennett, 1993). And this temporary resigned attitude is comparable to Kim's (2001) 'draw back'. According to Kim's stress-adaptation-growth dynamics, each stressful experience is responded to with a 'draw back', which then activates the adaptive energy to help reorganize oneself and 'leap forward' (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003: 381).

In addition, being comfortable with differences also resulted from the fact that F1 didn't feel that she was discriminated against any more; on the contrary, she came to realize that her difference was respected:

[75] *I really appreciate the way they treat 'difference'.* ***That's not discrimination, but respect.*** *(…) Not only learning approaches but also awareness changed in me. I don't feel it is too hard for me* (F1B).

F1's changes in behaviour from conforming to disengaging reflected her fundamental change in attitude and cultural awareness. F1's moving from 'speaking up' to 'just listening' was a significant step to affirm her own cultural identity and mediate between the two learning cultural values.

In short, the participants' initial response to the British learning culture highlighted the integral role of emotion in their learning and adjustment. This supports Boekaert's (1993) notion of the importance of achieving a balance between the demands of the learning environment and the resources of the person, among which emotional or affective resources are of utmost importance.

B. Networking with Co-nationals

Interactions with the local community have been identified as significant in helping socio-cultural adaptation (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The data in this study showed that the participants did have some local connections for social activities apart from the college life. Two participants attended regularly (every Wednesday evening) Amigo activities, organized by the local church to socialize the university international students. Half of the participants in this study were from a Bible studies group, organized by a British couple and attended by both Chinese students and families from the local Chinese community. The participants talked positively about the function of this network and considered it as not only the highlight of their social life but also an opportunity to 'release pressure'. As F4 said,

[76] *I joined the* <u>*Bible studies*</u> *group* ***because I felt very lonely.*** *I was very unhappy at that time and had no 'heart' to study* (meaning couldn't concentrate on her studies-my comment). *Then I met* [a Taiwanese student] *and he introduced me into the group. Now I have people to have a heart to heart talk with and feel very good […]****The communication helps each other release pressure and keeps you in a good 'study/learning state'****.* (F4FN Nov01-05)

Here, 'study/learning state' emphasized a positive affective state, conducive to learning. Self-control and emotional support from other co-nationals were both important in soothing a bad mood. At least one of the reasons why the participants would turn to their co-nationals for emotional support was that their English proficiency did not allow them to express subtle feelings and it was much easier to obtain sympathy and comfort from co-nationals. That was also reflected in the fact that they kept a diary invariably written in Chinese, as F1 said,

> [77] *The English we learned is only for academic work. I haven't learnt* ***how to use English to express my feelings yet. […]*** *I tried writing (diary) in English, but it wouldn't do. Then I gave up.* (F1FN Dec10-05)

So, both language and cultural distance were significant factors in the participants' networking, which, as an emotional coping resource, definitely played a positive role in providing them with emotional and other practical supports. The participants' accounts confirmed previous research results that it is difficult for the international students to form relationships with host students, for they are not proficient and confident in English language, or not familiar with the rules of participation or communication (Volet & Ang, 1998; Wang, 2004). So some of them had regular connections with other international students, mainly also from Asian countries. The participants reported that as much as they would like to socialize with the host and other European students they found little common interest with them. M1 admitted that he made efforts to make friends with both British and European students mainly out of instrumental purpose of improving his oral English. Similarly, F5 deliberately kept a distance from other Chinese students so that she could force herself to speak English.

In short, networking with co-nationals was an important socio-affective coping resource for the participants sojourning abroad. Creating or joining a co-national network to seek emotional support is not necessarily at the cost of linguistic and intercultural learning, as predicted by most intercultural adaptation models (Kim, 1988;

Brown & Holloway, 2008) as long as the sojourner keeps wider interaction with host culture or other international students instead of exclusive co-nationals contact.

6.4.3 Problem-focused Coping Strategies: Instrumental Acculturative Methods

Although emotion-coping strategies appear to be major contributors to adjustment efforts at the beginning, 'it is the intellectual components that tend to come into play in the later periods' (Aldasheva, 1984: cited in Anderson, 1994: 313). The participants knew that they needed to acquire knowledge and skills to follow and fulfil new learning norms and requirements in order to be accepted by the new community. Taking adjustment as a learning process, the participants' cognitive coping resources for adjustment presented here were intimately intertwined with their learning strategies, which are defined as 'specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations' (Oxford, 1990: 8). So, in this section, we will see what aspects of Chinese culture of learning were transferred to the new learning environment and how the participants negotiated new ways of learning and even created new culture of learning.

A. Imitating/Modeling: a default position to learn

The academic norms in the new learning culture were conceived as both knowledge and skills, which were to be acquired during the study process. However, even though the declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge could be explicitly imparted to the students, as the participants were told during their pre-sessional course about writing essays, how to apply this knowledge to essay writing or classroom practice was not automatic. To Chinese students, the default position of learning is to imitate a model. For example, M3 said he had no strategy but imitating the model papers and found it very effective.

[78] *Their way of writing is not really difficult. The structure is simple, yang ba gu,* (洋八股,

literal translation is *'Western eight-legged', implying that the structure is rigid)*[31]. *As for sentences construction, you can't translate from Chinese, you must learn/copy their way. I know some Chinese students write in Chinese first then translate into English, but* ***that practice is not very effective.*** (M3B)

When commenting on the practice of 'referencing', M3 frankly admitted,

[79] *That is their convention, and you* ***just follow the suit……I can't see how useful it is****.* (M3B).

Obviously, M3 was fully aware of the necessity to conform, or 'adaptive demands', the gap between one's internal competencies and the demands of one's environment, or cultural difference (Shaules, 2007). In Shaules' (2007) words, adaptation[32] doesn't guarantee that one sees the demands being adapted to as valid; one can adapt (change oneself) and resist (see as invalid the source of the demand) at the same time. This also lends support for Baker *et al.*'s (1991) and Furnham and Bochner's (1986) suggestion that international students may not prefer certain behaviour but they learn it anyway if they perceive that behaviour has made the locals successful.

M1 was impressed by European students' classroom contribution and their presentation skills, and would very much like to have a similar performance. However, he did not think verbal participation or presentation was positively related to academic achievements. In his word, it was simply 'performance', not a way to learn:

[80] *Some European students in my class are very active and eloquent. Their <u>presentations</u> are good. When they stand in front, they are very natural and confident, not nervous at all. Chinese students are* ***not good at performing****. I am often elected <u>team leader</u> to present on behalf of the group, for they* (other Chinese students on the team—my comment) *would decline with all sorts of excuses. My English may not be standard; I make conscious efforts to*

[31] Chinese eight-legged essay is a kind of literary composition consisting of eight parts, prescribed for the imperial civil service examinations, known for its rigidity in format and style.

[32] Shaules (2007) does not make distinction between the terms of 'adaptation' and 'adjustment'. Regarding the distinction we make between the two in previous sections, we can see he uses 'adaptation' in the sense of 'adjustment' we defined.

learn/imitate their manners of speaking. *It is really fun.* (M1B).

The data from this study provided evidence that sojourners may have contradictory reactions to the adjustment demands. They may resist the value at the deep level while adapting to the norms at the surface level, or they may accept the value but fail to adjust on behavioural level. Moreover, the surface behaviour and the deep beliefs are not static, but in a dynamic developmental process. For example, M7 also said that he did not appreciate the practice of referencing in the first place, but he simply mimicked the format at surface level, and gradually he came to realize its merits and gave authentic deep appreciation from a reader's perspective as presented in next Chapter. Furthermore, they may rather mediate and be in a state of 'constructive marginality' (J. Bennett, 1993), as the participants said, they accepted and enjoyed classroom discussion as a valuable form of learning, but still preferred to be a listener.

In Chinese beliefs about learning, imitating is the first step of learning. If we make an anthropological linguistic analysis of the two Chinese characters consisting the word 学习，'learning' or 'study', we will find that 'to imitate', 'to mimic' is one of the main meanings of the character 学; and the basic or inherited meaning of the character 习 is 'to repeat'. To some extent, it lends evidence in favour of Sapir-Whorfian Hypothesis of linguistic relativity that language not only reflects but also shapes its speaker's thinking and worldview, because mimic and repetitive learning is so deeply ingrained in Chinese learning culture, and in the learner's conception and consciousness as well, as representative in M7's account:

> [81] ***Learning is imitating /copying***. *Perhaps, you don't understand something in the beginning, but you should accept it first, then master it, because you cannot decide what is useful and what is not at the first sight. After practising it with heart consciously, you can know whether it is suitable or not.* (M7FN Mar20-06)

This finding is also consistent with that of Dahlin and Watkins' (2000) study that whereas the Western students saw understanding as usually a process of sudden insight, the Chinese students typically thought of understanding as a long and slow

process and revealed to the learner gradually after certain effort.

B. 'Put more efforts'/ Repetitive learning

All the participants said that they would like to and, as a matter of fact, did put more efforts into their studies while studying abroad. To Chinese students, this is a taken-for-granted strategy confronting difficulties arising from studies. As M5 said,

> [82] *I have no better strategy than* ***putting more efforts*** *in my studies. The papers are in English, and you can't understand by reading once. So, sometimes, you have to read a paper several times before you can make sense of it.* […] ***Learning in a second language entails double efforts***. (M5A)

M5's experience and comment found resonance from other participants, such as F3:

> [83] *It is not like learning in Chinese that you know the writer's idea at first sight. It (reading in English) may* ***take double or triple as much time****. The worse thing is you can't memorize what you have read, so you have to go back to it again and again.* (F3FN Feb 02-06)

It seemed effortful learning and repetitive learning was still the participants' main strategies to cope with their demanding academic work. Since reading in English was less effective than reading in Chinese, coupled with a more extensive reading load, few participants were satisfied with their reading competence and efficiency, so they had to put in more efforts to catch up:

> [84] *Our teacher can do 30 pages in one lecture. It is impossible for me to read all of it before the class. But I will try to catch up after class to fill the gaps.* ***Since your competence is limited, all you can do is work harder.*** (M3B)

The participants reported that extensive reading for each module was very demanding, and few of them could handle the load. As F5 said, 'reading only one source won't do, and you need know the different points of view on this matter. And the problem is how can we (students) know which is better?' and she did not hide her frustration and thought fondly of 'one-textbook' time (F5A).

But they believed that if they did manage to finish the reading before class, they would have better understanding of the content and would like to participate in class discussion. For example, F7 said,

> [85] *There were a few times, only a few, when I made thorough preparation for the class and felt fully engaged at class. I knew what others were talking about, and I could participate in their discussion, and I felt really great.* ***But most times you don't have enough time and energy to prepare.*** (F7B)

The participants did not think that they or other Chinese students worked harder than their European counterparts. M1 said that most of the high achievers in his class were European students and they all worked very hard indeed. The participants also came to realize that the Western class looked relaxing, but in fact, the students needed to do more work before and after class:

> [86] *We thought it was easy to study here. That is not the case. It may not seem very tense in class, but* ***after class all bury themselves in the books. If you want to do well, you need put more efforts,*** *and even that (more efforts) cannot guarantee that you can compete with European students.* ***You must exercise your brain power*** **(**M3FN May 04-06)

'Exercising brain power' meant to use higher order thinking skills to analyse and synthesize information. While emphasizing effortful learning, the participants seemed to feel its limitation and the need to engage in a deep approach to learning, which they admitted was less developed in their undergraduate studies.

However, the genuine interest in the subject area and the facilitating environment made them willing to engage in deep approach to learning. M2 said that he read widely in the library and enjoyed personal involvement in the learning tasks and related what he learned to other areas of his interest:

> [87] *If I have no class, I* ***usually 'dip' myself in the library*** *for the whole day, reading extensively, not just financial books, but various kinds in related areas, including politics, and everyday (I)* ***feel much enriched*** *(mentally). And you find you have 'talk capital' (tan zi, 谈*

资) [33]*to discuss with others*. (M2FN)

In short, that the participants emphasized effortful learning reflected both their inherited conceptions of learning and shortage of effective cognitive learning strategies to cope with the academic demands from the new learning environment, and this corresponds with the results of other research carried out with other methods. In other words, as a learning strategy and a fundamental belief held by the Chinese learners, effortful learning was applied productively to the new learning tasks and travelled well across learning cultures, while the cognitive learning strategies developed in the Chinese (undergraduate) learning culture fell short of the learning demands of the British learning culture. However, to develop higher order thinking skills, though challenging, was willingly engaged with efforts.

C. Metacognitive and Social-affective Learning Strategies

The metacognitive and social-affective strategies identified and used by the participants were various and much more in number than the cognitive strategies. In terms of the popularity of the use, self-disciplining and self-monitoring of one's 'study state', both affective and cognitive, were much emphasized. Their accounts abounded with some inherited conceptions of learning, such as their beliefs in diligence, perseverance, concentration, and other 'learning virtues' listed in Li's (2006). These strategies were metacognitive in nature and showed that the participants were constantly introspecting and developing their self-knowledge and 'self-awareness', which, according to Twining (1991:3), was perceived to be important in exploring what learning strategies and study skills one possessed or matched their personal characteristics. Rich self-knowledge and awareness also enabled learners to be aware of what support they need in order to manage their resources accordingly (Pintrich, 2002) so that they could employ social strategies to accomplish their academic goals.

To exhaust the categorizations of all these strategies would be well beyond the scope of this study, I will only selectively present those that were highlighted by the

[33] It is the first time that I've heard this coined term, literally meaning the capital to talk, implying that you can talk among the people if you are well-informed and know better.

participants as coping with the academic adjustment demands from the new learning environment, rather than those they adopted in their general adjustment to life abroad.

(1) Identifying priorities

All the participants pursuing a Master degree thought that the time for learning abroad was so short that they must make good use of the time to make their learning efficient and effective. However, they realized no matter how desirable the 'whole experience' was, academic achievements must be given priority, for it had direct bearing on whether they could get the degree or not. Only after they mustered enough self-efficacy to secure the degree, did they have the 'capital' to go deeper into the host culture life. As M5 said,

> [88] *My first intention of coming here is for my Christianity faith. Now, I am here. And my ultimate goal is to graduate with a degree. To understand its (British) culture, of course, was important, but if anyone comes with the intention of just experiencing its culture and* ***neglects his/her studies****,* ***that is inexcusable. I think that is too irresponsible.*** (M5FN Mar22-06)

To most participants, securing the degree certificate was the most important learning outcome above all. Besides that, to improve English proficiency was also high on their agenda, for English adequacy was perceived to be the prerequisite of successful learning and also the most beneficial gain of studying in the UK. The participants from different disciplines had different English-related challenges. For example, students of humanities and social sciences found most challenging but desirable efficient and effective understanding of a large number of readings and writing quality academic papers; science majors did not feel reading and writing were much difficult for them, but to follow the seminars and participate in discussions were given priority.

However, it was not always the participants who could decide what was given priority on their agenda. For example, F4 considered writing quality academic essay and learning different way of thinking most important, but being aware of the expectation of 'people at home', including that of the prospective employers, she gave priority to

'speaking fluent, accurate English' while studying abroad:

> [89] *Since you are studying in the UK,* people at home *expect you to speak fluent, accurate English when you are back home. It is shameful if your English turns out to be inferior to those who haven't studied abroad. They can't tell how much you have learnt abroad, but* ***they can tell how good your English is*** *as soon as you speak up.* ***I know my weakness, so I put more efforts on these aspects.*** (F4FN Jan 11-06)

Reading and talking about Bible was her main strategy to improve her oral English. Similarly, F5 focused more on improving her English proficiency than on her subject courses, for 'the courses are no problem to me' (F5B)[34]. But not all the Chinese students were keen on improving their English. For example, I once overheard a Chinese student complaining that her teacher criticized her English and told her that she was too weak in English to survive the course. She said in great bitterness, 'I came here to learn new designing conceptions, not English. Why can't I just learn what I want?' (FN20-12-07). Perhaps, that was a special case for Chinese students, but it showed the students had their own priorities on their personal agenda, which constantly interacted and might conflict with their adjustment demands in the setting.

(2) Maintaining motivation

The participants in this study were generally highly motivated. But learning in a new environment where formerly significant others—parents or teachers—were not around, self-motivated strategies would be important for the participants to maintain the momentum of achieving. F2's narrative was representative:

> [90] *Since I came here* ***nobody has urged me to study.*** *When my mum calls now, she will say 'don't work too hard' or 'take good care of yourself'. She has become more concerned with what I eat than my grades.* ***I must constantly motivate myself.*** *C (her classmate) and I often encourage each other and reward ourselves if we work really hard, like having a good meal in an Italian restaurant* (F2FN Nov 02-05).

[34] F5 had a few years of working experience with a solicitor's in Taiwan and was confident in her subject knowledge in law, so she did not think subject course would pose any problems to her. See Section 6.2.

The concrete motivation maintaining strategies included ‘self-praising’, ‘talking about your progress with your friends,’ and ‘learning from the successful examples’, etc. The praises and understanding from lecturers and supervisors were considered very spirit-lifting and an essential motivating force as well.

(3) Being reflective about learning behaviour

Commencing their overseas studies, all the participants were consciously monitoring their learning progress and actively engaging themselves in self-reflection on the effectiveness and efficiency of their learning. This reflection had much to do with introspection (*neixing*, 内省) emphasized in Chinese learning culture, with the latter more focused on one’s conduct and behaviour. Facing challenges, the participants were actively searching for appropriate learning methods in their repertoire and showed concern about their ‘study orchestration’ (Meyer, 1991). For example, F6 came to realize that she needed to orchestrate reading and writing and find her best working hours or productive cycle in order to be more efficient in her studies (FN Feb 02-06). The participants not only monitored their own learning state but also had intention to observe others’ learning behaviour and would like to follow the good example. For instance, M1 said he needed to exercise stamina in order to be working for long hours (M1FN May 02-06).

The participants’ accounts also showed that these Chinese students tended to attribute their learning problems to their own factors, which revealed that they would like to take responsibility for their own learning. The regular use of this metacogntive strategy could help the participants timely rectify their learning methods and lead to changes in both approaches to learning and conceptions of learning, as shown in Chapter 7.

(4) Seeking help

Seeking help was another social strategy the participants considered necessary in dealing with adjustive demands. Co-nationals’ help was identified as most accessible

and effective: *'ask your own people for help without bothering others'* (M3B). Only when it was not available, did they turn to out-group members or academic staff. To the PhD students, help and advice from earlier cohorts were most useful:

> [91] *Whenever I come across something, academic or not academic, I don't know how to handle,* ***I will turn to 'xuezhang'****(*学长, a senior fellow student—my comment*) for their opinion, and if they say you need ask your supervisor about this, then I will feel less nervous to consult my supervisor.* (F6FN Nov. 11-05)

It seemed that the participants were less confident as to the legitimacy of their requests and what help could be expected of their supervisors. But actively seeking help from supervisors and keeping regular meeting with supervisory team was considered as active/autonomous learning. Nonetheless, seeking help among the co-nationals was a common social strategy used by the participants to solve their academic and practical problems, but not restricted by co-national network (Chalmers & Volet, 1997).

If the participants had some pleasant experiences with social strategy, these positive incidents would facilitate their process of adopting new ways of learning. F4 said that in her Chinese university students were competing against each other in studying and were even reluctant to share any good reference materials, so she had been inhibited from asking other classmates for help especially in dealing with academic work until one day an Indian girl volunteered her brief and understanding of a discussion topic, which made F4 experience classroom discussion in a new way:

> [92] *I remember clearly that one day, just before class, I learnt that we were going to discuss the next topic, which I didn't read, for I thought we were to discuss another topic in class. An Indian girl volunteered to tell me the content of that topic and also her understanding, which was very insightful and I could never think of. During the seminar, though I didn't speak up, I could understand the discussion going among the lecturer and the class. From then on,* ***I dare to ask my classmates*** *how they understand the article, they won't belittle you but* ***be happy to help you,*** *and you will be much rewarded.* (F4B).

F4's experience suggested the complexities of using strategies in intercultural learning as well as its transforming potential to renegotiate cultural and personal learning identities for successful postgraduate studies. 'Seeking help' was also related to 'face' issue, so the participants were cautious with this strategy unless they were sure that the learning environment was safe and facilitating. This finding supports Langston's (1994) argument that people may take positive experiences as opportunities to enhance learning and development. The participants reported and appreciated all kinds of help they received from the communities of practice (COP) (Wenger, 1998), either social or academic, which gave them a sense of legitimate membership in the community.

D. Achieving approach

The participants showed some concern about the close-book exams, though they had seen the previous testing papers and found the questions 'not difficult', and the lecturers would give a rough coverage of the testing paper before the exam so that the students knew what and how to prepare. Nonetheless, uncertainty about the results was permeating.

The participant said that they took grades and marks not as seriously as they did in their home universities, where grades were connected with more other things, such as scholarships and even prospective work opportunities. Nonetheless, the participants would still employ the achieving approach in order to maximize their marks.

(1) Cue-seeking

In this study, the participants all showed characteristics of 'cue-seekers', named by Miller & Parlett (1974), especially when the close-book exams were coming near. The participants manifested high sensitivity to the lecturer's instruction, and sought out chances to consult lecturers for clarifications. They were also actively looking for cues for the possible format of the testing paper. For example, they would speculate on the prospective topics on the testing paper, basing their judgment on whether the lecturer had showed interest in the topic during his/her lecture, the lecture's point of view or

even preference. For example, M1 took a typical achieving approach to his studies, both in China and in the UK. He reiterated that one must actively adapt to the new learning culture and meet the requirements here in order to be successful. He was quite confident in his judgement or appraisal of the situation and took strategies accordingly. He said,

> [93] *What you write must be in accordance with the teacher's point of view, with what the teacher said in class. If you get rid of his, just write your own ideas, your grade will be zero. I am sure that is the case.[…]* ***I don't think classroom performance has much to do with exam results.*** *Some Chinese students, who did not speak a single word in class, did much better than those active lao wai* [foreign students] *at exams* (M1B).

M1 had been consistently instrumental in learning orientations and consciously seeking cues in the new learning environment in order to achieve high in his grades. In fact, he did very well in his exams. He said he got 67 and less than 30% of students (45 out of 180) got the mark over 65, so he was quite satisfied with his academic performance and attributed his success to his adaptability and flexibility. In his words, 'you need size up the situation and play the game knowingly'. In other words, he wouldn't take risks to put forward his own ideas on the exam paper. He said,

> [94] *I think in the process of learning, they* ***encourage you to be creative, but not at the exams.*** *At exams you can only show what you are taught. You can talk anything in class. No matter how wild your ideas are, the teacher would say 'good', 'excellent', to make you feel confident;* ***but when you are doing exams, it is the same as in China.*** *The products are the same, and I'm sure you won't be awarded any extra credits for your* ***fancy ideas*** (M1B).

The participants from other departments also reported that for some subjects, the lecturer would give an outline of the points for the test and exams, what books to consult, which chapters in the book, and what contents the student need learn by heart before taking the exams, and they emphasized that memorization of details was crucial in getting high marks.

I am not sure whether this phenomenon is due to Western teachers' over-accommodation to their perceived Confucian learning culture, or as Marton and Booth (1997) suggest, Western instructors may frequently underestimate the extent to which the academic task in Western universities could best be described as Confucian approach. They claim that they are teaching higher cognitive skills, but their assessment methods instead encourage absorption, recognition and re-expression of facts. As Biggs (1996b) argues, in some Western contexts the Confucian approach will provide advantages if grades are based on an ability to solve familiar problems or to reproduce foundational knowledge. In other words, cultures of learning are insulated but synergetic: Western culture of learning is not free of the elements of Confucian culture of learning. I will come back to this point in the section of general discussion.

Previous research has also show that CHC students are more sensitive to test-taking and diligent at cue-seeking in order to conform to task requirements and achieve high marks (Biggs, 1988; Tang & Biggs, 1996; Volet & Kee, 1993). This seems therefore to be confirmed by the data here. Volet (1999) asserted this learning disposition took an ambivalent status when transferring to a Western context. However, from the student's point of view, cue-seeking strategies 'are highly appropriate candidates for transfer as they represent survival skills to find out about learning requirements in a new unfamiliar environment' (ibid: 631).

(2) *Memorizing the points for recalling at exams*

Apart from the common achieving strategies, such as sorting out the notes and handouts, the participants emphasize the importance of 'practice with time pressure': 'see how many words one can write in ten minutes' (M3). F4 also said that she would write down the answers to the essay questions beforehand and familiarized herself with them before the exam. (F4FN May 22-06)

It seemed these strategies were not unrelated with the fact that they had to write in their second language, which was perceived to be a drawback in answering the questions. Yu and Atkinson, cited in Kirby *et al.* (1996: 142) claimed that

low-proficient ESL learners tended to rote learn for subjects, which required high language skills because they lacked the vocabulary to write on their own. However, the participants of this study learned the answer by heart not because of lack of understanding but simply because of guaranteeing second language quality within the time constraint. As M1 said,

> [95] *Of course, you can't compete with British or European students in writing in English. They needn't think too much. But we are different.* ***So we'd better prepare more thoroughly beforehand, thus, you needn't spend time translating from Chinese or constructing sentences on the spot, within time limit.*** (M1FN May 22-06)

'Thorough preparation' included writing down the answers beforehand and committing them to memory so that they could reproduce them spontaneously at exams. But unlike in their home universities, the prepared answers were not the standardized model answers, but constructed by the student him/herself.

> [96] *In the past (in China), you knew the standard answer and all the students gave the same answer; but now* ***you made the answer by yourself.*** *There is no one standard version of the answer. In this sense, it is more difficult.* (M3B)

In fact, for some courses, the participants could choose whether they wanted to sit the exams or write longer essays. Most of them chose to write essays for fear of the intensity of exams. But later on, they felt that writing essays was more difficult than sitting the exams and could more easily get good mark on the latter. In their words, 'short pain (referring to sitting exams) is better than longer ones (referring to writing essays)' (M1FN May 22-06), but they also admitted that they learned most from the painful process of writing essays (F4B).

The participants' accounts and behaviour provided further evidence that cue-seeking and memorizing strategies were mainly linked to test-taking, aiming at accuracy and high grades (Biggs, 1988). While studying in a new learning culture, Chinese students are still cue-seeking for examination contents and commit prepared answers to

memory. However, as Volet (1999) contends, the belief that students are interested in performing well at the expense of understanding the materials and learning for the sake of learning is not supported by the empirical evidence (ibid: 632). Moreover, writing in a second language at high stake exams and under time constraints may reinforce, rather reduce the use of these strategies. Therefore, we can argue that these achieving strategies, treated as ambivalent transfer in Volet's (1999) categorization, are considered both legitimate and appropriate transfer from their inherited learning scripts.

E. Negotiating new ways of learning

Considering the drawbacks from their use of English with less facility, the participants were also negotiating their new ways of learning. They preferred to receive their teachers' feedback in written form, because they were worried that by talking might not make themselves understood or understand their teachers perfectly. For example, M7 had his own way of managing his supervision with his supervisor:

> [97] *To me, language is the biggest problem. Even if I were here for ten years, I doubt I could communicate clearly as the local students with my supervisor, so* ***I would make a list of topics and questions which I want to talk about with him,*** *and e-mailed him what I think about those issues two days in advance. The written form is structured and clear and complete, and I can know what problems have been solved and what are not. Therefore, our meetings are very* ***effective and efficient (****….) Sometimes I prepare some questions to ask during our* ***informal chatting*** (M7A).

F7 adopted a similar strategy and preferred to communicate with her supervisor via e-mail.The written feedback was favored not only for its clarity but also because it can be documented for later reference and consultancy. I also heard that some Chinese students tape-recorded their talk with their supervisors so that they would not miss any important instructions.

The participants felt that learning in a second language was a big challenge and even a disadvantage for them to achieve their academic goals, but to improve their English

proficiency had been both the most beneficial gain of studying in the UK. Being exposed to this English speaking country, they were consciously negotiating new ways of improving their English: M5 took the advantage of the coffee break to eavesdrop others' conversation; F5 attended Amigo activities[35] regularly just to force herself to speak English with other international students, though she was not interested in Christianity at all; F4 found her English was getting more and more fluent through reading and talking about Bible in the Bible studies group; M1 moved out of his college flat to stay with a host family so that he could have access to *'didao English'* (meaning authentic native English); F1 was not satisfied with the superficial phatic communication and tried to find 'deep' topics to talk with British students.

F. Negotiating 'in-group tendency' (Siu, 1952)

It has been widely held that sojourners tend to associate with people of their own ethnic group because of common interests and cultural heritage and in-groups can create 'a home away from home' to reinforce perceptions of the host culture (Kim, 1988; Siu, 1952). The participants in this study showed this in-group tendency as well, which was more prevalent among the departments where Chinese students' proportion was high. However, deeper analysis of this tendency showed that this tendency 'could be viewed as a situation rather than an inherent characteristic' (Spurling, 2006: 107). As M1 said,

> [98] *This is the reality. More than 70% are Chinese, so we naturally stick together with other Chinese students, in class and out of class.* ***It is not like that we don't want to associate with British students, just too many Chinese students***. (M1A).

The participants admitted that to be with co-nationals was more comfortable than be with the students from other countries, but they also considered such in-group tendency a barrier to practicing English or a 'whole experience' (Spurling, 2006)[36]

[35] Amigo gatherings are open to all international students, organized by a local Christian body on every Wednesday evening

[36] The 'whole experience' refers not only to 'better education' of the UK, but also includes 'gaining work experience in the UK, experiencing another culture, improving English language ability, making international

and should be overcome:

> [99] *Of course,* ***you will feel easier*** *to make friends with other Chinese students, and* ***you are more comfortable*** *in that circle to speak Chinese…. (But) you'll get lazier and lazier, and don't force yourself to speak English* (F5A).

F5, like others, acknowledged the co-national network provided a comfortable zone, but in the meanwhile, the network was also perceived as a mesh hampering Chinese students from enjoying the authentic learning experiences. On several occasions, F5 said that one should 'force him/herself to speak English, to shun other Chinese students'. She even refused to join any group organized either by Mainland Chinese students or Taiwanese students. The idea that group work was not encouraged among the law students was from their tutor, who also warned them that it was not good to share ideas with other classmates in case their essays were similar in content. That might be Western academics' proactive measure to prevent Chinese students' collusion, but to some participants, the question of how much help could be expected from other classmates was still elusive.

The participants acknowledged the benefits and help from associating with co-nationals, especially those who were senior sojourners or immigrants (with Chinese ethnic backgrounds) and acting as cultural mediators to pass host cultural knowledge, such as Chinese academics working in the University. Either on social occasions or during academic activities, the participants would like to consult Chinese lecturers for advice. On the one hand, they felt a natural affinity to co-nationals and less nervous in speaking Chinese; on the other hand, the Chinese lecturers were thought to know better what difficulties Chinese students needed to overcome in order to be successful. The host of a Bible studies group was a Chinese senior lecturer and

---

friends and staying in England (temporarily or permanently) after completing their degree' (Spurling,, 2006: 103). In this study, some participants actively sought opportunities for such 'whole experience'. For instance, some applied for short homestay during Christmas or holidays through 'host scheme'—a national organization introducing international students to stay with a British family for a week usually during Christmas time.

during the interval of their Bible studies, the Chinese students would turn to him for insider's advice concerning the British academic culture. F6 once said, *'Since he knew the two systems and he could know what was wrong with Chinese students and how to do about it'.* (F6FN Feb28-06)

Living abroad, the participants felt strongly the need of connecting or joining a group. In fact, both Mainland Chinese students and Taiwan students had their own spontaneous study groups. They met regularly in someone's flat, studying on their own, and took turns to cook or had pot luck. Since the members were from different disciplines, they were engaged only in a collective form of self-study rather than the collaborative learning advocated in the West.

In the Mainland, those coming back from studying abroad were given a new collective identity, '*haigui*',[37] literally meaning 'the overseas returnee' and this new identity would create a network when they were back in China and might bring about prospective business opportunity and career development as well:

> [100] *Chinese students majoring in Business must have the awareness to develop guanxi, (meaning social networking-my comment).* ***Your classmates may be your partners in future,*** *especially when you once underwent adversities together. ... In China, haigui* (returnees from overseas—my comment) *have become a strong force. We should help each other when abroad, not like at home people of the same line jostle against each other.* (M1FN June11-06)

Previous studies failed to notice that Chinese *'guanxi* 关系*'* (or 'renmai 人脉' by Taiwanese students) — relations and networks— are not just transferable to a new place, but also can be created in new space.

In short, to the participants, co-national network played a crucial role in providing

(a) emotional support, spiritual encouragement and motivation in one's studies (see the section of Adjustment in Affect)

(b) practical help and problem-solving suggestions in dealing with overseas living

[37] 'Turtle' and 'return' are homophonic in Chinese.

and studying, i.e. *xuezhang*'s insider advice or other mediators' (such as Chinese academics working in the British university) guidance.

(c) spontaneous collective learning (SCOLL, Tang, 1996)outside classroom.

(d) possibilities for future professional network and new collective identity *haigui* 海归.

The findings of this study are generally consistent with those of earlier studies on Chinese students' patterns of seeking help (Spencer-Oatey and Xiong, 2006) and Bochner *et al.*'s (1977) functional model of overseas students' friendship patterns, as reviewed in Section 3.4.4, but they also challenge the counterproductive view of ethnic communication in the process of adjustment as in the literature which posits co-national network and host culture in a rival position (see Berry, 1990; 1997; Kim, 1988; 1992; 2001), reviewed in Section 2.2 of Chapter 2.

6.5 Summary and Interim Discussion

In this section I have shown Chinese students' perception about British teaching and learning culture and how they were grappling with the new learning requirements and adjusted affectively, cognitively and behaviourally in order to fit in the new learning environment by employing coping resources from their inherited culture of learning on the one hand and negotiating new ways of learning on the other. In the following section of this chapter, I shall discuss the main findings about their perceptions and acculturative methods (Rudmin, 2009) to see how much this research supports or challenges previous studies.

On the affective level, the emotional capital (Cousin, 2006) possessed by the participants motivates them to conform to the new teaching and learning norms and be responsive to the expectations from the new significant others, i.e. teachers or supervisors, and they could explicitly identify the main challenges confronting them from the British learning culture, which include independent learning, verbal

participation, critical learning, and teacher-student role relations. However, due to the implicit nature of the academic norms, the participants' understanding of either the declarative or the procedural knowledge about the new learning culture was still partial, not without misinterpretation, which may affect their initial adjustment and result in unpredictable behaviours. These findings confirm those of the previous studies that significant differences exist in learning, teaching, and assessment between Chinese and British learning cultures, which pose great difficulties and challenges to Chinese students in their commencing period. But the data also lend support to the studies which refute the stereotyped views of Chinese learners' passivity, reticence, and rote learning. This study shows that Chinese students are more positive about and sensitive and adaptable to the new learning environments as claimed by the studies conducted with contextual approaches (see Section 3.4.5 of Chapter 3), but, despite their strong willingness to conform to the new learning norms, they were consciously feeling incompetent in fulfilling the requirements and expectation from the new learning environment, especially in critical learning.

The adjustive resources (Lazarus, 1976: 47) the participants utilized to fit in the learning environment, including emotion-focused strategies and problems-focused strategies (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), reflected their inherited cultural beliefs of learning. Emotion strategies adopted included 'adjusting the state of heart-mind' to be more open to differences and forcing oneself to conform to the new learning culture. This emotional adjustment motivated the participants to consciously adopt problem-focused acculturative methods in order to fulfill the new learning requirements. These intellectual coping resources, including both cognitive, metacogntive, and social-affective strategies, also manifested the characteristics of the Chinese learning culture, which were apparently successfully transferred to the new learning environment and facilitated their academic adjustment.

6.5.1 Transferability of Chinese Culture of Learning

The metacognitive and social-affective strategies were more resorted to by the participants than cognitive strategies, and transferred positively to the new learning culture, while others were constantly subject to the process of adjustment, through trial and error. One reason for that may be Chinese students' inherited learning conceptions are more social-affectively focused and metacognitively-oriented; and another reason is perhaps due to the fact that learning in a new learning culture is more metacognitively taxing than learning in home universities. Among all the coping resources, co-national networking turned out to be a very effective support in terms of both emotional needs and counseling resources for academic adjustment. The findings of this study challenge the general literature on adjustment which treats the sojourner's inherited culture as counterproductive during acculturation (Berry, 1990; Kim, 1988) and call for specific theories to account for short-term academic adjustment and the interactions of cultures of learning.

The data about the students' coping strategies demonstrate that effortful learning, repetitive learning, and respectful learning are still their main cultural resources to resort to at least during their initial academic adaptation period. This finding lends further support to the evidence that metacogntive strategies and social-affective strategies are positively transferable across learning cultures, but cognitive learning strategies are more contextualized and sensitive to different learning tasks, therefore less transferable to the new learning culture (Biggs, 1984; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Veenman & Verheij, 2003; Volet, 1999). In this study, the use of these metacognitive and social-affective learning strategies reflected the participants' fundamental disposition and values in their inherited learning culture (Volet, 1999), and can be seen as legitimate ways of good learning.

In short, during the process of adjustment to the new learning environment, some of their inherited learning behaviours were relinquished for their inappropriate transfer, such as the verbatim reproduction of the lecturer's notes and ideas; some learning

behaviours or dispositions continued, if not reinforced, such as Chinese learners' propensity to cue-seeking and imitating, high motivation, and effort attribution. In the meanwhile, the participants were also exploring and negotiating new ways of learning, such as seeking assistance through communication, researching and constructing knowledge for classroom presentation, etc., constantly developing new cultural resources as well. According to Volet (1999), the aspects of learning that travel well across cultural educational contexts are those that reflect students' fundamental belief system about learning, and those that only reflect the aspects of specific educational systems are not part of the learner's fundamental values and beliefs, therefore, they are amenable to change (Volet, 1999:638).

6.5.2 Cultural or/and Contextual Factors

In explaining Chinese students' reluctance or passivity in classroom participation, previous research gave too much emphasis on the cultural characteristics of the students but many contextual or situational factors were overlooked. The interview data of this study demonstrate that both reference group, cultural identity, and group dynamics, and even curriculum bias, are important factors affecting voluntary classroom participation and communication. Chinese students' classroom participation pattern is too complicated to deserve a generalized sweeping statement. Various modes of participation exemplified in this chapter suffice to say that classroom (verbal) participation is not a reliable indicator for academic ability or genuine engagement.

6.5.3 Adaptation or Adjustment?

The participants' experience of accommodating to a new learning culture in this study provided evidence for Kim's (1988; 2001) stress-adaptation-growth dynamic, but not necessarily a process of unlearning inherited cultural rules. In other words, one does not have to give up one's culture to acquire another culture, but engages in an 'additive' process; new skills or ways of being are added to one's original 'repertoire'

(Bennett 1993: 52). This creative process of restructuring makes it possible for an individual to strive for a balance or congruence between their inherited culture of learning and the new learning environment by drawing 'selectively and strategically from the two opposing categories to open new alternative.' (Soja 1996: 5) or mediate between the two cultures of learning when congruence is not achievable.

If we acknowledge the differentiation made by Anderson (1994) between adaptation which demands the acceptance of the validity of the new value systems, and adjustment, in which sojourners may not change or abandon their deep beliefs and values but negotiate to accommodate to the new environment, these Chinese students' acculturation is more an adjustment than adaptation process. On the one hand, they employ their own cultural resources to best advantage in the new learning practices; on the other hand, some learning behaviour or habits are too deeply entrenched to be changed in short time. Nonetheless, with the boundary of the cultural frame of reference being constantly pushed back with the new stimuli, one's perception of the environment and cultural practices is also subject to adjusting accordingly. In other words, one's perception is always in a dynamic and dialectical interaction with both his/her inherited cultural frame of mind and his/her new experiences.

The study supports the distinction made by Searle and Ward (1990) between psychological adjustment and social-cultural adjustment. However, it also shows that learning adjustment or academic adjustment is not the same as other forms of sociocultural acculturative process. The fluctuation of emotional state and the unpredictability of learning behaviour underlie the necessity to distinguish between general social-cultural and psychological adaptation models from the models of academic adjustment, though these two aspects are often intertwined.

Over a period of cultural adjustment, intellectual capacities, disciplinary way of thinking and doing, and professional socializations are perceived to be but more important than cultural constraints for academic success. The validity of the learning model is reflected in the relationship between time and adjustment; however, the

linearity suggested in the curve or stage theories or models is not fully confirmed.

6.5.4 Other Issues

Besides various resonances, the findings of this chapter also show some areas which may have been overlooked by the previous studies:

A. Imitation/ Mimicry is a Default Position to Learn

Faced with great pressure and uncertainty, the participants realized that they should adapt to the new learning culture as quickly as possible, but they consciously felt their incompetence in meeting those requirements as shown in last two sections. With limited skills and partial knowledge, a purposive coping strategy or a default position for the participants to adopt is modelling and imitating.

In addressing learners' incapability to master a threshold concept in a *liminal* state, Meyer and Land (2003) pointed out that in this suspended state the learner's understanding 'approximates to a kind of mimicry or lack of authenticity'. So 'mimicry' implies 'partial understanding' or 'misunderstanding' and can also be a form of ritualised learning, a 'functional naivety' (Meyer and Shanahan, 2003): 'functional' because it gets the students through their exams and 'naive' because it does not lead to mastery. Meyer and Land (2005) described this utilitarian notion as 'pre-liminal variation' because students do not even enter the prospectively transitional state of liminality.[38] In this study, the participants revealed their misunderstanding or partial understanding of the newly acquired concepts, such as 'independent learning', 'participation', 'critical thinking', 'originality', which may lead to their acceptance of these terms at face value and imitation in a form of functional mimicry. Therefore, conformity in behaviour does not entail the real understanding and acceptance of the values, and the opposite may be true as well.

[38] In fact, J. H. F. Meyer (personal communication April of 2008) does not encourage the use of the concept 'liminal' or 'liminality' outside of disciplines (or subject knowledge learning). But the state of the participants found themselves in during their intercultural adjustment is analogous to the 'liminal' state experienced by the students in their subject learning.

Modelling and imitating, as an essential part in Chinese learning culture, is considered as a legitimate way of learning or knowing by the participants in this study, without any negative connotations. Therefore, I argue that **imitation** is different from **mimicry**, which, the latter, does not lead to mastery, whereas imitation can be a positive posture to productively negotiate the *liminal* space and help the students make sense of their new learning experiences and gradually move to mastery with constant reflection, and leads to new understanding as well. In Chapter 7 we will see that some of the participants' beliefs and conceptions of learning do change over time.

B. Deference to Authority is Both Given and Earned

The teacher-student role relations have a great bearing on the pedagogical issue of learner autonomy and teacher authority. In view of the fact that teacher's interactional authority has been socially and institutionally established, 'how we view the exercise of authority in interaction will depend on our attitude to education and the society it serves.' (Widdowson, 1990:188) Chinese students are accustomed to the teacher's interactional authority, but that does not preclude that Chinese students do not welcome an equal, more democratic teacher-student interactional relationship. However, as for the transactional authority, which is achieved by virtue of academic attainment and professional qualifications, the participants' expectation confirmed Widdowson's (1990) statement that the authoritative role of the teacher should not be diminished or undermined and must be retained.

Power distance (Hofstede, 1991) has been an explanatory construct in cross-cultural research on interpersonal relations, and the co-occurrence of these two terms is often taken for granted in practice. However, this is not necessarily the case in all cultures (Spencer-Oatey, 1997, 2000). For example, Spencer-Oatey's (1997) research on British and Chinese conceptions of tutor-postgraduate student relations found that the variables power and closeness were significantly negatively correlated for the British subjects, the greater the degree of power difference perceived between tutors and postgraduate students, the greater the degree of distance perceived, and vice versa;

whereas there was no correlation between the two in the sample of the Chinese subjects. That is to say, the degree of power difference perceived between tutors and postgraduate students was not associated with the degree of distance perceived. The finding of this study supports this result in that the social distance between the teacher and the student in the British learning culture is perceived to be much shorter than in China, but this interactional closeness does not diminish the teacher's transactional power position in their mind. The findings of this study also show that the PhD students, who keep regular contact with their supervisors, not only feel more emotionally attached to their supervisors but also place even more trust on their supervisor's guidance in their research than Master students to their course lecturers or dissertation supervisors. And this trust, attachment, and receptivity may be easily perceived as dependence and deference.

C. Teacher as a Model Learner

Like previous findings about Chinese students' overseas learning experience, Chinese students likely encounter the friction between teacher-regulation and student-regulation of learning after entering the British learning culture. However, the interview data of this study show that this friction in belief is a kind of 'constructive friction' (Vermunt & Verloop, 1999), which represents situations where students, though unable to use a certain learning activity independently, are able to do so with the guidance of an expert. According to Vermunt and Verloop (1999), this kind of constructive friction emphasizes the roles of teachers in initiating and influencing the thinking processes that students use to learn and will help and challenge students to try new ways of learning and thinking. For example, if a student is unable to process the subject matter critically on his/her own, an appropriate teacher-regulation strategy will be necessary to stimulate the student to engage in critical thinking by demonstrating the different activities and making knowledge construction and utilization activities overt and explicit:

Teachers should demonstrate the use of learning and thinking strategies important for the

subject domain, so students can develop a clear picture of what a certain strategy means and how it can be used.

(Vermunt and Verloop, 1999: 264)

In fact, 'teacher as model learner' has been congruent with Chinese learning culture which highlights teacher's expositional role in teaching and learning. Through following the teacher's way step by step, the students leap out of the liminality over the threshold onto real mastery.

D. Passive vs. Active Coping Strategies

Hsu *et al.*, (2008) assert that coping pattern concepts developed from an individualistic cultural perspective are focused on the individual autonomy and control of the environment while neglecting the relationships between the individual and others or between the individual and the environment. Therefore, coping strategies developed from a Western cultural perspective cannot be directly applied in an Eastern cultural context.

The Chinese learning culture puts great emphasis on efforts and is closely related to the Confucian belief in human malleability as reviewed in Section 3.4 and also presented in Chapter 5. The individual feels that changing themselves is easier than changing others or the environment, and, thus, adjust their 'state of heart and mind' to cooperate with the needs of others or the environment.

This could be related to the findings from a review of studies comparing American and Asian people on control-related behaviours (Weisz, Rothbaum & Blackburn, 1984). They concluded that the Americans placed a greater emphasis on primary control, whereas the Asians showed a preference for secondary control. In primary control, people deliberately act to influence existing realities, such as the environment and other people; in secondary control, people make personal adjustments to accommodate existing realities (Rothbaum, Weisz, & Snyder, 1982). Chinese students in this study fit this category as well. They do not actively exert impact on the existing

environment but accept it in an unquestioning way in the first place. Their complying attitude and lack of apparent actions may seem passive from Western point of view, but we can argue this seemingly passive coping strategy is a positive posture in intercultural adjustment, not just manifesting emotional resilience but also representing a suspension state of one's beliefs, values, and personal interests and should be much encouraged in intercultural space.

Qualities like forbearance, patience, endurance, restraint, and tolerance, have been considered good virtues in Chinese culture, and cultivating these qualities in themselves is an important in Chinese culture of learning as well. In this study, almost all the participants admitted that they consciously exercised forbearance and perceived it as a positive mental coping strategy in facing difficulties. They believed perseverance and tenacity can eventually solve the problem successfully.

With reference to Bennett's six-staged model (see Section 2.2.2), the data from this study can confidently show that Chinese students start with ethnorelative stage rather than ethnocentric stage in terms of their attitude toward the new culture of learning. The perceived differences between the two learning cultures are both acknowledged and accepted, though the new norms and practices are strange and daunting to them. The reasons for this immediate acceptance of an alien culture are, apart from the prestigious status of British education in Chinese learners' mind, which I have mentioned in the earlier sections on their motivation of studying abroad, in the UK to be specific, also come much from Chinese learning culture, which put much emphasis on deference, humility, and respectfulness towards learning from others. Therefore, to some extent, instead of being considered as an inhibitor, Chinese culture of learning on conformity and deference provides adjustive resources for their acculturation to the new learning culture.

E. Implicit vs. Explicit: Can Values be Taught

Much research on international students calls for explicitness in teaching practices and essay requirements (Gallois, *et al.*, 1995; Holmes, 2004; Ryan, 2000; 2005; Turner,

2006). However, we need to be aware that being explicit about the rules of the game is not enough, which may only make students mimic from outside under the coercive power of foreign knowledge and skills.

Learning in the new learning culture, students learnt from the course guide or were told by lecturers or supervisors the explicit knowledge about what they were expected of, such as, independent learning, active participation in classroom and voicing one's own opinion, engagement with critical thinking and no plagiarism. In this study, those who attended pre-sessional language courses could explicitly recount the requirements of the academic writing, but still they felt this hard knowledge could not guarantee their successful function and were ambivalent about the values of these practices. In other words, they obtained the declarative knowledge of 'know-that', but had not acquired procedural knowledge of 'know-how' and 'why'—the conceptual knowledge 'know-about' (Leinhardt, 1992). Without empathic genuine appreciation of the values behind the practice, they may linger at the *liminal* stage, mimicking these practices in their interests, with or without interest. Byram (1997) also suggests that beliefs and values are non-explicit reference frames and could not be explicitly taught but would be understood through experiential observation and discovery with genuine interests and empathy.

Therefore, to gain genuine understanding and appreciation of these cultural practices, students need cultivate intercultural *savoirs* (Byram, 1997), so that the students can really broaden their reference frame, internalise the valuable practices of the new culture of learning, or mediate between and mobilize the two learning cultural resources to create new forms of learning culture for their own purpose. In short, acquiring cultural values is tacit, and even troublesome (Perkins, 1999), which, entails intellectual humility and cognitive endeavour, together with ethnographic participation and intercultural competence.

In sum, this study provides further support for the statement that transitional experience in a new learning culture was initially seen as 'a painful and testing

process' (Brown & Holloway, 2008: 243), but believed to be positive in its learning outcome. The findings of this study also suggest that the existing literature on intercultural adjustment may fall short in accounting for the complexities experienced by sojourning students during their academic adjustment to a new culture of learning.

Chapter 7 Changes in Learning Beliefs

Everything man is and does is modified by learning and is therefore malleable.

(Hall, 1976: 42)

7.1 Introduction

In the last two chapters I have presented the participants' inherited beliefs about learning and their perceptions of the British learning culture respectively and I have analysed their processes of adjustment as a consequence of new learning experiences. In this chapter I am to report what impact their new learning experiences and their process of adjustment have on their beliefs system about learning. I have highlighted in Chapter 5 the salient features of their inherited beliefs about knowing and learning, including their view of knowledge accumulation and transmission, their emphasis on effortful and respectful learning, and their instrumental and moral orientations in conceiving of learning. Their inherited beliefs system about learning constitutes a three-dimensional framework, i.e. what-dimension, how-dimension, and why-dimension. Following this line, in the present chapter I shall illustrate with interview accounts and field notes how the participants modified and expanded their beliefs system about knowing and learning by assimilating and accommodating the norms and values of the new learning culture as a consequence of their adjustment process analysed in the previous chapter. This chapter is concluded by the discussion on the new forms of culture of learning being created from the interaction of Chinese and British learning cultures, and their relevance to the theoretical strands of scholarship reviewed in Chapter 2, i.e. personal epistemological and intellectual development (Perry, 1970), transformative learning theory (Mizerow, 1990), and intercultural competence theory (Byram, 1997).

7.2 Change in What-dimension

In Chapter 5, we have seen that to accumulate knowledge is an essential construct in

the participants' conceptions of learning. They tended to view knowledge as a discrete entity, transmitted from a learned master or teacher to an apprentice or student. Moreover, in their mind, knowledge, as a system of canonical facts, was impersonal and collective in nature, not to be questioned or repudiated rashly. However, after almost an academic year of receptive and reflective learning, the participants gradually came to realize the different values and attitudes the two learning cultures accorded to knowledge and consciously reflected upon the nature of knowledge.

7.2.1 Change in Conceptions of Knowledge

A. Differentiating Knowledge from Data/Information

The participants from both social sciences and sciences backgrounds held knowledge in high esteem. When they perceived that the knowledge and theories they deemed factual and static were challenged or even torn to shreds, they had to pause to think what counted as true knowledge.

> [1] *I think we had a blind faith in books, and tended to think they were true all the time. In fact, more often, they were just information, without being proved yet, or simply cannot be tested. We used not to discriminate knowledge from information, and nowadays, all kinds of information are pouring into your head, you* ***have to differentiate what is useful knowledge and what is simply information***. (M3B)

M3's point of view about the difference between knowledge and information was widely shared by other participants. Quite a number of them began to show doubt about the validity of the materials in books and awareness of what sources of information were more reliable. For example, some master students said that they used to cite obscure articles from the Internet without thinking of their validity or reliability as long as they could support their points of view.

M6 reflected that what was in the textbook was not knowledge yet until the student internalise it:

[2] *To think what we learnt from those classes, the so-called knowledge, in fact,* ***the materials in the book were just data. They are not knowledge yet until you internalise it.*** *A good teacher should make the student learn how to turn the data into knowledge. This is very important*. (M6B)

He used the word 'internalise' (*内化*) to mean 'thoroughly understand and accept', and it seemed to involve not only cognitive but also affective commitment in it.

B. 'Knowledge is Personal'

M6 also emphasized that a teacher must be passionate about knowledge, and transmit his/her enthusiasm to affect the student:

[3] *If a teacher has no passion for knowledge, he/she'd better quit his/her job. A good teacher should make the student* ***feel the beauty of knowledge****. He/she should teach the student that learning is not just to find a job;* ***learning can liberate one's mind*** (M6B)

According to M6, even the science knowledge was not cool facts; there was beauty embedded in the formula and theorem. But without one's own experiential understanding (*ti hui* 体会), they were just information or raw data, not becoming a part of one's being. So, the former belief in impersonal and collective nature of science knowledge was tinted with personal and affective elements.

Similarly, F1 started to show disapproval of the so-called knowledgeable teachers who were just imparting textbook knowledge without their own opinions:

[4] *Most of our teachers (at home universities) are just zhao ben xuan ke (*照本宣科, meaning teaching in accordance with the textbook—my comment*). They themselves may not believe it. This school thinks that... and that school thinks that, and* ***they neither challenge nor give their own opinions. Knowledge is not the things to show off.*** *(…)* ***You must believe it yourself and show your stand. I think my attitude towards knowledge is changed.*** (F1C)

In Chapter 5 the analysis of participants' inherited beliefs reveals that they tend to view knowledge as something collective instead of individual, an external entity to be

transmitted and stored in one's head. In their later interviews, most of the participants felt evidently the different approaches to knowledge between their previous learning experiences and the new learning experiences and talked in one way or another about Chinese conservative attitude towards knowledge, that is, 'to transmit', 'to store in the brain', 'to recall from memory', 'to apply to practice'; whereas the British learning culture emphasised speculative or sceptical attitudes toward the established knowledge system by encouraging constant questioning and critiquing. These two different attitudes were best summarized by M6 as follow:

> [5] *From their lecture, I learnt a new way to look at knowledge. There are two approaches to learning: one is 'to have' and the other is 'to be'. If you* ***simply memorize*** *what you have read,* ***then it is 'to have'****; if you* ***focus on the ideas and arguments, the author's thinking vein, what pitfalls in it, then, after critiquing, you have made the information you read become your own knowledge.*** *This attitude is* ***'to be'****, not just 'to have' knowledge* (M6B).

The notion 'to own knowledge' is deeply ingrained in Chinese mind where knowledge and the person are in a dualistic separate state, as discussed in Section 5.2. In contrast, 'to be', with existential implications, seems to provide a new perspective to look at the relationship between knowledge and being. It transcends the delimitation of person-world, for what one learns externally about the world would be transformed and contributed to one's internal horizon and growth. We can see that the participants' conception of knowledge has shifted to an even more sophisticated stance where no real distinction exists between learning and life in general. In other words, the acquired knowledge of the outside world is conceived of as becoming a part of one's inner self, and perhaps the self is also a constituting part of the world and need knowing and exploring. This holistic view of person-world is similar to Marton *et al.*'s (1993) 'change as a person' as discussed in Section 3.2.1, but more consistent with the ultimate purpose of learning emphasised in Chinese learning culture—self-perfection.

C. Certainty of Knowledge

Viewing knowledge as certain or uncertain is concerned with the nature of one's

epistemological beliefs. In Section 3.2.2, we have reviewed Schommer's (1994) four dimensions of epistemological beliefs, one of which is concerned with the stability of knowledge, which has become the key construct in measuring intellectual maturity of a university student since Perry's (1970) pioneering work and we have argued in Section 3.2.4 that personal epistemology should be considered as part of one's conceptions of learning. In this study, by reflecting on their previous 'habitual action' (Leung and Kember, 2003) and the perceived value of their new learning practice, most participants showed signs of development in their understanding of knowledge, which constituted an important part of their personal epistemological development.

F7 in the third interview gave an account of how she was totally at a loss when she found that Marxist philosophical tenets she had learnt in the university and firmly believed were discredited and confronted with other voices:

> [6] *In the beginning, the new information rendered me completely at a loss, for* ***what you were learning was in conflicts with what you had learnt before.*** *My first reaction was 'this must be wrong: how come the new (knowledge) was not accordant with what I had believed for so many years? Why so many people abroad took opposite sides and couldn't care less about what I had learned? They said what I upheld was only a tiny part of the whole issue, just a drop in the ocean and advised me not to be limited by those (doctrines). As if there was a voice telling me that the more I had learnt before, the more ignorant I became; and if I were blank, perhaps I could learn more here. So, just like this.* ***Those conflicts and contradictions really irritated me and had a great impact on me, which urged me to know more about them.*** *And when you know more about them, probably, some viewpoints would convince you. And you would feel that 'right, there is something in what they say'. Then you will come to realize that* ***everything has its own cream and dross. No theory enjoys universal application to all societies, all mankind.*** *So the universality we held to in the past maybe a fallacy. Everything has its relativity and limitation. It is only applicable in certain environment or cultural context.* (F7C)

Upon reflection, she attributed her biased or limited view to the Chinese intellectual

tradition in general and Chinese political pedagogy in particular. She started to read extensively in the library and learnt to be open to others' comments. Gradually, she questioned what she had taken for granted. This questioning and reflection prompted a shift in her personal epistemology on the uncertainty of knowledge:

> [7] *I think some knowledge is certain, like 1+1=2, which is the basic starting point, but some theories we learnt might not be, such as, 'socialism is superior to capitalism', or 'the world is materialistic, without gods', because these statements could not be proved right or wrong. Atheism is, after all, a belief. Belief in gods and disbelief in gods are all faiths, and you can't say that atheism is certain knowledge. I don't know how to put it, I want to say* ***some theories and knowledge are universal, and absolute, but some have their own relativity and limit of applicability***. (F7C)

The contextual applicability of knowledge was gradually recognized by the participants during their learning process, as commented by M1:

> [8] *In the past we tended to believe that everything written in the textbooks were truth. But when we are studying here, we come to realize that* ***all those theories we learnt before all have their own context of application****. For example, theoretically, marketing department is the leading department in a company, and if you go back to China and tell the personnel department 'You are subordinated to me', I'm sure you will be kicked out first.* ***So theories are theories****.* ***You can't just say this theory is true or not. You should put it in the context.*** (M1C)

The critical approach adopted by the lecturer to the textbook and other supplementary materials caused other cognitive conflicts among the participants and did not fit comfortably with their schemata of classroom learning, which was not prepared to refute but to receive 'the essentials', 'the selected, valued texts', the canon of knowledge as shown in Section 5.2. Therefore, they felt quite puzzled at commencing stage when an article was criticised scathingly in class, as F2 once wondered: 'since the article had no merits, then what was the point of reading it?' (F2FN Nov02-05)

However, with considerable empathy, she admitted that although she was not used to learning in this way yet, she believed that this kind of training would improve one's discerning ability and speed up intellectual development and maturity, which, in her understanding, included the following traits, such as 'being less credulous', 'not following blindly', 'not parroting other's views'.

> [9] *You are getting* ***less credulous about book knowledge, even the knowledge from the teacher,*** *for the teacher himself said frankly that* ***he was not sure about it either****. One* ***can't follow blindly and echo the views of others.*** *We need do research to find the answer for ourselves* (F2C).

An interesting finding of this study was that, not as predicted by some scholars, such as Cortazzi (1990), discussed in Section of 3.5.3, the teacher's frankness about 'not being sure of the matter' did not decrease the authoritativeness of the teacher's image in the student's eye; on the contrary, most participants attributed their British teacher's reservation to the rigorous or meticulous attitude toward scholarship dominant in the Western research environment and their respect for knowledge and empirical research.

According to F1, to overcome the tendency of being subjective and to respect objective results was also the indicator of intellectual maturity, as is evident from her third interview:

> [10] *It is quite often that* ***the research results are not as you expected,*** *like this time. I couldn't prove my hypothesis and I really got panic. I don't know what to do about that. I talked with my supervisor and he said* ***it was not uncommon that the results were not supportive of the hypothesis.*** *Different people might come to different results if their samples or research instruments are different. Analysing the factors leading to the results is what the research is all about* (F1C).

Reflecting on the research papers in China, she criticized that most of the papers were simply subjective opinions, for they were not empirical research at all, or they came up with the conclusions first even before the research was conducted. Her conclusion

was ‘Chinese emphasize the result but overlook the process—the research methodology’ (F1FN June 25-06).

In short, exposed to different teaching and learning practice in dealing with knowledge, the participants gradually came to re-examine the legitimacy of their knowledge, doubt its certainty and began to acknowledge its relativity and contextual applicability. This finding confirms Boulton-Lewis *et al.*’s (2001) and Dart, *et al.*’s (2000) claim that epistemological beliefs are neither innate nor fixed. On the one hand, we cannot exclude the role of education play in the development of epistemological beliefs as in Perry’s (1970) research, but on the other hand, we need see that intercultural experience and intercultural competence do play a catalyst role in this process. I will come back to this point in the discussion section.

D. New Understanding of Accumulation and Creation of Knowledge

In Section 5.2, I have pointed out that much emphasis was put upon knowledge accumulation in Chinese learning culture. Although great importance was also attached to creativity and originality, it was conceived of as an ability of higher level or a pioneering spirit to make innovations, which had to be based on the years of consolidation of knowledge and beyond of reach of the student. In fact, the participants came to agreement that in Chinese learning culture, encouraging originality and creativity still remained at the discourse level, and never institutionally took effect in educational practice. Neither the teacher nor students themselves believed that they were in the position to create knowledge because they believed that there was a temporal or sequential order (*xun xu jian jin*, 循序渐进) between accumulation and creation of knowledge. In other words, creativity couldn’t happen unless accumulation is solid enough.

The participants’ later accounts evidenced that the belief in the sequential order of accumulation and creation started giving way to a synchronous or even parallel view of the two:

[11] *You can* ***think and generate your own ideas while you are absorbing new knowledge. Creating and absorbing could happen simultaneously. It is not the case that you can't create until you complete all the reading****. [...] I have fostered a habit of taking notes while reading along, scribbling down the new ideas popping into my head, and gradually, the accumulation of these writing will make a chapter* (of the thesis) (F7B).

It seemed that to F7 generating one's own ideas equalled creativity, and originality of the thesis mainly lay in one's new ideas. Though the participants did not conceive of creativity or originality in the same way, as discussed in Section 6.3, it was not considered as something beyond their reach any more. The following quote best illustrated most participants' shift in understanding the relation between knowledge accumulation and creation:

[12] *In China, the traditional intellectuals emphasize gewu zhizhi* (格物致知, meaning deep study of the nature of phenomena to attain knowledge—my comment). ***And firstly, you need accumulate knowledge****.* ***Personal points of view do not count unless you are accomplished in certain area.*** *That is what we understand at home, i.e. to learn is to learn knowledge, to put it in your head, to collect step by step.* ***Creativity must be based on the accumulation of certain knowledge; otherwise, you are not qualified to do that.*** *When you come here, you'll find* ***that is not the case.*** *Even if you are a pupil in a primary school, you should have your own opinion about the matter.* ***Learning is very personal. You need to seek what you need and analyze by yourself and come to your own conclusion. That could be done at any stage*** (F4B).

In this account, the participant reflected about the intellectual hierarchy among Chinese scholarship: 'it is not that personal point of view does not count; what counts is *who* says it' (M5FN April20-06), which means, in terms of creativity, only great masters (*dajia* 大家) are qualified to create knowledge. F4 perceived that in British culture of learning, creativity was encouraged and could happen at any stage of learning, even in primary schools. Not denying the importance of knowledge accumulation, the participants' understanding of creativity or originality was much

extended. This finding may provide evidence for learners' perspective transformation advocated by Mezirow (1991) and Taylor (1994a; 1994b) who claim that the revision of meaning structures from experiences lead to personal transformation; but in the meanwhile, we need to point out that this change in perspective is not in the sense of complete overthrow, as implied in Mezirow's original theory, but is getting more inclusive and emancipatory for the student to act on alternative understandings (Hoff, 2008).

7.2.2 Change in Conceptions of Ability

A. Emphasis on Higher Order Cognitive Abilities

The changes in the participants' conceptions about knowledge seemed to have a direct impact on their other learning beliefs and performance. Striving to meet the new learning requirements, the participants were more aware of the importance of developing higher order cognitive abilities, such as relating new knowledge to the existing one, constructing one's own ideas, questioning, and critical thinking, all of which were felt less emphasized in their previous learning environment.

(1) Relating and 'integral comprehension' (融会贯通)

The participants, who were continuing their subject studies, fully acknowledged that owing to the Chinese educational system, which emphasized knowledge transmission and consolidation (巩固), they had laid a solid foundation in their subject knowledge, which greatly facilitated their academic survival or success in the new learning environment. However, they also admitted that what they learned at home universities were mostly dry theories and hard facts, involving limited understanding and application. For example, M1 (from the Business School) said that even the textbook they used here was exactly the same as they used in his home university, but, unlike here, little attention was given to relating the theories to practice or considering the contextual factors in application. In contrast, the practical approach in the British learning culture was positively commented:

[13] *Here,* ***practice is more important,*** *and the theoretical study must be closely related to practice. The examples the teacher used in class are real cases. At exams, it is said that we are to analyse* ***practical real cases,*** *too. Moreover, doing Finance entails* ***a wide range of knowledge, so the interrelations between subjects are much emphasized,*** *and the students can really* *'huo xue huo yong',* (活学活用, meaning 'learn in more ways and apply in ingenuity'—my comment).

In fact, innovative learning and applying (活学活用) has been a much advocated pedagogical objective in Chinese learning culture, but, ironically, the participants felt that it was finally embodied and realized in the British curriculum.

Despite seeking systematic learning, many Chinese students used to treat their knowledge acquired from each subject as isolated units of facts without being aware of the interrelations between or among these subjects. Take M4 for example, he did not realize that he had already possessed the knowledge foundation required when he was assigned his PhD project in the Engineering department:

[14] A*t first I didn't know what I was going to do here. Since they sponsored me and I didn't need to worry about my life here, I just came. When I got here, they assigned me this project, and I really got a nasty shock, because it was not my field. I told my supervisor I knew nothing about this, because my major was hydromechanics, but he said 'no problem, you will catch up. You will be doing fine'. I really did not understand why. But now I began to understand that, in fact, I had already acquired those knowledge before I came here, and I just did not realize* ***the link between /among those knowledge****. I think that is the biggest problem in our (China) education: the student is just taught to acquire knowledge, but not to* ***organize knowledge and build relationship between/among the subjects.*** *My* ***knowledge foundation is fairly solid,*** *and my marks on the transcripts are also very good, which impressed them. But before I came here, if you asked me what I was good at, I could only say I was good at taking exams. That is true. I'm serious*. (M4B)

Not until he was on the UK PhD program did M4 come to realize the importance of organizing knowledge and establish relations between knowledge systems. With solid

knowledge foundation in different subjects, all he needed to do was activate the 'inert knowledge' (Perkins, 1999) reserve and relate one another to construct new knowledge. This shift from an atomistic to a holistic approach to organize knowledge constituted the most significant step towards deep understanding of the complexity of phenomena and an important aspect of learning to learn. I will revisit the latter in the next section. Like M4, several other participants began to show awareness of relating compartmentalized knowledge learnt from different subjects to get a holistic understanding of the matter, which was often referred as 'a breakthrough to integral comprehension' ('*rong hui guan tong*', 融会贯通), the culmination of the learning process in traditional Chinese learning culture, which was described by de Bary as

> *a comprehensive understanding of things in their undifferentiated unity or wholeness, which eventually dawns on one (i.e., an understanding which is not necessarily an exhaustive knowledge of things in their particularity but which brings a fusion of cognitive awareness and affective response, overcoming the dichotomy of self and other, inner and outer, etc.)*
>
> (de Bary, 1985, cited in Munro, 1985: 21)

Again, this culminating stage of learning, much sought after at home, was experienced while away. The participants' conscious attempts at holistic approach to knowledge construction are exactly what Marton & Säljö (1976) define as 'deep approach'. So the conclusion drawn here is that the challenges of the new learning requirements expand and deepen Chinese students' approach to learning rather than restrict them to a disadvantaged position as some scholars claim (see Li *et al.*, 2002)

(2) 'Constructing/generating your own ideas'

In the new learning culture, the participants evidently perceived that reproduction and memorization of the lecturer's notes or textbook materials were not appreciated, and thus, did not have much scope for high achievement here. In terms of learning outcome and assessment, value was placed in personal knowledge construction and originality, which the participants were explicitly told to strive for.

Looking through the data set, ‘constructing/generating your own idea’ or ‘expressing/giving personal opinion’ was one of the most frequent phrases in the participants’ interview accounts. Though the participants consciously felt incompetent ‘to have one’s own idea’ or ‘to show one’s personal opinion’ in the initial stage, they wholeheartedly embraced the value of this learning requirement. As F4 said,

> [15] *There isn’t any significance if there are no your own ideas in it (the essay). That doesn’t show what you have learnt; that (your own idea) is what the teacher wants to know. [Imitating teacher’s voice] Why you just put down others’ ideas here? I know those stuff as well and I don’t need you to show me. (F4A)*

With strong receptive and adaptive orientation, the participants were consciously trying to conform to the requirements of the new learning culture, as shown in the last chapter. Successful completion of first one or two assignments was an important watershed for them to leap from reproducing to creating knowledge. Though they might be uncertain about the mark they would get, their confidence was boosted, as F4 said:

> [16] *You are expected to solve the problem with what you have learnt. I think this is really good. But* ***at first I really felt at loss and went panic****. Am I going to think through it all by myself? But after you read books and made comparisons and you would find there was nothing you couldn’t do. As a Chinese student, you can also compare the British and the international commercial law after all! After I finished it,* ***I felt my confidence boosted,*** *though I don’t know what mark I’ll get. Anyway, I have learnt something, and you will never forget it, because* ***you did the comparison and drew the conclusion by yourself****. It is really* ***an enjoyable experience*** (F4B).

The different attitudes toward personal opinions between Chinese and British cultures of learning were in constant reflection and awareness of the participants, and it was easy to see that they really appreciated the value of ‘airing one’s own ideas’, and took it as a manifestation of individuality:

> [17] *They (British lecturers)* ***value personal opinion****s. Though they know your ideas may not be very mature, for you are still a student, after all, they just encourage* ***self-expression****.* ***We Chinese are not good at, or not confident in that.*** *If someone tries to be different and comes up with an outstanding idea, unless the idea is really good, otherwise, the teacher will think you are* ***inflated, not steadfast*** *in study, and other students would tag you* ***'show off'. The atmosphere is not congenial,*** *so* ***individuality and initiative is simply inhibited (in China)*** (F7B).

F7's comment accurately captured the features of the contrasting learning environments. In Chinese learning culture, the role of the student is to absorb and digest knowledge. Any attempt to 'amaze the world with a brilliant idea' (一鸣惊人) would be labelled 'impetuous' or 'unsteady'. So the student is not expected to create knowledge or to air original ideas.

M1 also felt deeply about this contrast:

> [18] *In China, if you approach the teacher with your own ideas, usually, the teacher will say 'you'd better think it over. It is not as easy as you thought'* […] (In the UK)*, if you discuss your points with the teacher, face to face, they all say 'good', 'very interesting'.* ***They appreciate[39] your idea, and Chinese teachers depreciate your idea. Here, they encourage you; in China, they discourage you****.* (M1B)

So we can predict that if the students are confident and capable enough, they will be free of these cultural cares and concerns and feel less inhibited to manifest their individuality in the new learning culture. However, although they perceived that personal opinions were valued in the new learning culture, they were very cautious and conservative when taking exams, as shown in Section 6.4.3 about their achieving approach to learning. In terms of classroom behaviour, they may still keep silent by self-perpetuating the Western stereotype about Chinese learners. As M3 said, 'Anyway, they (British lecturers) all know that Chinese students do not like speaking up in classroom' (M3FN). This stance allows them much freedom and opens up new

[39] The underlined part is the students' own words, without being translated.

possibilities as well.

(3) Questioning (*zhiyi,* 质疑)

In this section, 'questioning' was mainly used to refer to classroom interaction or interpersonal interaction involving verbally challenging or open confrontations of ideas. This was indeed a fresh and new experience and foreign to the participants' inherited classroom schemata as discussed in Section 6.3.2. However, the participants perceived the sceptical attitude toward book knowledge and openly questioning the knowledge presented by the teacher was the valued learning norm in the host classroom culture.

In their later interviews, none of the participants showed aversion to this way of learning, though the questioning practice may be only restricted to classroom performance:

> [19] ***In class,*** *we (Chinese students) would argue, but* ***after class,*** *we are good friends. At first, we would complain 'why did you criticize me in class? You can tell me your opinion later quietly, after class.' But gradually, we are all used to this'* (F7FN March 15-06).

In fact, most participants highly appreciated this kind of intellectual contention and marvelled at the challenger's boldness as much as his/her intelligence:

> [20] *Sometimes the student's question could be very sharp, even the teacher would get stumped for words. [Interviewer: Do you feel it embarrassing?] A bit. But they took it easy. […] I think that* ***a university classroom should be a contentious forum to hear different voices,*** *not just one voice.* ***I really admire those who dare challenge,*** *for not only it entails knowledge but also courage.* ***I can't do that.*** *Even if I have a different idea, I will communicate with the teacher after class* (F4B).

So we can see that to most participants, to embrace the value is one thing, and to implement or practice it is another. Much literature on Chinese students has recorded their polite submissive classroom behaviour (Barker, *et al.*, 1991; Bradley & Bradley; Samuelowicz, 1987), which is attributed to their acceptance of power distance

(Hofstede, 1984) and the value of social harmony (Durkin, 2004). That might be true in their home university classroom, because both the teacher's authority and the student's subordination have long been institutionalised. But sitting in the British classroom, the participant did not feel overt questioning and confrontations had threatened classroom harmony, as F3 commented:

> [21] ***I don't feel their debating and questioning disrupt social harmony or affect interpersonal relation. Even if they did not disagree with each other, they would like to explore the issue together***. *In China,* ***if you question an authority's theory, he will think you challenge and distrust his authoritative status.*** *[…] Chinese are used to concealing disagreement to achieve so-called harmony****. I think it is meaningless to present a false picture of peace and harmony but not convinced at heart*** (F3B)

Here the value seemed to shift from maintaining false harmony to exploring truth. In other words, false harmony was not as valued as sincere confrontation. This point was echoed by F2:

> [22] *Of course, we were not used to this polemic classroom atmosphere; in the beginning, I found it rather embarrassing to commit myself in front of my group members who hold different opinions.* ***We don't want to offend anybody, but we had to vote*** *[…]* ***We Chinese always think of arguments negatively and take them too personally.*** *We thought holding different opinions among the group would definitely affect interpersonal relations among the group member. But I find that as long as you talk honestly about your opinion,* ***nobody will nurse a grudge against you. On the contrary,*** *they (the opponents) would like to talk to you more about that during the coffee break.* (F2B)

Both F2's and F3's comments revealed that Chinese tended to treat the person and his theories as inseparable union. Therefore, to criticize a theory implied criticism towards the person. This point was accurately captured in F4's elaboration on the detached attitude of Western scholarship:

> [23] *The main reason I think is we mix up the matter and the person. We think if we are*

against this idea, then it implies we are against the person as well, because the idea and the person who put forward the idea are not separated. But here, ***people deal with a matter on its own merits, and the person involved won't take criticism too personally.*** *I think people feel easy to speak up their true opinion in this atmosphere. Because I always have this concern when I discuss something with my classmates, but now* ***I feel more comfortable to do that, for I know they know you are not aiming at the person.*** *But I can see some Chinese students do not like my way, for example, my flatmate. […].* (F4C).

This reflection and differentiation on the two intellectual traditions enlarged their reference frame with more accommodating capacity, in which the inherited value on harmony was not compromised, but the ability of negotiating questioning and facing confrontation was increased dialectically. This finding that questioning and harmony are not at odds in the participants' beliefs system poses a challenge towards previous research on Chinese students' adaptability to Western norms of argumentation (see Durkin, 2004; 2008a, 2008b; Turner, 2006).

(4) Critical thinking

In the previous chapter, I have reported that the participants' understanding of the term 'critical thinking' varied and manifested a developmental pattern with time. By the end of their first year of study, the value of critical thinking was appreciated by most participants and deemed as both a prerequisite and an outcome of successful learning in postgraduate studies, although they did not feel that they had a good command of this competence yet. They conceived of critical thinking as a higher cognitive ability, and admitted that most Chinese students lacked this ability, as M6 said in his second interview:

[24] ***Critique is a competence, not innate ability. It needs training and fostering****, otherwise it is not available when you need it. Accumulation process is very important.* ***The more you accumulate, the easier it is for you to critique****.* ***Accumulation process is also the process to train your critical thinking ability.*** *I feel that we Chinese ---I won't say it is a bad habit or shortcoming---are afraid of being laughed at if we ask* ***ben wen ti (***笨问题, meaning simple

> or even silly questions –my comment*), but Western people won't feel that way, they just ask, no matter how silly the question is. In fact,* ***they are accumulating their critical ability****. We do not dare ask such questions, for they seem so simple.* (M6B)

To M6, critical thinking was an acquired ability. It was neither innate nor alien. Through training and fostering, everyone could master this competence. Moreover, unlike most participants, who seemed to value more thoughtful and sophisticated questions, M6 asserted that the accumulating or training process of critical thinking involved asking simple or even 'silly' questions. This finding disconfirms the assertion that Chinese students only value thoughtful questions. However, this change in learning beliefs does not necessarily bring about change in behaviour in the short run due to the inertia or habitual force.

In addition, the positive value of questioning *(质疑)* was added to their previous conception of good theories. For example, M6 once said that good theories were those well-established ones, which could explain more phenomena and cover more ground (M6A), and his new understanding of good theories emphasised a new dimension, that is, evolving through constant questioning and being questioned. He said,

> [25] *Now I understand that* ***all the theories are open to questioning.*** *Every theoretical breakthrough is temporary',* [referring to Chomsky's, Newton's and Einstein's theories as examples] ***Good theories must evolve constantly; otherwise, they are just dead theories. Constant questioning will push the development of theories. Even in science field there is no absolutely correct answer either*** (M6B).

However, this development in his personal epistemological beliefs and appreciation of 'questioning' did not change M6's 'silent' learning behaviour. He admitted that he did not dare question others openly for fear of making a fool of himself. But he learned to question himself by constantly asking 'Is my reasoning sound enough? Is my derivation logical?' (M6B).

Such self-critical attitude was well-received among other Chinese students. It was

taken as more than humility or self-depreciation, but a scholarly quality of being rigorous, as F1 said, she was not only getting critical towards others' ideas, but also toward her own writing by questioning herself:

> [26] *I can feel that I start adopting a* ***critical attitude toward what I read****, not just take in what is said* […]. ***I read until I am convinced.*** *I even* ***question myself while I am writing my essay****, so I often repudiate my own ideas and start all over again* (F1C).

From being critical as a reader to being critical as a writer should be considered as a leap in the process of intellectual and even ethical development. Being critical did not mean to exercise intellectual prowess to cast destructive criticism on other's work, but to be open-minded, willing to be convinced by the evidence or remain unconvinced if the evidence was insufficient. Being critical also meant to take a self-critical attitude towards one's own work, to be a responsible writer, not to follow one's own inclination to give unjustified or biased opinions.

Apart from taking critical thinking as an intellectual practice in the academic domain, some participants began to consider it as a social practice as well. They agreed that critical thinking was not only necessary to meet academic requirements, but also useful in everyday life. For example, M6 talked about medical reform in Taiwan and how ordinary citizens should engage with it critically. F7 expressed the idea that critical thinking was becoming characteristic of modern people, regardless of cultural backgrounds. However, the participants also showed awareness of the contextual factors in implementing critical thinking. As F3 said,

> [27] *Of course, you need take the audience into consideration. If they are narrow-minded and resist to different voices, then you won't 'play the harp to a cow'* (meaning addressing a wrong audience—my comment). *But I believe many people will* ***listen with a fair mind*** *if your criticism is grounded. Like here, I have a group of (Chinese) friends with common interest. Sometimes we have fierce argument, but we are still good friends,* ***trusting and respecting each other. Mutual respect is the premise*** (F3C).

So, practicing critical thinking entails open-mindedness, mutual respect, and intellectual humility, which are more person-oriented than cultural specific.

In summary, although the participants held different referential understanding of what can be called 'critical thinking' and the value attached to it, they conceived of it as a desirable higher order cognitive ability, necessary for successful academic studies and even a defining quality of modern society. Appreciating this value, the participants were also aware of the contextual factors of implementing it in practice and underscored the values of respect and fair-mindedness in exercising critical thinking. The findings of this study in this respect, on the one hand, confirm the claim that critical learning is not developed in many Asian countries (Ballard, 1989; Ballard & Clanchy, 1991; Samuelowicz, 1987); on the other hand, they also give evidence to the view that critical thinking is a universal thinking skill, achievable and to be pursued by all human beings regardless of culture (Paul, 1993). Therefore, Durkin's statement that 'they (East Asian postgraduate students) do not fully accept and internalise the academic norms and values of the United Kingdom regarding critical thinking and argumentation' (2008: 48) is not supported in this study.

B. Emphasis on Learning Abilities/Metalearning

The participants seemed to shift emphasis away from subject knowledge towards generic skills and abilities in learning. 'Learn to learn' and 'to improve learning abilities' had become their new motto phrases. They believed that the important function of the university was not only to transmit and create knowledge, but also to make students learn 'how to learn', so that they could continue learning after graduation. Though the term 'learning abilities' frequented their interview accounts and daily conversation, referential aspects of the term were somehow less defined. Nonetheless, all the participants underscored the cognitive aspects, as well as metacognitive abilities involved, such as self-regulation and reflection. However implicit the meaning the term conveyed was, most participants tended to believe that learning abilities were malleable, therefore they needed to learn to acquire them.

(1) Learning abilities

Quite a few participants were very surprised to learn that in the UK specializing in a subject was not necessarily geared to the future vocation. This knowledge was a bit troublesome, and against their intuition as well, because in China when the students, or rather their parents—because that is often the case—fill out the university application form and decide on the specialized discipline, their future career, to a great degree, is settled if they are recruited. So the participants' inherited conception that learning was much concerned with vocational skills and knowledge was questioned and wavered. They were trying to interpret this phenomenon and discover the reason behind:

> [28] *Our British teacher said that in Britain that you major in law does not mean that you'll become a lawyer and that your major is geography does not mean that you have to find the job related to geography. […] It makes clear that* ***learning ability is the most important,*** *by which we can learn everything. Of course, working in those areas, like physics, you must have subject knowledge as well, but many occupations in society do not require much specialized subject knowledge. Similarly, to be a good lawyer does not depend on the subject knowledge* (F4B)[40].

Like other participants, F4 by the time of this second interview had started to believe that being equipped with learning abilities, one could learn any subject knowledge by him/herself, and not be limited to certain occupation. According to F4, people should be prepared to engage in more than one occupation, so generic or transferable skills were more important than certain field of subject knowledge. Some participants would interpret the phenomenon as 'the employers get their eyes on the all-round '*suzhi'* (素质, referring to qualities and attributes). I shall unpack this term '*suzhi'* in Section 7.4 of this chapter about the ultimate purpose of learning—self-perfection. Other participants put emphasis on learning ability, the ability to acquire knowledge and skills, efficiently and effectively, i.e. 'the capability to make yourself an insider in a

[40] After graduation, F4 did not seek jobs with a solicitor's office in Beijing or Shanghai as she planned before she went abroad, but worked in a German company near her hometown.

totally new line within a couple of weeks' (M3B). They even knew that good companies would provide pre-service professional training regardless of your major, so 'as long as you have good learning abilities, you will prove equal to the task after the training' (M3B).

'To enhance learning ability', as a pet phrase, recurred throughout the interview accounts, but again the participants emphasized different referential aspects of the term. For example, to M3, 'learning ability' implied efficiently and effectively constructing knowledge; to M2, 'learning ability' seemed to have a methodological dimension or a set of methods, which were contrastive to knowledge acquisition and more essential to learning:

> [29] *During the whole process of our learning, to* ***acquire and to enhance learning ability is the most important****. Methodology (?) will play a bigger role in your future study and work practice. If you just beg for knowledge, then you are deviating from it (essence of learning)* (M2C).

F1 confessed that she had been biased against the so-called ('learning ability') in the Chinese context, where the term was perceived as the same as 'test-taking ability', i.e. the ability to perform well at exams and get high marks. But now she had a better understanding:

> [30] *To think of* 学习能力*('learning ability'), my first response would be* ***'test-taking ability****', to which I held rather negative attitudes. It is true, in China, that your learning ability is just your ability to take exams. If you get high mark, then it means your learning ability is strong.* ***But now, I don't think so.*** *I think* ***learning ability should be your cognitive ability.*** *For instance, on our module, the students were divided into two groups and each group should, within half an hour,* ***produce an argument by organizing much information from several sources.*** *And that will show your learning ability* (F1B).

That F1's understanding of 'learning ability' changed from 'the ability of achieving at exams' to 'cognitive ability', on the one hand, reflected the phenomena in China's

education where examinations do not aim at testing the student's higher cognitive ability; on the other hand, it added another dimension of learning ability: organizing and transforming knowledge. I shall turn to this important skill in learning in section 7.3 about changes in learning skills and behaviours

(3) 'Learn to Learn': think about learning *per se*

In fact, learning in a new academic setting and being confronted with different ways of knowing, the participants were stimulated to reflect upon learning *per se*. According to Jackson (2004), the conception of metalearning includes not only the constructs of knowledge and understanding of how to learn, but also the motivations and the capacity to regulate one's actions and behaviours. In the long list of the perceptions of metalearning compiled by Jackson (2004: 393), changing perceptions of learning, the ability to adapt and change approaches to learning as conditions change and new knowledge emerges, and a sense of identity in the learning process are addressed. The interview accounts demonstrated that the participants' perceptions of metalearning showed more awareness of the process of learning and the development of personal knowledge and evaluation about the different ways of learning. As F3 said,

> [31] *We thought learning was to gain knowledge and know how to apply it in practice. And now we see this understanding of learning is too narrow. One thing I think about quite a lot when I am studying here is nothing but learning itself. In fact,* ***learning should be thinking****. I* ***keep thinking why our ways of learning and teaching are so different from here?*** *My conclusion is because we need different type of* <u>*jiebanren*</u> *(*接班人, successors/citizens). (F3FN May 20-06)

The academic difficulties confronting her made her quite aware of the different ways of learning in the new learning environment and she said that she found herself thinking quite a lot about learning *per se* and arrived at the conclusion after her second interview that 'the British educational system produced thinkers, not 'machines', because their society need active thinkers, but ours (Chinese educational system) turn

out ‘dumb boys’’ (F3B). She implied that Chinese society did not need thinkers, but she said on several occasions that she did not want to be ‘a dumb duck to be stuffed’.

Through consciously reflecting on the new ways of learning, the participants started to re-evaluate not only their academic learning outcomes but also the ultimate aim of education. This reflects Barnett’s (1994) ‘life-world becoming’ educational framework, in which the learner is expected to engage reflective knowing besides know-how of operational competence and know-that of academic competence. Barnett’s ‘life-world becoming’ looks to learning as metalearning, which means the learner is willing to examine one’s learning critically; it is ‘a form of continuous action learning, where one’s projects and practices are ruthlessly evaluated by oneself, and jettisoned where appropriate’ (1994: 182). Neither intercultural adaptation theories nor research on Chinese learners studying abroad have analysed the sojourners’ intercultural critical awareness (Byram, 1997; 2008).

7.3 Change in How-dimension

After showing the changes taking place in the participants’ what-dimension of conceptions about knowledge and abilities, in this section, I am going to show their changes in the beliefs about 'how to learn, i.e. How-dimension. In fact, participants’ epistemological development and shifted attention to improving cognitive abilities and learning abilities is correspondent to their acquiring new learning behaviours and enlarging repertoire of learning skills. However, gaining new learning skills and behaviours do not mean the relinquishment of the old valued beliefs. In Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, I have shown that social-affective aspects of learning are much emphasised in their conceptions of learning and successfully transfer to the new learning environment as well. Effortful learning, reflective learning, and respectful learning, which have played a positive role in their adjustment, are reinforced in their conceptions of learning. Owing to these positive conceptions of learning, the participants are willingly exploring new ways of learning despite various difficulties.

7.3.1 Change in Conceptions of Learning Skills/Behaviour

Here, the term 'skill' is used in the sense similar to that of Svensson's concept 'skill in learning', in which 'skill' has a very broad meaning to refer to 'the nature or quality of an interaction' (1997: 59). In other words, skill can be understood as 'the fundamental unit of human behaviour' (Singleton, 1978, cited in Svensson, 1997: 59). So listening, verbalizing, reading, and writing are all learning skills which determine the quality of learning. Since the concept 'skill in learning' is enlarged to describe all the learning activities and behaviours, I put learning autonomy in its domain as well.

A. Autonomy: Independent Learning

In Chapter 6, we have seen that 'to be independent in one's studies' is the first salient challenge confronting the participants in the new learning culture. Despite various understandings of and attitudes toward 'independent learning' in the initial stage (see Section 6.3.1), in their second and third round of interviews, all the participants expressed genuine appreciation of learning autonomy and incorporate new understanding into their learning beliefs system. Their changes of conceptions of 'autonomy' manifested on three aspects: attitude, behaviour, and the ability of self-directing one's learning.

(1) Self-conscientious Attitude: 'Learning is my own business'

On attitude level, the participants admitted that 'being independent is the **right** way to learn' since 'nobody can learn **for** you' and 'you are learning for yourself'. Several participants confessed that in the past (in China) they were always thinking of learning for others, or simply to please parents, teachers, and other significant others, even when they were already at university. M4 said 'if the teacher pushed hard, then we would study hard; if I liked the teacher, I'll study harder; otherwise, I would drag along, as long as I can pass' (M4FN Jan03-06). Now in the new learning culture, they felt that a self-conscientious attitude was the premise of real learning. Ironically, when 'nobody begs you to learn, you start to feel like studying' (F2B). F1's account exemplified this change in the ownership of learning:

[32] *We were always pushed, driven and even begged by the teacher and parents. Now, they are all far away and nobody begs you (me) to study, but seriously, I* ***really feel like studying now****. For the first time in my life, I feel that* ***learning is my own business*** (F1A).

In Chapter 5, I have shown that one of the inherited conceptions of learning among Chinese is 'learning means painstaking efforts and enduring hardship'. Since it is something against human nature, external surveillance and exhortation is necessary. The popular saying among the Chinese teachers is 'if you do not whip them up (students), they won't move on'. That is why one of the basic qualities to be a good teacher in China is to 'be strict with the students'. The belief that 'strict teachers produce brilliant students' (*yanshi chu gaotu,* 严师出高徒) is embraced by both the teacher and parents and by the students themselves. Reflecting on their slavish attitude towards learning in China, some participants said that if they had been given more freedom and trust they would have become autonomous in learning too:

[33] *Neither our parents nor the teachers believe children like study, so they keep such a close eye on the child as they do to a thief. How can we be independent?* ***If we can choose what we want to learn I believe we would have already been autonomous****.* (M3FN May 14-06)

Their words also indicated that autonomy was related to genuine interests in learning as well, which in turn brought joy and fun to learning. I will revisit the paradox 'pain' and 'fun' in the general discussion.

(2) Self-reliant Behaviour: 'You must be active'

On a behavioural level, the participants came to realize that the main actor in their studies was not the teacher but themselves. Therefore, 'to be active' became a prerequisite of successful learning:

[34] *Your supervisor is like your colleague, you should* ***take initiative*** *to ask him for advice but* ***make your own decision*** *what and how to do research. If you are* ***active****, you can learn a lot; otherwise, you may be wasting time without learning anything. I like this way'* (M5A).

Looking through the data, the participants' active learning behaviours include:

Be active to search information for the course task, such as for presentation (F1)

Be active to consult the lecturer or supervisor for help (F7C, M7B)

Be active to complete the assignment on time (F4)

Be active to practice and apply what one has learnt (M4,)

Be active to discover and solve new problems cropping up during the research (M6)

We can see the participants' 'being active' is different from Marton's (1988) 'being active', which mainly refers to being active at cognitive tasks: thinking along with authors, examining the arguments, forming one's own interpretations, and drawing one's own conclusions based on facts or personal judgement of the correctness of information presented. Here, the participants would like to be active on a behavioural level, searching, gaining, and applying knowledge, and to be actively involved in the learning activities, or even to create learning opportunities. M7 said he prepared questions beforehand and asked his colleagues at the department when they were chatting; M5 took the advantage of their coffee break to learn English. F1 was a typical example in this aspect:

> [35] *So **after class,** I would talk with the local people and learned how they felt about their own education. What they provided was not professional knowledge, only their personal experience, but it would give me a **link** to what I have learnt from the class. Without this link, it would be very difficult for me to have a good understanding of their system. What we learnt from the textbook was very limited, and I tried to **broaden it from outside of the classroom.** When we were having casual talk, **I would deliberately bring up those issues, not without a purpose,** and those bits and bobs from **deep chatting** could make me have better understanding what they (*teachers and local students—my comment*) were talking about when I was back to the class. I feel much better. I would actively **create opportunities** to talk with people from other countries about their educational systems and **compare** with the British system* (F1C)

Since the knowledge learnt in classroom was, to some extent, alien to the inherited reference frame, F1 was actively seeking the 'link' between new knowledge and the

life world in order to achieve a deep understanding of the new knowledge concerned. Through deliberate 'deep chatting', she was creating new learning space in the new learning environment. The participants came to agreement that learning was not restricted to the classroom but also took place outside the formal learning setting, which in turn informed and facilitated classroom learning. As M2 said, 'the more you know about their society, the better you know their financial system and operation' (M2FN May 05-06).

(3) Self-initiated Goal: 'You should know what you want'

Despite the participants' conscientious attitude and active behaviour, they found it most daunting to self-initiate goals in the commencing period. At the end of their first-year study, they showed awareness of not only 'learning management' and 'cognitive process', but also 'taking control of the learning content' (Benson, 2001), as reviewed in Section 3.4.3. A British supervisor commented on his Chinese PhD student's learning behaviour as 'socially polite but quite independent intellectually' (FNMay20, 2006). However, as we mentioned before, it was not a matter of willingness but of ability and competence as well. Self-directed learning promoted at the postgraduate level has much to do with freedom in choosing their own research topics and this often put the participants at a loss.As F3 recalled her experience when commencing her overseas studies,

> [36] *We were given a group of suggested topics to choose for our thesis. No matter which topic I chose, my supervisor would say 'Ok, as long as you are comfortable with it'. That baffled me. You know we* ***are used to being led by the teacher and doing as told****, and suddenly you (I) were asked to make the decision, and, as long as* ***I*** *am comfortable with it.* [Pause] *Now I understand why. They ask you to decide, because only you* ***know what you are interested in.*** *They know without* ***interest or curiosity,*** *you can't do good research* (F3B).

The change of her learning conceptions took place when she understood that self-directed learning entailed intrinsic interest and motivation from the student. She also believed that this kind of learning must be enjoyable, because it was of the

student's own accord, not imposed externally.

In Chinese learners' learning beliefs analysed in Section 5.2, learning entails hardships and perseverance; it is a painful process. However, learning autonomy practiced in the new learning culture endows the learner with much freedom to learn what they want to learn, which, to certain degree, generates intrinsic interest in the subject matter. They gradually had their own 'points of interest' and felt that learning **should** be an enjoyable process. However, the new belief that learning should be enjoyable is side by side with the old inherited one that 'learning process is painful', entailing strong willpower, personal resilience, and perseverance, which are still the defining qualities of a successful learner.

The participants deeply appreciated the value of the self-directness in learning, by contrast with 'being led', but they may find that they still lacked the ability and vision to self-direct their own learning. Most of them preferred to be given a research topic, not because of passivity but the trust that 'the supervisor, as an expert in the field, knows better which area is worth exploring' (F6C). Take F3 as an example, she had no idea as to what topics were worthy of doing (see the quote [36] above). In the end, her supervisor suggested a topic, with which she was actively and passionately engaged. So, however attractive or appreciated the self-directed learning should be, most participants felt more comfortable with supervisor-directed learning process and took it as indispensible to actualise the goal of independent learning in future.

The value of self-directed learning was evident in the advice the participants gave to newcomers: 'you should know what you want' or 'if yourself don't know what you are going to do, how can your supervisor help you?'(M7C). It seems that in their conception they have already assumed the subject responsibility for their learning, but in reality, they appreciate more their supervisors' hands-on approach than 'probing in the dark, like a headless fly.' (F2B)

Apart from lacking ability in judging the worthiness or significance of their research, to a great extent, the participants felt self-initiating a thesis topic might be too risky.

They admitted that they were not used to making decisions in their own studies, and therefore were quite concerned about the consequences as well. For example, a Finance PhD student came to ask me for advice[41] whether she should choose one big topic, which was like 'putting all your eggs in one basket' (FN Jan 02-06) or three small topics for her thesis, and the latter required more time and energy and she had problems in choosing three areas that she was equally interested in. She was given a choice, but she was reluctant to make a decision for fear of the consequence. She would like to do a big project, but in the meantime, she felt it was risky. So what bothered her was as much the risks involved in one piece of work as her ability in choosing the research area.

Similarly, M1 claimed, 'if you just follow your own interest, you will end up disastrously', because 'if it did not work out, it was all your own responsibility' (M1B). It seemed that they entertained the idea that if the student got stumped, his or her supervisor would definitely help him/her out.

The picture is a complicated one. On the one hand, the participants embrace and appreciate the value of learning autonomy and take it as one of the gains of their overseas studies. On the other hand, they doubt their self-directed learning ability. Moreover, they consciously avoid taking risks to assume the responsibilities in exercising self-directed learning especially when high stake consequences are involved. Considering the huge financial investment on study abroad and personal/family face at stake, perhaps it is quite understandable for them to take a cautious strategy to secure the degree. Time constraint is perceived by the participants to be another main obstacle to hamper full autonomy in practice. For example, M6 said, 'Of course, a scientist should take risks to experiment with new things, but as a PhD student, you don't have time to try constantly' (F6FN June 20-06). In other words, a student could not afford to make mistakes if they wanted to complete their studies in the time frame. Nonetheless, the value of self-initiated learning seemed implanted or

[41] This piece of data was from my earlier group of informants before my research started. Considering the close relationship kept with the informants, I was advised to recruit new informants to ensure the validity of the research.

transplanted in their learning conceptions, but they were also aware of cultural factors encouraging or inhibiting exercising autonomous learning. Some participants associated autonomy with individuality or even Western democracy, and doubted its applicability in the Chinese social context, but its desirability in learning is widely endorsed among the participants. For example, I once overheard a conversation between two Chinese students about autonomous learning on campus:

[37] *Student A:* ***Western democracy is based on individual autonomy.*** *They are autonomous ever since childhood. Our cultural background is different; it doesn't provide a ground for autonomy.*

Student B: ***I don't think learning autonomy has much to do with culture***. ***As a student, you should be autonomous anyway***. *In addition, nobody can stay at school forever. After leaving the university, you don't have a teacher any more and you must be an independent learner.*

Student A: That's right. Our university (home university in China—my comment) *also promote learning autonomy, but it is different.* (FN April 22-06)

In fact, Student A was talking about the concept of autonomy on a group level as a central tenet of Western democratic ideology and a product of liberal and humanist education; while Student B's understanding of autonomy was in the sense of individual autonomy in a learning setting, where cultural factors were deemed irrelevant. However, both of them seemed to agree that university was a place for fostering and exercising learning autonomy and preparing lifelong autonomous learners. I will relate the findings of this section to the existing literature on learner autonomy reviewed in Section 3.4.3 later in Section 7.7 Interim Discussion.

B. Interactive/Communicative Learning

In Chinese teaching and learning discourse, the terms of communication and interaction did not get prominent until the introduction of communicative approach in foreign language teaching and learning in the 1980s. Now they are becoming vogue

terms across disciplines and on all levels of educational systems. In response to the advocacy for a student-centred teaching approach, classroom interaction and the communication between the teacher and students are much promoted in Chinese classrooms (see Jin & Cortazzi, 2006). Most of the participants of the study reported their (Chinese) teachers' efforts in increasing classroom interaction by asking and inviting questions, but the participation of the students was somehow felt to be artificial, not authentic. Reflecting on those interactions in their home universities, F4 had acquired a new understanding of 'interaction':

> [38] ***There isn't anything new coming out of interaction. It is not real dynamic interaction.*** *The students' questions were mainly for clarification of comprehension, and the teacher was inviting questions from students just half-heartedly. If anyone really raised a question, which the teacher did not know the answer or the answer was not recalled immediately, the teacher would say something like 'we can talk about that after class so that we won't take up class time'.* ***So there was no real interaction in class.*** (F4B)

It seemed new learning experience equipped her with new definition of classroom interaction, which should be genuine negotiation, dynamic and producing something new. In fact, her account resonated with other participants' depiction of the classroom interaction if there was any in their home universities. That is to say, Chinese teachers seldom asked open questions to elicit or invite the students' ideas and comments. Half-hearted 'Any questions?' was understood to be the indicator to move on to the next section, and any student, who had not grappled with the issue in class, could ask the teacher after class without wasting others' time. As we analysed in Chapter 5, in Chinese culture of learning, class time is too precious to be wasted on an individual's idiosyncratic understanding of the issue, and the precious class time should be effectively used for the teacher to deliver structured knowledge. Though the participants did not use the term of 'closed questions', they meant to say that the questions asked by the teacher in their home universities were mainly those with fixed or established answers. So that was not 'interaction' in its real sense.

The different values in communication in the two learning cultures were deeply felt by M4 in the third interview:

> [39] *As I study engineering, it never occurred to me that communicative competence was any important until I came here.* ***I found that you should possess not only subject expertise but also very good communicative competence****. Those who had done very good research in our department also gave very good presentations to* ***communicate their research findings****. My supervisor kept reminding me of that and deliberately encouraged me in this aspect, but I let him down. Actually, I was very talkative before I went to senior high school, but both my father and my teacher told me off for not being steady/sedate (稳重), because I talked too much. So gradually I became uncommunicative.[…] My supervisor was very disappointed with me. He said 'how could you be so taciturn? That won't do'. […]* ***I come to realize that it is important to develop communicative skills, but I am afraid that I can't change back*** (M4C).

M4's inherited conception that language or communicative competence was not as important to science students as to humanities or social science students was not uncommon among Chinese learners. All the science students among the participants admitted that they never thought that communication competence was such a generic skill that every researcher, no matter in science fields or social science fields, could not do without it. M5 said that 'if you cannot communicate effectively with people, you lose opportunities to learn from others' (M5B); M1 even claimed that 'one can not become a successful financer without good communicative skill' (M1C). M4 (FN May 20-06) thought highly of the textbook compiled by his supervisor because the language used was engaging and easily understood and reflected the author's effective communicative skills in transmitting knowledge, not like the dry and dull textbook he studied in his home university.

The participants felt that the salient feature of the new learning culture was the interactive nature of learning mode. New experiences gave them new understanding of the learning activities, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and modified their

conceptions as well.

(1) Attentive Listening

Classroom interaction was not a new concept in the participants' learning dictionary, because the term was getting popular in teaching and learning discourse in China for the last two decades as said above, but the understanding of the term seemed to be confined to the interaction between the teacher and the students rather than among the students. In fact, 'learning from each other' has been a school motto, no matter in primary schools, secondary schools or universities in China, but what they were expected to learn from each other was learning attitude and learning behaviour or even learning spirit. No wonder the participant felt that 'at long last, I understand what learning from each other means'.

> [40] *In the past, we **just listened to the teacher in class**, and here the teacher spoke less, and the students talked all the time. They are talking about their own experiences and treatment, because they are teachers themselves. And you can also know other people's comments, which often provided an impetus to get you (me) thinking over those points, which I had never thought of before. So I think **listening to others is also a good way to learn*** (F2B).

The value of discussion and listening to others was fully acknowledged by other participants:

> [41] *I feel that we can learn a lot from discussion. You have an idea, and others' ideas perhaps never occur to you, then you will learn new stuff, an eye opener. We have no seminars in Taiwan, so to many students, taking classes means sitting in the classroom to **listen to the teacher; discussion is not important**. But, in fact, **discussion is a process to train your critical thinking ability**. Some questions seem very simple, but when we discuss them, I will find 'oh, there are so many details that I have never thought about*** (M6B).

In their inherited learning schemata, 'attentive listening' is part of the respectful learning (see Section 5.2), meaning 'to listen to the teacher attentively' to show respect and to gain better understanding. Now in the new learning environment, the

students became the main actors and the interaction among the students themselves was the medium of gaining knowledge. Both F1 and F2 found that it was hard for them to be involved in the class discussion, because even if the people would like to listen to them patiently they had no much experience to share:

> [42] *But the problem is I have no individual case to talk about. They would talk about their treatment, with clear focus and close examination.* ***I feel involved as if I was experiencing that case,*** *though temporarily.* ***It is fine to be just listening*** (F1C).

After initial 'torturing' period when she was struggling to speak up in class, they began enjoying listening to other students:

> [43] *I feel involved now, not like in the beginning that I feel out of involvement. Now what matters is not whether being involved or not; the most important is learn and to learn in their way. […] I think my ideas are changed and updated. Now* ***I like to follow their learning approaches to read books, to engage in discussion, and to be a listener at seminar.*** *I needn't be talking all the time, for* ***I learn a lot just by listening.*** *I like to change my role.* ***I know that it is important that I should talk, but for the time being, at seminars, to be a listener is more important.*** *What they are talking about are totally new to me, and by reading books, I learn a lot and when I listen to what they are discussing, I will feel suddenly enlightened. I can't make myself a speaker, because I'm not equipped with that stuff. Moreover, they are all teachers and they would talk about their students, their schools, but I have none (to talk about).* (F1B).

F1 explicitly claimed that she was learning in their (British) way, following their learning approaches, but she also developed her own learning strategy due to contextual factors. Though she perceived that talking and discussion were important, as far as she was concerned, to be a listener for the time being to understand what other people were talking about was more important. On other modules where she had more repertoire or resources, she would feel more confident to be the speaker:

> [44] *When we are on Bilingual module,* ***I would like to be the speaker,*** *because I have more experience. So I feel that* ***I'm changing, in terms of ideas and learning approaches.*** *I have*

this awareness. ***Now I'm feeling very good.*** *I don't feel frustrated any more. I don't feel frustrated that I am just a listener; and I don't feel proud when I'm talking in English* (F1B).

Having gone through ups and downs, the participants felt much at ease or found their own comfortable zone over time. The intention of claiming cultural identity was giving way to an attention to gaining deep understanding of subject knowledge and other fellow students' experiences. Therefore, the pattern of Chinese students' verbal participation is not easily predicted. This finding provides evidence to the statement that voluntary speech in class is a poor gauge for thinking and learning (Tweed & Lehman, 2003) and that talking should not be taken as a primary indicator of active engagement, effective learning, or critical thinking (Li, 2003). In earlier sections, I have mentioned that Chinese university students are of a relatively homogenous body in terms of age and learning experiences. The facts that they live in the same dormitory, four or six sharing a room with bunk beds and class is the basic unit of conducting activities, both academic and extracurricular, may make listening to other students' ideas and experiences in class less necessary. The change of learning behaviour is as much the result of changing places as the reconstruction of 'small culture' (Holliday, 1999), i.e. classroom culture.

(2) Explicit Verbalizing

I have shown that the participants began to conceive of communication and interaction both as effective learning channels and desirable skills to acquire, among which to verbalize one's ideas explicitly was given particular emphasis, because from class discussion to oral presentation, it was unavoidable for the student to speak his/her mind, explicitly and effectively. The comments on this learning feature usually triggered the participants' reflection upon different cultural practices and values about speaking. They all admitted that oral presentation was not essential in Chinese learning culture, and explicitly expressing one's ideas was not encouraged either. However, this did not mean that they accorded less value to this practice. On the

contrary, all the participants thought highly of this new learning behaviour and linked it to other social practices of the host culture:

> [45] *I think **they are justified** in emphasizing oral expression. It needs training as well. I once attended their parliament debate in London. It is open to everyone. **I really admired their politicians' eloquence,** although I did not understand much. But I can tell all is impromptu, not arranged. Not like our leaders, who just read the text, which is written by their secretaries. It is so different* (M2B).

Acknowledging the difference, the participant also made a value judgement at the same time. Impromptu verbalization of one's ideas was as much a personal charisma as a democratic social practice. Similarly, F1 also expressed her amazement at the confident eloquence of lower ranks:

> [46] ***I am so amazed that people here are so articulate.** Even our cleaning lady talks fluently, confidently, because they were encouraged to verbalize their thoughts from childhood. We (Chinese) don't pay much attention to oral expression, let alone to encourage children to speak up their minds, so we are not good at expressing (orally) in a coherent manner. I come to believe that **explicit verbalizing facilitates logical thinking. It forces you to think clearly*** (F1C).

F1 was more surprised at the cleaning lady's confident manner in talking, for she often said that she was not confident in expressing her ideas and attributed that to the socialization practice of Chinese culture. She also said, 'don't you see that only those in authority position talk much in China, and small potatoes just listen to the talk'. This comment confirmed the common impression observed from Chinese communication that voice is equated with seniority, authority and expertise.

Furthermore, the adages that caution against clever speech are very common in Chinese language, but participants showed disapproval of them. They gave added value to the practice of explicit verbalization and acknowledged explicit talking

embodied logical thinking. Some participants also linked explicit verbalization to the cognitive function:

> [47] ***If you could verbalize*** *what you have read in your own words,* ***it means you have understood that****. I found it was often the case that you thought you had understood but you couldn't talk explicitly. […] In Chinese, we often say 'It can be apprehended, but cannot be explained in words' (zhi ke yi hui, bu ke yan chuan,* 只可意会，不可言传*). But I think that indicates you have not fully understood yet* (F6B).

F6's comment reminded us of the participants' conceptions of understanding in section 5.2. According to them, explicit verbalization was related to 'real' understanding, and if one could not talk explicitly about an idea, it indicated that he or she had not grasped the meaning yet. Therefore, speaking, thinking, and understanding are interrelated in their new conceptions of good learning.

In fact, 只可意会，不可言传, on the one hand, means the inadequacy of the language in constructing meanings, on the other hand, it emphasizes a kind of 'intersubjectivity', which refers to interlocutors' ability to understand each other's minds without resorting to explicit language. The participants acknowledged the ability to empathize in order to decipher the hidden and implied meaning, which is highly valued in Chinese communication, but, in the meanwhile, they gave equal credits to explicit way of communication in Western classroom—in F1's words, 'it (explicit verbalization) forces you to think clearly' (F1C). Therefore, Kim's (2002) assertion that East Asians believe that silence is beneficial to high levels of thinking is not supported by the finding of this study.

(3) Analytic Reading

In Chapter 6, I have shown reading extensively was perceived as a most common learning activity in the new learning culture. Apart from quantitative changes, the participants were also aware of their qualitative changes in their reading activities. An important change of such kind was to read for evidence:

[48] *In the past, I just tried to understand the writer's main points, and as soon as I knew what he talks about, then I thought I have finished reading. But now I know that* ***you can't just accept/receive*** *what he/she says, you have to check if their points of view are valid or not. Are they logical arguments or not? Are their findings based on their empirical data?* (F1C)

Of course, this change was correspondent with their change of attitude towards textbook knowledge and their acquisition of critical thinking as analysed in earlier sections of this Chapter. In fact, the critical attitude towards knowledge changed their reading habit from reading for ideas to reading for evidence and for arguments. The participants acquired not just a terminology, but also new ways of reading and 'reading awareness':

[49] ***I think I have changed a lot in terms of reading habits.*** *Of course, I learned some English reading techniques at university in Taiwan, such as skimming, scanning, reading the topic sentence, usually the first sentence of each paragraph, but these techniques are only for speeding up your reading. They do not teach you* ***how to read analytically.*** *I find I begin to* ***have such reading awareness that reading just for ideas are not enough.*** (M7C)

Having established new reading criteria in mind, some participants tended to devaluate Chinese academic papers:

[50] *At first, I wanted to write about Chinese enterprises and hope to have some originality. I found some articles with similar titles to mine in Chinese on internet, but they were not usable.* ***You don't know how they come to the conclusion. No reference, no page numbers. No argument; very subjective.*** (M1FN May 10-06)

Apparently, they were expecting the same academic criteria in Chinese articles as well. Although the participants acknowledged the different intellectual traditions and practices in different cultures of learning, they tended to believe that the academic standard should be the same no matter what culture the scholar was from. So reading for evidence, as contrast with previous belief of reading for 'understanding' (*dong,* 懂) and memorization, was a newly acquired learning behaviour and considered as a

valued higher order cognitive ability.

(4) Academic Writing

Writing essays is the main form of assessment and occupies a central position in Western higher education (Hounsell 1984: 103), which poses challenges for the students coming from a different learning culture with different assessment practices and academic writing conventions. Though the participants from science disciplines tended to believe there was not much difference in writing academic papers or reports by the scholars from different intellectual traditions or in different languages, other participants' interview accounts documented the development of their conceptions of academic writing and awareness of different values in different practices to increase their 'academic communicative competence' (Swales, 1990: 9) and strive for the larger space for their own writing identity.

a. from descriptive to argumentative writing

The present study did not intend to investigate the participants' approaches to writing essays in terms of procedure and content, but was more concerned with the students' conceptions of essay writing. The findings from the data confirmed the different levels of the students' intentions in writing a thesis, i.e. arrangement, viewpoint, and argument, as identified by Hounsell (1997). For example, the participants all showed a concern for orderly arranging facts and ideas, and also awareness of presenting a viewpoint, as exemplified by F5's perspective of thesis writing:

> [51] *If the topic is 'comparing A and B', in Taiwanese way, we will begin with what is A and what is B, then what differences are between the two. If you don't know A or B, how could you compare them? But Western way of writing essays is to* ***jump to the point directly****. They don't want to read what is A and what is B. I feel that way is too abrupt. We have* ***different audience*** *in mind. I think the audience are average people, but they are writing for professors. It is ridiculous to talk about A or B to professors. I think I should clarify the meanings of the concept first, since the law systems of the two parts are different. But now I* ***know better*** *and do not waste time on it any more'* (F5B).

F5 was trying to transfer her Chinese descriptive or chronological way of writing to the writing task in the new learning culture and found that this practice was not appreciated at all. She noticed the differences between the two writing conventions and showed willingness to adjust to the new norm, and, importantly, she was developing an awareness of audience the essay was addressed to, which was not just the competence of academic writing but also an awareness of contrastive rhetoric. M3 preferred a balanced way of comparing A and B, without committing himself to either side, and again this neutral, noncommittal stance was depreciated in the new culture of learning. He came to realize that 'the most important element of the essay was your own point of view' (M3C).

To view essay writing as an ordered presentation of an argument well supported by evidence (Houssell, 1997) was less common among the Masters students than among the PhD students. As for most participants, to employ critical thinking to evaluate competing knowledge claims and make fair judgements was felt more difficult to achieve. However, they believed, if given time and proper training, Chinese students could master these academic skills as well. For example, an EdD student, who had just finished one-year Master program, said if she could rewrite the thesis she would definitely do a better job:

> [52] *The comment from my supervisor is very pertinent. She said that it was good that I cited other literature to support my point of view, but when I cited them I didn't* ***evaluate their validity of their evidence.*** *I just cited their conclusions without thinking about how they came to the conclusion. In fact, there was a big flaw in their research design, so, based on their conclusion, my* ***argument*** *was not strong then. […]. Although* ***we were told to evaluate evidence critically, we did not know exactly from which aspects to do it. It takes time to master these skills.*** *I think in my EdD thesis, I will pay attention to this aspect.* (FNSept 10-06)

Though in writing practice, the participants did not feel confident in handling argumentative writing, at least on a discourse level, they could comfortably talk about

'evidence', 'interpretation', 'argument' and 'critical evaluation' etc., by the end of their first year of study.

b. from reader's responsibility to writer's responsibility

Contrastive rhetoric studies have shown that in Chinese writing, 'the introduction is often historical and discursive to recall 'past lessons', not the focused review the Western essay requires; the body contains much direct quotations from respected sources' (Biggs and Watkins, 1996: 279). M7's account in the following exemplified Biggs and Watkins' statements:

> [53] *I am used to starting with telling stories and much background stuff, slowly drawing to my purpose. Their way is totally different. If we say ours is* ***bottom-up****, theirs is* ***top-down****. In the first chapter of introduction they have made clear what they are going to argue.* ***It didn't take me long to adopt their style, because I was aware of my problems.*** *I struggled a lot in the beginning. (...).* ***My tutor told me that I had to be used to this (their) style*** *to make myself understood. The first sentence of the each paragraph is the main idea of the whole paragraph, and the last sentence is the conclusion. After a while,* ***I came to realize that what I write is not for myself, but should be of help to the other academics,*** *so the* ***writing attitudes are changed*** (M7B).

Owing to their receptiveness and conformity, the participants reoriented to the British writing task demands quickly and strategically (cf. Chapter 6), but it took them a while to come to realize the value behind the academic practice. The newly acquired writing attitude to be responsible for the reader was manifested in other participants' comment on the British referencing and bibliography system. According to their understanding, these practices were reader-friendly, for 'they made it easier for the reader to get access to the resources' (M1B). Chinese academic writing is characteristic of writer-responsibility tendency or rather the power lies with the writer, without giving much regard to the reader's receptivity. The participants' change in writing attitude can be considered as a big step in their empathetic understanding of academic writing.

Influenced by Chinese writing values, several participants (F2, F5, M6, M7) believed that academic writing must be sophisticated in diction and sentence structures, and preferably, embodied aesthetic values as well. M7 once said that even for argumentative writing, the aesthetic element could translate well and achieve the purpose, but few people had such attainments. This emphasis on language accomplishment echoes Tweed and Lehman's (2002) phrase 'affinity for poetic ambiguity', which they used to refer to one of the characteristics of Chinese learning culture. F5 said owing to her memorization of GRE vocabulary, she was more competent (than her German classmate) in using formal/big academic words to make her essays carry weight (F5B). So we can see that the participants are negotiating their own writing identity by integrating the newly acquired academic writing norms with inherited writing values of Chinese culture of learning into a new constructive relation. This hybridity may not be 'unrecognizable' as third space theorists claim but 'a balance between the '*heimlich*' and '*unheimlich*' nature of culture and between newness and mediation of the past and the present as a consequence of intercultural interaction' (Feng, 2009: 87).

c. from product view to process view of writing

In Chapter 6, I have shown that the most striking difference, or the first pleasant surprise, the participants felt in the beginning was the mode of assessment in the new learning setting. Most courses did not have closed-books examinations, but the submission of essays instead. This mode of assessment was well-received by the participants who were from a competitive exam-oriented system. But after an initial sense of release or relief, the participants felt that writing essays was no easy job, perhaps more difficult than to sit a closed-book examination. In fact, the participants admitted that sitting exams tended to achieve higher marks than essay writing, but the participants acknowledged that they learnt more from the latter. Moreover, a new conception of essay writing was emerging as well:

[54] *Writing essays is really painful, but I can feel that I am learning.* ***I think I learn most from writing****. In China, we also wrote essays, but it was quite different. They were just* ***products, not a learning process*** (F4B).

F4's view of writing essays as an avenue of learning was shared among other participants. They admitted that in the beginning they just took it as an assessment tool, but later they felt they learnt a lot during the process, especially by organizing the fragmented information into a logical and coherent essay. They also had a better understanding and appreciation of this mode of assessment. For example, F4 said,

[55] *I think thesis* ***writing can best test your real ability, analytical ability, your synthesis ability,*** *whether you have* ***a thorough understanding*** *of the field or not.* (F4B).

Obviously, they appreciated the assessment which aimed at testing higher order cognitive abilities, which represented a deep learning approach.

In short, the participants' reflective accounts of experiencing struggles to meet the task requirements confirmed the discrepancy existing between the British academic writing convention and Chinese academic writing norms as earlier contrastive rhetoric studies have shown (Kaplan, 1966). Although the participants did not feel they were competent in making **critical** use of appropriate literature to develop the argument or evaluate others' arguments in their own writing, the validity of the argumentative nature of academic writing was acknowledged by the participants. The process of development of their conceptions of academic writing is that of modification of inherited learning schemata through tertiary socialization (Byram, 1989; 2008), which claims that using a different language has the potential to experience another reality and challenge the taken-for-granted realities they have internalised through earlier socialisations.

7.3.2 Studying Abroad Entails Intercultural Learning Skills

I have presented how the participants enriched their conceptions and repertoire of

cognitive and learning skills. The different practices in the host culture of learning made the participants realize that 'Learning at home and abroad is different and makes a difference' (F1B). One of the differences might be that certain skills would be strongly present in one's attention and need applying consciously, such as observation skills, interaction skills, introspective skills, and relating skills, which are resonant with the *savoirs* outlined in Byram's (1997) Intercultural Competence Model. In this part, I shall focus on their conceptions of these skills, which were felt essential to be functioning in a new culture of learning.

As shown in Chapter 6, the participants emphasized that one should be perceptive and sensitive to a new environment. In F3's later interview, she aptly advised,

> [56] *Coming to a new environment, you must* ***listen more, look more, think more, and ask more****. You should* ***neither mimic others blindly nor stubbornly persist in your own way****. 'Select the essence and discard the dross'* (F3B).

She cited a Chinese adage to show what proper attitude should be taken to deal with foreign theories or practice. Not like learning in a familiar environment, no routine scripts to follow, 'as if you were back to be a child' (F4A), impotent in function, and fragile in psychology. But unlike a helpless child, these students had a clear purpose to make their learning successful, so they consciously knew that they had to 'open seven apertures'(F2A)—eyes, ears, nostrils and mouth, all sensory organs, to perceive and absorb. The following skills were consciously fostered by the participants in their attention and intention.

a. observing and discovering

In Chapter 5.2, I have shown that 'using heart/mind to learn' and the propensity to cue-seeking are two characteristics of Chinese culture of learning. These positive conceptions of learning were successfully transferred to a culturally different learning setting. To the participants, 'use one's heart/mind to observe' was the first step to 'play the game'. As M1 said, 'just coming out of the country [China], not knowing the

situation, you have to get off your high horse and learn step by step by observing what others do and how they do, and discover their rules of the game' (M1B). For example, he noticed, unlike his home university teachers, the UK lecturers paid more attention to journal papers than textbooks in class, and always mentioned the origin of a theory whenever used. His own inference from this practice was 'subject knowledge needs upgrading rapidly and constantly and you must learn the cutting-edge stuff' (M1B). As for referencing the source, he said, 'since they emphasize this, you must form the habit to do it as well, in your assignment and on the exam' (M1B). M3 held almost the same belief in 'cracking their system' and 'giving what they want' (M3B), but before one could play his/her part or, rather the game, knowingly, observing their practices and discovering the rules behind was the first step.

In addition, the participants also emphasised experiential learning, such as personal experiences of discovering the cultural rules:

> [57] *It is like a friend tells you that Italian restaurant is good, and you won't think it is good unless you eat there. […] So what other people tell you is just a 'clue',* ***and you have to discover it by yourself****.* (F1FN Feb 22-06)

Like other participants, she was not convinced when the British staff told her that independent learning was expected of a Masters student until she discovered its merits by observing undergraduate classrooms and experiencing the differences between different levels of learning by herself.

b. participating and interacting

When the participants emphasized observing the local practices and discovering the rules of the game, obviously, they considered themselves as outsiders. And the way they talked about also signalled the tension between 'us' and 'them'. They understood that only by participating and interacting with the new culture, could one claim membership in this community, as F4 said:

> [58] *There is plenty of room for you to interact with the teacher or other fellow students. It*

depends on the individual person whether he/she relishes the opportunities to interact with others or not. ***If you are actively participating and interacting with others, definitely you can learn more than those who are not.*** *[…] Sometimes I really feel sorry for those students (who alienate themselves and withdraw from academic activities*—my comment*). They shouldn't come here. They'd better stay at home* (F4B)

Quite a few participants (F1, F2, F3, F4, M1, M2) held the view that some people were suitable to study abroad and some were not. According to them, those who did not like to communicate and interact with people were not suitable to study abroad. In fact, the participants more often than not commented on those 'timeservers' around them—their classmates, other PhD students, their flatmates, and what they saw and heard about. So it seemed not uncommon that there existed a considerable group of Chinese students on the campus who did not relish the opportunities to interact with others but still could get 'that piece of coloured paper' (the Degree certificate) and left. But in the participants' eye, though they got what they wanted, their overseas studies could not be called 'successful'. For example, F3 had been harbouring the belief that the assessment of overseas study should not be simply based on academic learning outcome, but also the change of deeper notions in heart and mind. I will talk about this aspect in next section. In F3's words, 'otherwise, they might never have a chance of change anymore' (F3C).

F3 was a good example of negotiating learning space in the strange learning environment. She always had loads of questions and asked them when the occasion arose, free from any inhibition. She said, 'as a foreigner, you can ask anything, because they know that you are an **outsider,** and you are asking out of ignorance.' It seemed she believed that outsider's status would endow her with a licence to ask either provocative or stupid questions, which an insider would find uneasy to raise. Of course, as F3 said, the benign and tolerant environment fostered her unbridled queries. Though not all the participants found it that easy to interact with cultural others, they also believed that interacting were generic skills, and should be in everybody's

repertoire for effective intercultural communication, which, as evidenced in earlier sections, is taken as an essential avenue of learning.

c. introspecting and reflecting

Another skill the participants emphasized was 'introspection' (内省 *neixing*, meaning 'look within') or 'reflection' (反思, *fansi*, 'reverse thinking'), 'the ability to reflect critically on the way in which one's own cultural background and standpoint influence one's view of other cultures', which was termed as 'reflexivity' in Roberts, *et al.*'s (2001: 93). In China, no matter in ancient times or in modern time, the individual is encouraged to be introspective of their conduct, thoughts, and feelings, for introspection and reflection are means to the end of self-cultivation, as Confucius says, 'when you see a worthy man, emulate him. When you see one who is not worthy, then look within' (*Analects*: 4:17). So the original meaning of 'introspection' or 'look within' is an individual behaviour in private, withdrawn from the public life. However, in modern times, the word is not restricted to personal moral conduct and behaviour, but has become a nationwide catchword, such as 'national introspection' (民族内省) or 'cultural reflection' (文化反思), for calling on the whole nation to draw lessons from the past and revitalize Chinese cultural spirit.

Examining their interview accounts and overhearing their daily conversation, bringing the two cultures into juxtaposition for comparison and contrast and introspecting on their own cultural practices had gradually become a daily topic and education was the area to which they were not hesitant to show their critical attitude. Quite a few participants (F1, F3, F4, M1, M4) criticized 'academic corruption' in Mainland China. The participants also like entertaining their own cultural beliefs in a reflective manner. For example, we once talked about Chinese beliefs in efforts, and naturally, the old saying '只要功夫深，铁杵磨成针' (the literal meaning of the saying is 'as long as you work at it hard enough, you can grind an iron rod into a sewing needle') was articulated to support the proposition that perseverance spelt success. But, on second thought, the group started to question themselves: 'Why we have to grind a rod into a

needle? An iron rod has a rod's own function.' Such little incidents often triggered off serious reflections on Chinese 'rigid, uniform' educational goals that 'every child should hope to make him/herself a scientist, a doctor, an engineer, or other respectable professions; it would be a family shame if the boy only wanted to be a bus driver or a worker in a factory' '(FN 16-02-06) They also criticized the strong pragmatic orientation dominant in Chinese parents' mind in choosing majors for their children: 'To think of those studying in the business school, how many of them chose their majors out of their own will?'

The consequences of those comparisons often led to some participants' tendency to depreciate the inherited Chinese educational values. For example, F3 said,

> [59] ***We were brought up in that way, but it does not mean that way is correct.*** *[…] Our educational system is to produce submissiveness and servility, because the government need this kind of successors to consolidate its political power and to carry out obscurantist policy* ('愚民政策'—to render its people unenlightened). (F3B)

F7 recalled that she had experienced the similar stages as others did during their sojourn, from defending Chinese cultural practice to being disapproval of many things in Chinese culture of learning, but given time, reconciliation would be reached with better understanding and objectivity.

It seemed that being overwhelmed by the contrast situation and going to extreme and then moving back or rectifying was a common trajectory of the participants' reaction, or rather that these are the constant movements for the border people to move back and forth to find their balance point or comfortable zone, where inherited and foreign influences are interacting in a dialectical way.

In short, being situated into the borderland of two cultures, the participants showed ability of de-centring from their inherited culture of learning and looking at it from certain distance more objectively. As Chinese students often said 'there is no appraisal without comparing'. Reflecting on one's own culture always involved certain critical

attitude, which could result in discarding certain cultural practices with personal commitment, or valuing some cultural practices even more. Most participants would prefer a balanced view on inheriting the old and absorbing the new practices and values about learning.

d. relating and contextualizing

One of the Chinese thinking modes identified in the literature is dialectical thinking (Nisbett, *et al.*, 2001), which emphasizes the relationship between the things and the holistic view of the matter. Though sometimes the participants showed a strong commitment to one cultural practice (the British one), as shown above, most of the time, they could take into consideration contextual factors restricting or facilitating the practice and reach a dialectical balanced view. Generally speaking, PhD students in this study would give a more dialectical view on absorbing and inheriting cultural values. They seemed to be more aware of the contextual factors in interpreting and evaluating different sociocultural practices. For instance, when reflecting on their previous learning experiences, besides showing repulsion against rat-race competitive examining system, they fully acknowledged the benefits they gained from Chinese education: 'Students from Mainland (China) all have laid a solid knowledge foundation and the (UK) professors are fairly pleased with that' (M4A); 'Being educated in China, you will be more disciplined, and will foster good study habits' (F6B). Several participants said that although the national entrance examination was rigid, little short of being cruel, but in the mean time, considering the reality in China, it was at least fair. And, most importantly, those who had gone through this 'baptism' and survived would prove their perseverance and stamina, and these desirable qualities were transferable to one's future studies or career. As F6 said,

> [60] *Anyone who has experienced the national entrance examination must possess the* ***qualities of industriousness and perseverance,*** *which are very important for further personal development.* ***And these were useful here as well*** (F6B).

Since different educational systems lay different emphasis on different aspects, they in

turn produce different kinds of talents, which are not perceived to be contradictory but complementary to each other, so, in this sense, receiving education from two systems naturally benefit any individual and is an avenue to be 'a complete person'.

According to F7, lofty ideas and extensive knowledge were not enough; deep thinking was another necessary '*suzhi'* to 'make a complete/whole person'. She said her biggest gain from studying abroad was that she learnt how to think through an issue, how to refute or defend an argument. She said,

> [61] *I decided to go abroad to study with the naive belief that I would learn advanced political theories and solve China's practical problems, like ardent youth in the early of last century, going abroad to seek truth. I really thought that way.* ***But in fact, the really useful things we learn here are not any effective theories or isms, but a set of thinking tools, with which you know how to think through a matter and make your own argument. It is not matter of right or wrong; your own stance is important.*** (F7C)

Due to the nature of her field (politics), F7 was often involved in discussing controversial issues, like Taiwan issue, Tibet issue, human rights, family planning, etc. She said,

> [62] *At beginning* ***I simply wanted to tell them that they (European students) were wrong,*** *because they did not know Chinese history; later, I found* ***there was something in what they said****, and they were not groundless. But now though I don't know or can't predict how to solve these problems in an ideal way, I feel, at least, more* ***confident in talking about these issues from different perspectives, and defend China's position more evidentially and sympathetically*** (F7C)**.**

F7's growth process fits the description of Perry's (1970) intellectual and ethical development of university students, who are moving from an absolute thinking of 'right' or 'wrong' to a pluralist stance where different views and perspectives are acknowledged to be valid in their own rights. But not stopping at the point of relativism she related to China's reality and contextualized the issue and reached a

higher stage of intellectual maturity—relativistic stance with commitment.

7.3.3 Summary

To the participants, the inherited ways of learning, especially learning skills, which includes much reliance on the teacher, listening to an experienced master but not a peer student, non-critical reading and writing, disregarding verbalizing ideas in class, and inductive writing style, etc. do not travel very well to the host learning setting. However, the new learning experience and reflection have refined and broadened the participants' inherited frame of reference by developing new understanding of the learning activities and acquiring new learning skills. They started to emphasize active engagement with the academic work, and believe that communicating is a most effective way of learning. They also emphasize affective factors, like interest, curiosity, willingness, fun, and confidence, in the learning process.

They have modified considerably their learning behaviour and enlarged their repertoire of learning skills. Though they are not quite confident in implementing some skills, such as self-initiated learning goals or critical argumentative writing, they have embraced the values of these learning practices in their conceptions of learning. Moreover, we should bear in mind that the modification and development of their learning beliefs should not be taken as one set of learning beliefs to replace the other. The interaction between the two learning cultures is always operating on the individual level, and synergetic culture theory and tertiary socialisation theory are insightful in shedding lights on the complexities of this transforming process.

7.4 Change in Why-dimension

In Chapter 5, three aspects of the purpose of learning emerged from the participants' account: learning is for desired career and social status, for self-perfection, and for contribution to society. Learning in the new environment inspired them to review their life goals and make new choices and enriched their understanding of the ultimate

purpose of learning.

7.4.1 Increasing Self-knowledge and Commitment to One's Life Aspirations

The instrumental orientation of learning was common among the participants when they came to the UK and studying abroad as an investment was expected to pay off through securing a desired job after graduation (see Section 5.2). However, after almost one year of overseas learning, the participants showed a declining of vocational orientation of learning and an increasing self-knowledge and personal pursuits of their life aspirations, which may have been constrained in their home culture. The participants would like to make their own decisions for their life and felt happy to take responsibilities for their own choices as well. After critically appraising the Chinese academic milieu and his own personal attributes, M1 decided to be an academic instead of making himself a millionaire as he once expected:

> [63] *The professors in my home university do not take research seriously. It is not their fault. The whole atmosphere is there […]* ***I feel that both the teachers and the students in China are either money-oriented or fame-oriented.*** *But the academic atmosphere here is much better. […]They identify with a life style.* ***This greatly impacted my view on the quality of living standard****. Before I came here,* ***my life aspiration was to become a millionaire,*** *or even a billionaire. I think many students have similar ideas as I did.* ***Now I think it is important to do what you really want to do in your life.*** *It is not bad to lead a plain life. Perhaps you think I'm too naive. But that is what I am thinking about, at least now.* ***I have changed some of my ideas since I came here. I've changed a lot*** (M1C).

Obviously, M1's change was definitely not a quantitative one in terms of more knowledge and skills but a qualitative one in self-understanding and life pursuit. M1 also said, in the past, though he was fairly interested in his subject, he was mainly motivated by pragmatic benefits in his studies. After coming here, he developed an intrinsic interest in certain areas and also a sense of responsibility and even duty for

his own study, not for parents, or any others, but for himself. The dedication of the academics impressed him so much that he voluntarily pushed himself harder. He said, 'If a man with three children to look after at home can do this (work at weekends), as a free bachelor myself, what reasons or excuses I have to neglect my studies?' (M1 FN05-05-06)

M1 also realized that communication was the most important skill in his career. He said 'Without communication, without finance'. But the complicated interpersonal relations and communications tactics of Chinese made him a bit 'scared' and he felt that he was too artless and inadequate to be working with 'this bunch of sophisticated people[42] if he wanted to start his career in the banking or financial system.

Though frowning upon such 'ways of the world', M1 felt there was a need for him to learn those 'smooth skills of conducting oneself in society (处事技巧)', which were understood as a kind of social competence, usually acquired outside of classroom. But, ironically, by the end of the program, M1 told me that he noticed that those people had changed a lot in terms of the ways of dealing with people:

> [64] *I found **they have changed a lot** and got more open and less sophisticated* (*shigu,* 世故, meaning worldly-wise in terms of interpersonal relations—my comment) *than before. They also start liking talking with us. [PAUSE] **I feel sorry for them.*** (M1FN05-05-06)

In the beginning, M1 desired to be one of those who were successful in the (banking) system and lamented on his lack of 'skills of conducting himself in society', and now he felt sorry for them, maybe because they had to go back to that stifling system when the program ended. After comparing two academic cultures and, most importantly, having gained much self-understanding and self-knowledge, M1 decided not to secure

[42] The typical profile of a Chinese university student is: young (aged 17 or 18 for freshmen and 21 or 24 for seniors), single, without working experience, so few mature students could be found in a typical Chinese university. M1 talked on several occasions about a group of mature Chinese students in his class, who usually had more than three years of working experiences in the national banks in China and were funded by their employers or other financial institutions. Their 'smooth' characters and sophisticated attitudes towards people shocked him greatly,. He said, 'They are as smooth as fish. They talk slowly, and you can tell from their eyes that their words won't come out unless they are turned over three times in their mind'. (M1C)

pay-off jobs in China, but stay to pursue his PhD studies in the UK[43]. He said

> [65] ***I know better myself now.*** *I am not suitable to be working in big banks in China because I am not good at managing complicated interpersonal relations, but I am confident in doing proper research and* ***making myself an academic of integrity.*** (M1FN July 13-06)

Another similar case in this respect was F2, who gave up her accounting major and switched to education. She developed a genuine interest in pre-school education as a result of learning in the UK. However, she was fully aware of different value frames in the two cultures concerning the hierarchy of occupations:

> [66] *I told my [UK] teachers that that I want to be working in a kindergarten, observing and playing with children, and they all encouraged me and say it is great. But when I talked with those teachers from China, they all showed disapproval. They said 'you are a Master now and have a degree from the UK, how could you think of working in a kindergarten? Your parents would be disappointed as well.[…]* ***People here have no bias in terms of*** **'lower/ higher or noble /common occupations,** *but* ***if I go back to China*** *to be working in a kindergarten, that would certainly drive my mum mad.* (F2C)

F2 was fully aware of the cultural constraint that in the Chinese mind, pre-school education is lower in status, not a respected career as in university. However, gaining new perspectives to view the value orientation of occupations made her possible mediating these two value systems and avail herself of this opportunity to make her own choice with good reason.[44]

> [67] ***Since I am living here, I can try getting the opportunity to do what I like.*** *Perhaps, when I go back to China I can never have the chance to do it. You know I am much prone to be influenced by others* (F2FN Aug 16-06).

F2 did not consider herself as fully independent personality; as she admitted, she was typical Chinese, easily influenced by others' opinions. However, studying abroad made her aware of possibilities to be temporarily away from her cultural constraints

[43] M1 went to Ireland to do his PhD instead.
[44] After graduation, F2 managed to find herself a temporary job in a nursery in Scotland.

and to ‘author her own world without being subjected to other’s will’ (Young, 1986:19).

7.4.2 Broadened Conceptions of Self-Perfection

In Chapter 5.2, I have shown that in the participants’ inherited learning conceptions, ‘*xue zuo ren*’ (学做人 learn to be/make a person) is considered as the fundamental learning outcome; Self-cultivation or self-perfection has been emphasized both by institutions and by individuals themselves. In fact, this concept mainly refers to personal cultivation in terms of ethical values and moral standards. The process of self-cultivation is believed to lead to desirable personal qualities, in a modern term, called *suzhi* 素质. In Taiwan, the corresponding term for ‘*suzhi* education’ is ‘Whole Person education’, actually introduced from the United States, advocating that teaching and learning should incorporate the body, the mind, the feelings, the social and intuitive dimensions of the individual in order to produce all-round developed citizens.

Having been tempered in this new cultural crucible of learning, the participants in this study gained much insight into their own innermost being and enriched their self-knowledge and constructs of personal *suzhi*. According to the participants, these desirable qualities were both the outcome and the prerequisite of successful intercultural adjustment and learning. Pooling their conceptions of *suzhi* together, I can categorize them into (1) Intellectual development: relativism in perspective; (2) *xinli suzhi* 心理素质: EQ (emotion quotient) and AQ (adversity quotient); and (3) Intercultural *suzhi*: development of international and intercultural identity, which will be dealt with in a separate section 7.4.3.

A. Intellectual Development: Relativism in Perspectives

The British classroom was perceived to be a site of contention, where different perspectives competed and were acknowledged with good reason, so gaining new perspectives seemed to be an inevitable learning outcome of studying abroad, felt by

most participants. F2' summary was typical of most participants' comment on their overseas study in terms of gaining new perspectives to view reality:

> [68] *And most importantly,* ***your mind-set is changed. […] You cannot be truly Westernised, but at least you can see the reality from their point of view.*** *It is* ***your choice*** *how to view the matter, from the West or/and from the East*. (F2B)

Gaining new perspectives was not an automatic happening; it must involve an empathetic movement from one's own frame of reference to a new stance. F4 explicitly explained how it happened:

> [69] *We* ***took it for granted*** *that 'you pay money for your debts, your life for the killing'. And* ***this belief was never wavered until I was abroad and confronted with another juristic system.*** *I had been thinking it ridiculous to spare those unpardonable killers. What was the point of sentencing one or two hundred years? Nobody could live that long after all. But when you* ***change your position and think about*** *their historical and religious factors, you get different rationale. These two systems are equally valid and justified in their own social contexts. […] When I provided contextual factors to explain why our government has to take drastic measures to implement family planning policy across the country, my European classmates began to* ***show sympathy with our conditions*** *rather than just accuse us of violating human rights* (F4B).

So 'to gain different perspectives on reality' became one of the most valued learning outcomes from studying abroad. The culture knowledge of the host country also made it possible for the participants to get out of their cognitive and affective stalemate by changing their position and starting thinking in the others' shoes. They would like using a vogue phrase in modern Chinese '换位思考' (*huanwei sikao*, meaning exchanging positions to think from the other's perspective) to negotiate such cognitive conflicts and affective stalemate. This concept fits the definition of empathy described by Bennett (1993): 'Empathy is ethnorelative in that it demands a shift in frame of reference; it is based on an assumption of differences, and implies respect for that difference and a readiness to give up temporally one's own worldview in order to imaginatively participate in the other's' (Bennett, 1993: 53). Bennett made a contrast

between ‘sympathy’ and ‘empathy’; the former is ethnocentric, because ‘its practice demands only a shift in assumed circumstances (position), not a shift in the frame of reference one brings to that circumstance’. However, the nuances around these two terms are not consciously differentiated in the participants’ ‘同情’(*tongqing*’), which was literally translated into English ‘sympathy’, but I could feel that there was empathetic connotation in the word as well, such as M1’s sympathy on *‘lao wai’* in an earlier section. Moreover, the Chinese phrase also implies a reciprocal shift made by the other part, not just one-way accommodation. In the case above, European students reciprocated their sympathetic/empathetic shift and showed understanding of Chinese national conditions.

To some participants, gaining new perspective could be an irreversible journey, involving a complete shift in outlook on life and the society they lived in; in other words, they were moving to the stage of Commitment in Relativism in Perry’s (1970) model because a new perspective usually involved shift in values and evoked strong feelings as well, as exemplified by F3’s case:

> [70] *I don’t quite understand when people ask whether you think in English or in Chinese. […]* ***But your values may gradually change, so the way you look at things would be different****. For instance, poverty was addressed differently in the UK and in China. In China, attribution of poverty is to individual’s own account, such as lack of education, laziness. That is not just. In the West, poverty is viewed as an infringement upon human rights. It is a complete different notion. […] When you go deep into their society you naturally* ***acquire a different perspective on the matter. You will know what is real social justice.*** (F3C)

Obviously, unlike F4’s cultural relativistic stance on justice, mediating two dissonant juristic systems, F3 held a universalistic value of social justice and found it impossible to neutralize the two completely different notions and perspectives. Similarly, M2 was also inclined to think gaining new perspectives was a personal continuous evolution process, not something that could be boxed and bracketed, but would become a part of one’s biography. He said, ‘it is not that you have got another worldview. As far as myself is concerned, I have been seeking a correct way to look at the world’

(M2FN-10-06-06). It seemed, at least to him, there was one correct worldview. Of course, the participants' seeking one correct way to look at the world did not mean that he refused to give credits to other worldviews; on the contrary, before approximating to the correct way, or during the process of seeking, with a spirit of humility, they were open to possible perspectives, ready to incorporate new perspectives into their own frame of reference. This change in worldview is broader that Marton *et al.*'s (1993) 'changed as a person', and more similar to Perry's (1970) relativism with commitment and Mezirow's (1978; 1990) perspective transformation. As Kauffmann *et al.* claim, 'when students grow intellectually and gain a new understanding of the world, they discover that they are changed people. They begin to relate differently to others and to think about themselves and their futures in new ways' (1992: 92) [45].

B. *xinli suzhi* 心理素质: Psychological Qualities

Though personal psychological traits are not the focus of investigation in this study, the key psychological qualities (*xinli suzhi* 心理素质), especially those that were perceived to play important roles and need developing when studying abroad kept being emphasized by the participants,. Based on frequency and semantic groupings from interview accounts, desirable psychological *suzhi* could include the following interlocking attributes: Emotional quotient and Adversity Quotient, (shortened as EQ and AQ, as in contrast to IQ), referring to the resilience, flexibility, and self-control in face of difficulties.

Emotional quotient (EQ) has been getting currency as a vogue term in Chinese context ever since the concept travelled to China. Chinese tend to think that like IQ, one's EQ can also be tempered and improved with accumulated experience and wisdom. In the psychology literature, EQ is conceived as the interaction between intelligence and

[45] Kauffmann *et al.*'s conceptualise 'change' in four dimensions: a. Intrapersonal understanding; b. Interpersonal relationships; c. Values, the ultimate beliefs and the central principles guiding life and decision making; d. Life direction/vocation, meaning 'the unique expression of the self in the environment, the use of one's abilities and talents to do what needs doing in the world' (1992: 98)

emotion, so EQ is also understood as emotional intelligence. The basic constructs of emotional intelligence include emotional appraisal of the self, emotional appraisal of others, regulation of emotion, and use of emotion (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Wong & Law, 2002). People with high emotional intelligence 'are more skilled at understanding the feelings of others and responding to them in a manner that is characterized by empathy and compassion' (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006: 9).

According to the participants, a person with high EQ has following characteristics:

'*be more open to communication and good at maintaining interpersonal relations*' (Fiona, from Business school),

'*not to be oversensitive or easily feel upset by others words or behaviour*' (M4B),

'*enjoy high self-esteem and confidence*' (F4B)

'a peaceful heart/mind' (F6A)

'*thick-skinned, standing up to criticism and setbacks* (PhD student in Finance)

'*know how to protect one's feelings from being hurt*' (F2A)

The participants' description and understanding of EQ enjoyed much in common with Stier's concept of emotional competency. According to Stier, 'emotional competencies refer to the student's ability to understand and cope with a variety of feelings, e.g. xenophobia, fear, uneasiness, uncertainty, insecurity, ambiguity, frustration, anger, disgust, ethnocentrism, etc., triggered by unknown cultural setting' (2003: 85). The participants' EQ seemed to be more oriented to a protective function in dealing with interpersonal relations, while emotional competence 'pertains to the ability not to…automatically and uncritically allow feelings completely to dominate one's actions or interpretations with respect to behaviour or events' (ibid: 85).

AQ mainly means personal resilience under pressure. It underscored the ability to stretch one's potential to endure adversities and uncertainties, social dysfunction, academic unfitness, communication barriers. All the participants reported that they had undergone certain spells of all-time low but gradually recovered and re-established confidence in their self-efficacy. Retrospectively, they took those social

disorientations and psychological distress as natural process of personal growth, which seemed to support the point that certain frustrations and disorientation were conducive to personal growth. For example, F4 talked about her flatmate, who could not hold out under the pressure of three essays' deadline approaching:

> [71] *She could not endure the pressure. Under pressure, she would collapse. She was happy that she was ill, for she could ask for extension for submission of essays. At first, she asked for extension for one essay; in the end, all the three essays were on extension. She did not finish any essay during the whole holiday. We had four exams in May. I really worry about her […] Whenever she meets difficulties and pressure, she just wants to shy away;* ***without perseverance and resilience, one can hardly succeed, neither in studies nor in his/her career*** (F4B).

Flexibility was deemed as another desirable personal quality to overcome difficulties in a new, unfamiliar setting. According to the participant, a person with good psychological *suzhi* must be flexible in dealing with unpleasant or ambiguous affairs. The participants tended to agree that Chinese seemed to be more flexible in both attitude and behaviour in dealing with general affairs, which were perceived to be a psychological strength and maturity.

In participants' words, being flexible meant as follows:

> *'be open to change',* (M2 April-22-06)
>
> *'ready to adopt other alternative methods',* (M5 Oct-06)
>
> *'not to stubbornly persist in one's own opinion',* (F6FN16-06-06)
>
> *'listen to others' opinion'* (F5 July-06)
>
> *'be willing to accommodate in light of circumstances'* (M7 FN05-05-06)
>
> *'be aware of the contextual factors and adjust accordingly'* (F4FNMay-06)
>
> *'to negotiate and make moderate compromise'* (F7 June-06)

Since being flexible is much related to reading situational cues and gearing one's actions to maximize the likelihood of a positive outcome (Snyder, 1974), so this attribute shares many common features with Snyder's self-monitoring theory, which is

focused on the stability and flexibility of one's persona across situation (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006: 7). According to them, high self-monitors are usually the chameleons of the world, readily changing their behaviour according to the specific environment. Snyder (1974) outlined three characteristics of high self-monitors: (1) a concern for behaving in an appropriate manner, (2) a sensitivity to cues in the environment, and (3) a change in behaviour according to what the environment demands. The participants tended to agree that most Chinese students were such high self-monitors, flexible and sensitive to the environment and were much concerned with the appropriateness of their behaviour in the host culture. As M3 said,

> [72] *After all, you are in other's territory, so you should be careful with what you say and what you do. It is not like at home;* ***'A guest should suit the convenience of the host' (客随主便).*** (M3A)

The 'guest attitude' was common among the participants.[46] In the Chinese mind, reciprocity is much expected of the relations between the guest and the host: the guest receives hospitality provided but conforms to the host's protocols in return. One pet phrase in their daily speech is 'it is not like at home…' This outsider status and mentality constantly reminded them to self-monitor their attitudes and behaviours not to violate the host's conventions. It seemed they took it for granted that one should be adaptive to the new environment, either physical or symbolical, at least temporarily, and then they could be themselves again when they came back home. This is consistent with the results of psychological studies on primary and secondary control of Asians as mentioned earlier (in contrast to Americans) that Asians place greater emphasis on secondary control to make personal adjustments to accommodate existing realities instead of exerting their influence on the environment (Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984). And this forbearance and resilience is easily perceived as 'passivity' by Westerners.

[46] Through contact with other Chinese students, especially in the Business School, I could also sense 'customer attitudes' harbored in their mind. Their insensitivity to the host culture was termed by F1 as 'turning into host from guest' ('反客为主', meaning assuming a dominant role regardless of the host' customs and rules)

Being away from home means away from significant others' exhortation and external discipline, so self-discipline and self-control was another prominent factor the participants highlighted influencing their social interaction and academic progress. The meanings the participants gave to this construct comprised two facets: self-discipline in one's studies and self-control in one's mood or heart/mind state. Self-discipline in one's studies entails efforts, perseverance, will power and conscientious attitude, as M3 said,

> [73] *When we are at home, there is always someone around to remind you of do's and don'ts, like 'Stop playing on computer', 'Do not watch TV for more than one hour'. At here,* ***you need manage yourself.*** *You need ask yourself 'have you finish today's reading? If not, then you can't go to the party tonight'. I think* ***I have trained myself to be self-disciplined*** (M3FN Feb12-06).

The frequent use of the reflexive pronoun 'self' in the participants' accounts indicated both a heightened awareness of and a de-centredness from themselves simultaneously. The 'self-talk', the educational value of which has long been recognized in Western educational psychology (Bruner, 1990; Harris, 1990; Vygotsky, 1965), seemed to be a new strategy adopted by the participants to self-regulate and self-exhort.

Besides heightening the consciousness of self-disciplining one's behaviour, monitoring and controlling one's mood and the heart/mind state was another growth indicator the participants underscored. The participants felt that living abroad changed their heart/mind state greatly, which was mainly manifested in being realistic about self and becoming understanding of others. As F4 said,

> [74] *Being away from China's atmosphere and soaked in this new culture, I could feel that my heart/mind is moving to a moderate state. In the past, I liked competition, seeking to outshine others. Coming out to see the big world, you know how limited our sight is, and you will* ***re-position yourself in the world,*** *and your heart/mind state is getting peaceful* (M1FNAug16-06).

M2 pointed out that many (Mainland) Chinese students' heart/mind state was not appropriate:

> [75] *They worried about personal gains and losses too much, blaming others but him/herself, complaining about everything all the time […]. They lack self-control, they don't know how to adjust their state of heart/mind to face the reality. All their mentality is still of Chinese. To be frank,* ***some students are not suitable to study abroad*** (M2B).

On the one hand, the participants seemed to suggest that studying abroad entailed certain psychological traits and personal qualities; on the other hand, they admitted that overseas learning experience made them acquire or develop these desirable qualities.

That learning involves affective factors is common sense to the educationist, but emotional components are often overlooked in higher education. Being closely associated with this group of Chinese students, I could deeply feel how easily they were affected by their lecturer's or their supervisor's positive or negative comment. The received and perceived attention from the staff and other new significant others would motivate them to achieve high in their studies and make more changes to themselves to be in tune with these significant others' expectation.

PhD students expressed more concern with their supervisors' attitudes toward themselves, and good relationship with supervisors was taken as utmost important for a successful PhD journey. The following was F6's account about her first meeting with her supervisor, which showed not only her sensitivity to her relation with her supervisor but also her emotional competence to make sense of the situation:

> [76] *I was about to leave and asked him when I should I come again. He said 'it's up to you, whenever you are ready'. I said 'how about next Wednesday?' He looked at his diary and said, 'no, I can't make it'. Then I said 'Friday afternoon?' and he said that he couldn't make it either. I didn't know what to say. After a while, he said "I can meet you at a quarter past twelve, Friday. Is that OK with you?" I didn't know whether he meant it or something. So I*

felt very uneasy. I felt I was not welcome. ***If your supervisor doesn't like you, how can you continue studying here?*** *When I was out of his room, I kept thinking: maybe he is really that busy; maybe they feel quite ok working at lunch time; it is not because that he doesn't like me, but the lunch time is the only time slot available for the rest of the week…. Anyway, I am determined to find out. I began to ask other students about their supervision time, and I learned that it is not unusual for the academics here to work at lunch time. And their lunch is very simple and informal, perhaps just a sandwich. They are really busy. People here don't take meals as that seriously. We Chinese spend too much time cooking and eating.* (F6B)

Her automatic emotional response was rather negative: 'I'm not welcome'; 'he doesn't like me', and she even thought about quitting her studies if her supervisor did not like her. But, instead of trapping herself into emotional depression, she made a cognitive response: 'think before you feel'. She took actions to discover other possibilities and perspectives in interpreting unfamiliar phenomena.

All the PhD students in this study were quite satisfied with their interpersonal relationship with their supervisors, and showed great admiration for their teachers' scholarship and character. From the language they used to talk about their supervisors, relationship was analogous to that of a bonding master-disciple in martial arts circles, full of affection and attachment and not without 'family' flavour. For example, people under the same supervisor would be titled 'brothers or sisters' (*shixiong* 师兄, *shimei* 师妹) to indicate that they were learning from the same master.

In short, the data presented in this section show that to the participants, studying abroad is as much an emotional journey as an intellectual journey. The affective factors played a catalyser role in both their academic studies and personal growth.

7.4.3 Development of International and Intercultural Identity

The development of the participants' international and intercultural identity was mainly evidenced by their reconceptualising 'international talents' (*guojihua rencai* '国际化人才').

In Mainland China, one of the objectives of Chinese higher education is to produce 'versatile talents' and 'international/world talents' to meet the need of China's modernization of its socialist cause against the background of globalization.[47] *Guojihua rencai*, a vogue but vague term, has not been seriously conceptualised yet and what key qualities will make an international talent are not explicitly formulated either in government documents or in the objectives of institutions. International talents are presumed to be those who are involved in international education, i.e. studying courses with the term 'international' in the titles. Reflecting on their cross-cultural learning experiences, the participants added an international dimension to their 'contribution to society' and an intercultural dimension to substantiate the watchword 'the international talents' (*guojihua rencai* 国际化人才), which are taken as the goal of modern education in the context of globalisation.

The essential qualities of *guojihua rencai* the participants identified could be categorized into: (1) Breadth of cultural knowledge; (2) Broadmindedness; (3) Accommodating new values; (4) Developing an intercultural learning identity

(1) Breadth of knowledge: Knowledge about one's own culture and knowledge about others' culture

Although the participants started to develop a critical attitude towards textbook knowledge, they still believed that to have a wide range of knowledge was necessary to meet the challenges presented in the modern world. They emphasized the construction of knowledge as the foundation to give play to one's skills and abilities. For example, when commenting on *suzhi*, F7 said:

> [77] *I think, firstly,* ***suzhi*** *refers to the breadth of your* ***knowledge****, then* ***the ways to see a matter.*** *Sometimes we may be quite narrow-minded, so we need move from the narrow-mindedness to absorb (new knowledge, new notions) constantly, then our* ***vision*** *will be getting wider and wider, so that we could* ***see the matter dialectically and holistically.***

[47] 'Three Orientations' (三个面向) – education should be oriented to modernization, to world (globalization) , and to future construction ('教育要面向现代化，面向世界，面向未来'), were first put forward by Deng Xiaoping in 1983 and have become the guideline for Chinese education reform for the last decades and the new century.

Another aspect of ***suzhi*** *is your* ***abilities and competences to deal with difficult situations calmly, level-headedly*** (F7B).

'To deal with difficult situations calmly, level-headedly' was mentioned quite often by the participants as an important quality, especially in dealing with intercultural issues. The participants also acknowledged that these desirable *suzhi* were the important factors which had made their intercultural academic adjustment successful. They admitted that they knew little about British culture before they came to the UK, or what they learned from language classes was only superficial knowledge and much of that turned out to be untrue. For example, M4 emphasized personal experience in acquiring knowledge:

[78] *If you hadn't come here yourself, you would never know. Our English teacher says British professors are very formal, not like Americans. Obviously, she is wrong. But it is not her fault after all; she has never been abroad. So I think* ***personal experience is very important****. There is good reason to believe 'reading ten thousand books is not equal to travelling ten thousand miles'* (M4C)

In fact, 'reading ten thousand books and travelling ten thousand miles' (读万卷书，行万里路), is a Chinese saying, meaning both the knowledge from the book and the knowledge from personal experience are equally important. But M4 rephrased and gave priority to travelling, that is, the personal experience in acquiring knowledge.

Besides one's accomplishments in certain field, the participants felt that to have a deep knowledge of the two cultures was important in order to interpret effectively or make a correct judgement of the host culture. The point was made by M2 that 'the deep knowledge' or 'the real knowledge' was more than historical and geographical facts or surface cultural phenomena and practice; one should discover the deeper ideology, termed 'cultural spirit', behind the phenomena and practice:

[79] *What we learnt here was still superficial. If you want to go deep and get a real understanding, you have to continue to read and learn. Many people, including Chinese*

students on campus only see the surface, the phenomena, and jump to the conclusion, very subjectively; they did not go to ***the deeper level,*** *[Interviewer: What do you mean 'deeper level'?]* ***The ideology behind the phenomena, or to study the law and principle of the affairs***. (M2C).

So according to M2, in order to make valid evaluation or judgement on a phenomenon, one should be equipped with 'deep knowledge' to make unbiased interpretation of the phenomenon. M2, representative of most participants, believed in the continuity of knowledge, no matter in subject areas or in sociocultural areas, that new knowledge was built up on the old knowledge, and the breadth of knowledge was the base to 'see through the phenomenon to grasp the nature of the matter' (F3B).

(2) Broadmindedness

In the participants' mind, studying abroad will definitely broaden one's horizon. They all felt that they had learnt a lot during the year, but they said 'the more you know the less you feel you know', emphasizing a humble attitude toward learning. They described how they were eager to take in new knowledge 'like a sponge in the boundless sea of learning' (F2B), and the more they absorbed, the more modest they remained. The cultural core beliefs of learning-effortful and respectful learning-were reinforced rather than diminished.

Later on, through constant adjusting learning approaches to adapt to the new learning culture, previous quantitative learning conceptions gave way to more qualitative ones, as presented in earlier sections. This conception of receptive learning is consistent with intellectual humility and openness inherited in Chinese learning culture. Modesty and openness are deemed important qualities for fostering *xuepin* (学品, scholarship character), which includes not only academic rigorousness, but also a broad mind to accommodate different opinions and schools of thoughts.

In Chinese, the common metaphor used to describe a person's magnanimous capacity to tolerate or forgive others' errors or shortcoming is the image of 'sea', whose

capacity comprises hundreds of small streams and rivers. A famous Chinese saying that ‘a prime minister’s heart is large enough to sail a boat’ (*zaixiang duli neng chengchuan* 宰相肚里能撑船) is often used to describe a great person’s magnanimity and broadmindedness. So, much related to self-perfection, the Chinese term 心胸开阔 is both a stable temperament and an embodiment of wisdom, and can be extended with one’s experiences and constant learning.

M2 said that, with the process of world economy globalization, more international talents in their subject field would be needed in China, and he offered his understanding of what ‘international talent’ means:

> [80] *What we learnt at university is very superficial. Of course, what we learn here is not deep either. But at least you (I) have* ***broadened your horizon and see your limitation.*** *If you just stay in your small world, you would be like ‘a frog in a well’* (a Chinese idiom, meaning a person with limited outlook—my comment)*, with parochial conceitedness, not aware of what is happening in other parts of the world. You say you are an international talent and other people think you are an international talent, then what does it (‘international talent’) mean?* [Interviewer. Then what does it mean to you?] *You should* ***have a global vision, ‘having the motherland in mind and the world in view’****.* (M2C)

When one’s horizon is broadened, naturally he/she can see further. Therefore, if ‘horizon’ refers to the width of one’s mind, then the term ‘vision’ will emphasize the depth of this horizon, so that one can not only have wide outlook but also see the field with intelligence and imagination. The last sentence is a propaganda slogan, which is prevalent in media and other official documents with the intention of integrating patriotism with internationalism. Another similar vogue phrase is ‘the more national, the more international’, aiming at maintaining national cultural characteristics when orienting to the world.

The participants admitted that the old national mentality of ‘to learn the advanced technology from the foreign nation with the purpose to contain/control it’ (师夷长技以制夷, a Chinese saying) was not uncommon among them in the beginning, but they

gradually moved out of this narrow mentality. As M1 said,

> [81] *Before I came here, I thought I must work hard* ***not to make Chinese 'loose face'****, because in our primary school textbooks we were taught how those great figures, such as Zhu Kezhen, Zhou Enlai,* ***won credits for our motherland*** *when they were studying abroad* ***competing against foreigners****. Now it seems a bit silly, (for) it (learning) has nothing to do with your nationality. […]****You just learn for yourself****'*. (M1C)

In the beginning of their sojourn, the participants tended to bring themselves and other Chinese into a 'part and whole' relationship, and their words and behaviour would have consequence on the image of Chinese people as a whole. They often said that when they were abroad, they were more concerned with the appropriateness of their words and behaviour, because they were not only representing themselves but also other Chinese people. Nurtured in the spirit of patriotism, some participants harboured a strong motive to compete against '*lao wai*' (students of other nationalities) in academic achievements. The change from learning for winning honour for motherland to learning for oneself evidenced his transcendence of narrow nationalism and inclination towards individualism and cosmopolitanism.

The contingent factor is that the Business School, like other business schools of UK campuses is disproportionately over-presented with Chinese students, accounting for almost 80%, with approximately equal proportion of Mainland Chinese and Taiwanese students. So 'it was meaningless to compete against your folk people' (M1C).They have also exerted certain impact on the British classroom culture, for example, sometimes the handouts were in Chinese and Chinese students would group together and talk in Chinese in classroom discussion when Chinese students were in absolute majority. According to M1, 'poor *Laowai* (foreigners) would helplessly look on and pleaded 'shall we speak English?' (M1B)

To what extent the presence of Chinese students impacted the local teaching culture was not fully investigated in this study, so further research is needed to explore this patch of cultural enclave.

(3) Accommodate and Assimilate New Values

Apart from acquiring cultural knowledge about the two cultures and personal intercultural skills, accommodating new notions and values was taken by the participants as the most important learning outcome of overseas study, more important than a student's academic achievements, as F3 claimed:

> [82] *I think a successful learner neither depends on his academic achievements nor his subject knowledge, but on* ***whether he/she has learnt the core values of Western culture,*** *whether he/she has learnt to* ***respec****t people, to treat people* ***equally****, to care about people and life, and whether he/she has learnt to pursue* ***social justice****. If he/she hasn't learnt these, no matter how successful he/she is in his/her subject matter, I think he/she is still a failure. And perhaps, he will never have the opportunity to acquire a* ***correct outlook on life and world*** (F3C).

To F3, who studied applied social science, to internalize the core values of Western culture was the prerequisite to be successful in her studies, and the ultimate purpose of learning was to establish a correct outlook on life and world, to gain universal values, such as equality, justice, respect and use them to readjust and rectify one's own value systems. In her words, the change in one's notions and values should manifest in 'one's deep heart and mind'. Therefore the real learning means the inner change—change as a person:

> [83] *Subject knowledge will perhaps be out of date soon, but the notions and values you learn here will be deep rooted in your heart, such as learn to* ***respect*** *people, understand their culture and social* ***justice,*** *learn* ***negotiations*** *between people. Our socialist country falls short of these notions and values. […]. So the change should not be at the superficial level. Some people only learn from the West those superficial things, like eating with knife and fork. I think* ***learning should take place in your inner heart. I emphasize the inner change.*** *Many people have changed their Chinese living habits, but their inner heart/mind is not changed at all. You can't say they have* ***learnt the real/ authentic things'*** (F3B)

F3's point of view was widely endorsed among the participants and they gave various examples from their experiences in the host culture to illustrate these points and values. For example, M6 made a comparison between Chinese 'respect' and British 'respect' and made it explicit that he liked the British 'easy relationship' between people, senior and junior, and found Chinese way of showing hierarchical respect tiring and a bit insincere:

> [84] *They (Westerners) are raised in this environment where seniors and juniors keep an* ***easy relationship, not devoid of respect****. I think we have different views on what is respect. [PAUSE] In our Eastern countries, we always* ***lower ourselves to show our respect. The more you belittle yourself, the more respect you pay the interlocutor and the more respectful the interlocutor thinks you are. I feel, for Westerners, to behave in confidence and dignity is to show respect.*** *For instance, an average person is talking with Prime Minister on TV, you will see he/she is behaving very confidently, not bowing or fawning. To have confidence means you don't feel inferior; it doesn't mean to be aggressive or self-conceited. I think this is an important difference between the East and the West.* [Int: Which way do you feel comfortable?] ***I like their way; I can be myself, and show my respect, with both confidence and humility.*** (M6B)

The new notion of 'respect' in his mental dictionary has acquired new connotations of 'confidence' and 'dignity', which were obviously absent in the componential analysis of Chinese 'respect'. However, by putting 'respect' in perspective, M6 made a dialectical commitment for himself: he was not simply replacing one with another, but drawing on the valued elements from both cultures and found his own comfortable zone of behaviour: 'to show respect with both confidence and humility'—'to be himself'.

The appreciation of evidenced argument and questioning spirit was another prominent theme from participants' interview accounts, as presented in earlier sections. Both the academic value and the social value of critical thinking were perceived and acknowledged. The participants came to realize that the value of critical thinking was

not just restricted to academic training and assessment and but also a sociocultural practice people live with. Moreover, the participants agreed that contentious thoughts could be incorporated constructively into Chinese sociocultural practice without necessarily harming the value of social harmony:

> [85] *The articles in Chinese newspapers or journals are always of one voice. If your article is not of mainstream, it is unlikely to be published. They are not proper research; they are policy-based, instead of evidence-based. Here* (in the UK—my comment), *you can put forward whatever sensational theory* ***as long as it is grounded or evidenced.*** *But in China, whenever there is a contentious school of thought, the government will think that it may potentially undermine the country, and those authorities would come out to disperse the 'rumour' and assure the public that that won't happen.* ***That's not right. We must change this practice to encourage contentious thoughts and to create sound intellectual atmosphere. With the improvement of whole nation's suzhi, one voice is simply impossible'*** (M2C).

In fact, the participants did not feel contentious thoughts and arguments were alien to traditional Chinese culture. They referred to the period of 'contention of a hundred schools of thought' in Chinese history[48] and believed that 'weeding through the old to bring forth the new' would lead to the progress of a society. However, some participants spoke from their own disciplines and pointed out that not all the good practices could be transplanted from one country to another, but to be able to have empathetic understanding of two distinct systems and practices will enrich individuals' cultural and intercultural resources and repertoire for them to mobilize for self-realization and personal growth. On more than one occasion, the participants proposed that the assessment of international students' overseas study should take into account this aspect of change.

(4) Developing an intercultural learning identity

[48] During the Spring-Autumn Warring States Periods (770-221 B.C.), Chinese history witnessed a flourishing period of ideology and philosophy when emerged in large number various schools of thought that were contending each other. Confucius, Mencius, Zhuang Zi, Lao Zi, Mo Zi, Han Fei Zi, etc. were representative figures of that flourish age, which is called 'Contention of a hundred schools of thought' in Chinese history. Later, Mao Zedong, set forth the policy 'letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought to contend', aiming at promoting the progress of the arts and the sciences and the development of a flourishing socialist culture.

The participants came to realise that 'international talents' should also have a global awareness (*quanqiu yishi*, 全球意识), the awareness of the Self and the Other, but act upon one's cultural identity appropriately in different context. In the initial stage of their overseas learning, the participants showed much ambivalence in this respect: on the one hand they did not want to be treated as outsiders; on the other hand, they would like people to acknowledge that they were different from others. F1's case was most 'I felt unhappy when they ignored me. I don't like being treated differently and I don't like even more when they ignore my difference'. Generally speaking, the Master students tended to entertain the idea that they should be positively discriminated as an individual or as a cultural group: 'they (the UK lecturers—my comment) spoke so fast; they don't treat us as foreigners. We are not like European students. English is almost their native language' (M3B); whereas PhD students were eager to claim full membership in the new learning and research community from the beginning, 'you are a member of the team now, nothing special' (M5A). M6 showed disapproval of emphasizing cultural differences:

> [86] ***I find Chinese like emphasizing how different we (they) are from others.*** *And they are very keen on 'selling' their culture, their food, inviting people to visit famous places, etc. I think that shows lack of confidence in our culture. French students do not vigorously promote their culture by urging people to visit the Louvre….* (M6B)

According to him, 'selling' one's own culture betrayed (national) self-inferiority complex. He was aware that the new learning setting was an intercultural space where students from different cultural backgrounds were temporarily jumping out of one's own cultural sphere and seeking common ground to interact, rather than an arena or pageant to present differences or uniqueness.

To most participants, independence was a key competence acquired during their studying abroad. The value of independence had extended from academic learning requirement to taking actions in living sphere in the sense of autonomy and agency, which greatly contributed to their self-confidence and self-worth, as F4 said,

[87] ***They (some Chinese students) would say 'we Chinese students….' or 'in China…' but you are not in China now, right? If you want to move the whole sets of Chinese things abroad, then what's the point of travelling thousands of miles to come here? (…).*** *As a Chinese student, as long as you set heart on learning, there is nothing you cannot do […]* ***The knowledge and abilities you've acquired give you confidence and sense of self-worth and you can go anywhere without feeling any sense of inferiority.(…) You are an individual; you can make your own decisions and nobody can stop you..*** (F4FN June 20-06)

So, differentiating element was not one's nationality, but his/her knowledge and ability, which could transcend any geographical borders. One point needs mentioning here. F4's narration above was in the context when she decided to receive baptism in the local church to embrace Christianity as her life belief. She said 'the words in the Bible touched her hearts' and she found 'God's requirements on man are much the same as Confucius's on *junzi* (君子, a Confucian term, meaning an ideal man whose character embodies the virtue of benevolence and whose acts are in accordance with the rites and righteousness). By bringing two cultural values into relations and acting upon them F4 resolved the superficial conflicts between the so-called Eastern and Western cultures and achieved a kind of personal commitment to the universal value. F4 even attributed her academic progress not totally to her own efforts but also to God's grace as well:

[88] *People praise me that my English improves a lot.* ***It is really a miracle.*** *Because I spend at least an hour reading Bible everyday and I start praying in English, my English is getting more and more fluent when I speak up. [Name] said my English was the most fluent among the Chinese students she knows and I feel very happy indeed.* ***It must be God's grace.*** (M4C)

After her baptism ceremony, she said the fact that she found herself a spiritual home was much more fulfilling than all her academic achievements, and that was also the first big decision she had ever made on her own. 'If I hadn't come here, I would never have made such a change on my life' (M4 FN June 20-06). She was proud of herself.

Some participants took the advantage of the new learning space and negotiated new

ways of learning and new identities as well. Take F3 as an example, she said she was getting more inquisitive in the new learning environment and consciously practiced the newly acquired Socratic skills of challenging and questioning, which were sometimes frowned upon by other Chinese students and considered as insensitive or inappropriate. When asked whether she was worried about offending people, she replied,

> [89] *They (the British) know you are a foreigner, and you ask the question out of ignorance, so they don't feel offended.* ***As a foreigner you can ask these questions,*** *which would be difficult to ask by their own folks*. (F3C)

Like other participants, F3 was also aware of the different cultural context. She said when going back to China,

> [90] *You should consider to whom you are talking and other people's capacity of tolerating different opinions.* ***Contexts are different, after all.*** *People with a broad mind are not afraid of confrontation of ideas. And those narrow-minded people are not worth befriending with.* (F3C)

Apparently, she was not insensitive to the environment; on the contrary, she took this intercultural setting as a creative playground to explore and experiment with her learning identity and was consciously playing her outsider's identity to negotiate learning space.

7.4.4 Summary

In the why-dimension of learning, changes have taken place in their instrumental or vocational orientation of learning. They valued more independent pursuit of life careers and made commitment to their life aspirations which could not be realised if they stayed in their own cultural environment. They also broadened their conceptions of self-perfection, emphasising intellectual, psychological, as well as intercultural dimensions of *suzhi*, which were embodied in their new understanding of

‘international talents’. In addition, learning in a new culture made the participants more aware of their cultural identity; however, in the meanwhile, the newly acquired skills and modified or expanded beliefs of learning distinguished themselves from other Chinese learners and made them consciously strive for an intercultural learning identity, negotiating new learning space and to be competent in different cultures of learning. These changes could not be foreseen prior to their experience abroad.

7.5 Summary and Interim Discussion

The findings from Chapter 5 prove that there exist certain cultural characteristics in the Chinese students’ learning beliefs system and during their acculturation to the new learning culture, their inherited Chinese culture of learning, on the one hand, serves as the important cultural resources that they can mobilize; but on the other hand, it also subjects to constant modifications and expansions, as shown in this chapter. The findings of this chapter are presented following the structure of Chinese culture of learning presented in Chapter 5: What-dimension; How-dimension, and Why-dimension. In what-dimension, the changes took place in their conceptions of knowledge mainly in terms of the certainty of knowledge and the attitudes toward knowledge, and the new understanding of the relation between knowledge accumulation and creativity. In respect of abilities, the participants came to realize the importance and value of higher cognitive abilities, such as relating, constructing, questioning, and critical thinking. In how-dimension, the participants gained access to alternative ways of learning, in which both cognitive, communicative and social-affective learning strategies were emphasized. In why-dimension, changes were mainly evidenced by the declining of instrumental (vocational and pragmatic) learning orientations and showing more expanded views of self-perfection and commitment to life aspirations. These newly acquired beliefs and values and inherited ones are achieving a new integration in the learner’s expanding learning identity through constant negotiating, constructing, and mediating between Confucian and Socratic learning cultures.

In the following part of this section, I shall discuss these new integrations in the participants' conception of learning and relate their adjustment process and changes to the theoretical conceptualizations of intercultural adjustment in the existing literature. Considering the limitations of length of the thesis, I shall illustrate with the following three aspects: (1) Teacher-Dependence and Autonomy: autonomous interdependence; (2) Harmony and Critical thinking: transcending the dichotomy; (3) 'Chinese-Western Learning Identity: from Chinese learner to an intercultural learner.

7.5.1 Teacher-dependence and Autonomy: 'Autonomous Interdependence'

The first integration in the participants' new learning beliefs system is that autonomy is as much valued as teacher's authority and guidance. These two beliefs are not conflicting but dialectically interconnected. This autonomy is interdependent in nature, and one of the teacher's roles is to foster this ability in the learner on the cognitive level (Benson, 2001) to exercise autonomy.

Some participants of this study did tend to associate the concept of individual autonomy with European liberal-democratic and liberal-humanist ideology, however, this does not mean the meaning of autonomy is too alien to be appreciated by Chinese learners. Though the participants felt less competent to take full charge of their learning activities, their beliefs and value in autonomous learning were undisputable. The findings of this study resonate with Candy's (1991) distinction of emotional autonomy and epistemological autonomy and Littlewood's (1996) constructs of autonomy (as reviewed in Section 3.4.3) that Chinese students acknowledge the value of autonomy on emotional level and are willing to take responsibility for their own studies, but they lack the ability, necessary knowledge and skills, to exercise full autonomy. This finding may explain the inconsistency found by Littlewood (2000) that East Asian students' stated beliefs in autonomy elicited by a questionnaire contradict the observations and common intuition of their passive and dependent

behaviours. It also seems to provide evidence for the operating of a deprivation model in cross-cultural research that people from cultures that feel deprived of certain needs come to value them more (Peng, *et al*., 1997)[49]. Therefore, the students' behaviours cannot always be expected to be correspondent with their beliefs or values system.

Furthermore, though autonomy and individualism have been in an obscure position in Chinese culture[50], once the social-cultural constraints are absent and necessary knowledge and skills acquired, both individualism and autonomy will be exercised with appreciation.

Autonomy vs. teacher's authority

Though the participants accommodate to the autonomous mode of learning, the findings of this study indicate that in Chinese students' conceptions of learning, teacher's guidance and transactional authority is still an essential, indispensable element in the process of learning. To Chinese students, personal agency or autonomy is always coloured in a sense of reciprocal social obligation, and the individual's behaviour should live up to the expectations of the significant others. Therefore, paradoxically, the more autonomous they get in their own learning on the levels of management, content, and cognitive process (Benson, 2001, reviewed in Section 3.4.3), the more they seem to value the teacher's guidance and transactional authority, especially at PhD level.

The findings of this study show that dependence on the teacher interpreted as refusal to take responsibility for one's own learning is based on the Western cultural value

[49] Peng *et al*. (1997) noted that Singaporean Chinese are more likely than Americans to value choosing their own goals, and Americans are more likely than Chinese to value humility.

[50] Through examining the value on individuality in Chinese classics, I do not think autonomy or individualism is alien to Chinese people. For example, Chinese hold 'hermits'[50] in esteem, because they keep their individuality from being corrupted by society. Among the three kinds of hermits, forest hermits, town hermits, and court hermits, depending on their sociality with the world, court hermit —the official who can keep his individuality while serving the emperor in court—has been considered as the highest stage and most valued in Chinese society, for it is easier to be a hermit in a reclusive forest than in a conference hall.

and assumption (Benon & Voller, 1987; Chanock, 2004; Pennycook, 1997). Chanock (2004) suggests that the methods of autonomous learning are not in fact incompatible with the dependence on the teacher. She argues for 'responsible dependence on teachers', which means depending on others can be a responsible way to learn, for it is the responsibility of the student to depend on others who know more than he/she does. This is also consistent with intellectual humility, the core value in Chinese learning culture.

In the literature on learner autonomy reviewed in Section 3.4.3, the term 'independence' is also used as a synonym for autonomy, implying that the ideal learner should be independent from the teacher or other facilitators/relationships in thinking and goal-setting. But the perceptions of the participants in this study indicate that the much encouraged interaction and collaboration are part and parcel of learner autonomy and the teacher's guidance facilitates rather than compromises learner autonomy. In fact, the interdependence nature of learning has been reflected on in the individualistic context and can be seen as a more developed stage of autonomy than total independence (Boud, 1981; Brookfield, 1986). Since learning occurs through interaction between people and scaffolding mediating objects and other people (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1979), the notion of any learner being 'independent' in the sense of doing without others (Schwienhorst, 2003) becomes problematic. In other words, since learning takes place in collaborative or guided activities, absolute autonomy is neither desirable nor impossible. So this study argues that the oxymoron idea of 'autonomous interdependence' (Benson, *et al.*, 2003) captures Chinese students' learning beliefs about the teacher-student role relations and the process of cultural negotiations of learning beliefs. It should not be considered as incomplete acculturation, but similar to Yoshikawa's (1987) double-swing stage, an eclectic mixture of Confucian and Socratic cultures of learning. During this 'generative stage' (Evanoff, 2006), a new culture of learning is being created.

7.5.2 Harmony and Critical Thinking: Transcending the Dichotomy

By comparing ancient Greek and Chinese sociocognitive systems, Nisbett, *et al.* assert that social organization affects cognitive processes in two basic ways: indirectly by focusing attention on different parts of the environment and directly by making some kinds of social communication patterns more acceptable than others (2001: 294). In a high-context culture (Hall, 1966), Chinese value in-group harmony, so the predominant mode of conflict attitude among Chinese is evasive and non-confrontational. (Ting-Toomey, 1999) Though it is true that any form of confrontation, such as head-on debate, face-to-face questioning and challenging, is discouraged, that does not mean there is no conflict or the issue is left unaddressed. However, people involved in the confrontational situations, such as to be critical of a person's theory, need to employ more subtle approach, especially at the level of language, to get their opinion across but without incurring hostility and resentment.

Citing the qualitative findings of Pratt and Wong (1999) that Chinese students and instructors in Hong Kong tended to treat texts and instructors as highly authoritative sources of knowledge, Tweed and Lehman (2002) asserted that Chinese-influenced individuals who are less practiced at expressing scepticism publicly may construct an academic role in which scepticism and questioning has little value. But, based on the participants' perceptions, questioning is a valuable higher-order cognitive and academic skill, though social-cultural and other contextual factors may constrain its practising, therefore, my contention is the lower salience of overtly questioning does not mean the value of questioning is depreciated among the Chinese (see Section 3.3.2), but the price of direct questioning and open challenge may be perceived to be too high to pay.

Researching the perceptions of critical thinking of East Asian Masters students studying in the UK, Durkin (2004) suggested that regarding critical thinking and argumentation, the majority of East Asian postgraduate students ultimately reject full acculturation into the academic norms and values of the UK. She worked out a

'middle way' model, which synergised those elements of Western academic norms, termed 'adversarial approach', with the traditional cultural academic values held by many Chinese, namely 'conciliatory approach' (Durkin, 2004: 511). This model is based on the assumption that the values of harmony and critical thinking are contradictory to each other, so East Asians have to seek compromise solutions to conflicts. The findings of my study are to certain extent in support of her 'middle way' model, but the reason perhaps is not purely of cultural convention but also involves cognitive complexities. Furthermore, the participants in this study believe that values of harmony are not compromised in practising critical thinking. In other words in their new belief system, harmony and critical thinking are not exclusive of each other but co-exist constructively, which may owe to Chinese holistic way of thinking.

The cognitive differences between Ancient Chinese and Greeks are loosely grouped under the heading of holistic versus analytic thought (Nisbett, 2003; Nisbett, *et al.*, 2001; Peng & Nisbett, 1999). According to Nisbett and his colleagues, holistic approaches are dialectical, meaning that 'there is an emphasis on change, a recognition of contradiction and of the need for multiple perspectives, and a search for the 'Middle Way' between opposing propositions' (2001: 293). So instead of developing formal systems of logic, Chinese intellectual tradition is characteristic of this dialectical approach, reconciling, transcending, or even accepting apparent contradictions: the opposite of a state of affairs can exist simultaneously with the state of affairs itself (Boucher, *et al.*, 2009; Chang, 1938; Mao, 1937/1962, cited in ibid: 294). 'If harmony remains the watchword in social relations for East Asians, and if social needs influence intellectual stances, East Asians would be expected to….try to reconcile or transcend seeming contradictions'(ibid: 296)[51].

[51] For example, in Peng and Nisbett's (1999) study, Chinese and American students were presented with contradictions drawn from everyday life, and Chinese responses were more likely to find a 'Middle Way', which found merit and fault on both sides and attempted to reconcile the contradiction, while American students tended to come down in favour of one side over the other. In other words, Americans preferred the argument based on non-contradiction in each case, and Chinese preferred the dialectic one.

The findings of this study show the development of the participants' understanding of critical thinking and critical learning. On the postgraduate level of learning, critical thinking is more conceptualized as a higher order cognitive skill, a valued outcome of learning, than a socio-cultural practice against the value of harmony. In addition, university classroom is believed to be a *zhengming* (争鸣，contentious) place for different schools of thoughts and voices to compete. In fact, they cited the Confucius' words[52] to show that real harmony and critical thinking are not opposed to each other; exercising critical thinking demands 'broadheartness' and a fair mind.

7.5.3 Chinese-Western Learning Identity: from Chinese Learner to Intercultural Learner

This study shows that academic sojourners experience fundamental personal changes, not just younger learners as predicted by previous studies (see Ward, *et al.*, 2001), and lends support for the transformative power of international and intercultural education in terms of personal growth, echoing those of previous studies that study abroad accelerates the student's perspective transformation and expansion of cultural identity (Adler, 1975; Murphy-Lejeune, 2003; Taylor, 1994).

The changes that have taken place in the participants beliefs system support the suggestion that changes in conceptions of learning and epistemological beliefs are likely to emerge as a result of educational experiences (Boulton-Lewis *et al.*, 2001; Dart *et al.*, 2000; Schommer, 1998), but we also argue that intercultural learning experiences, which require students to constantly compare and explicitly reflect on their beliefs about teaching and learning practices, will lead to re-negotiation of beliefs about learning and knowing and speed up the process of intellectual maturity and formation of an intercultural learning identity.

---

[52] According to Confucius, the difference between *junzi* (君子, a person of noble character) and *xiaoren* (小人, a base person) is the former can keep harmonious relationship while holding different opinions in harmony while the latter seek superficial agreement, which is no real harmony.

Chinese learners in this study, crossing into an alternative way of learning and knowing, 'physically and symbolically', 'perceive themselves as becoming someone other than who they were before' (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000:174). M3 said that one of his learning outcomes from studying abroad was 见怪不怪 (*jian guai bu guai*, 'seeing the alien but don't feel it so alien'), meaning that nothing will be too alien to you if you have experienced it. They have developed a new sense of self, and the newly acquired competencies make them feel competent to be a member of the new learning culture. This new socialization, or tertiary socialization (Byram, 1997), makes it possible for them to mobilize and draw upon different cultural resources to create an intercultural learner identity or intercultural personhood 'that strives to embrace and incorporate seemingly divergent cultural elements into something new and unique' (Kim, 2008: 366)[53]. Therefore, this new learning identity, as 'a site of struggle and change' (Norton, 2000a, 2000b), is different from their inherited one, Chinese learner, nor the same as that of the host learning culture, but an eclectic one[54], a mediating one, which can neutralize the opposing constructs in the two cultures of learning and bring them into relation in order to function well in both learning cultures.

[53] According to Riley (2003: 93), individual identity or personal identity 'can be seen as a superordinate term for… person and self'; 'person' is one's social identity, while 'self' refers to subjective aspects of the individual, and both terms are to some extent cultural variable: 'personhood involves a sense of self and a range of competences which satisfy a society's expectations and requirements of the ideal member' (Riley, 2003: 107). In Chinese mind, 'personhood' has a high moral ground as well.

[54] Eclecticism was defined as 'seeking aspects of the truth wherever it may be found, accepting illumination from any source…., keeping the mind open to new ideas, fighting dogma' (Strevens, 1987: 21, cited in Garrott, 1995: 220).

Chapter 8 Conclusions

[N]othing seems alien to the person who understands totally how all things link together in unity.

(Munro, 1985: 21)

8.1 Introduction

In this last chapter, I shall conclude the study with the following five sections. Firstly, I summarize the main findings of this research to see if they have substantially answered the essential research questions (Section 8.2); secondly, I shall highlight the contributions of this study to the existing knowledge body on Chinese learners and Chinese learning culture as well as intercultural adaptation theories (Section 8.3); thirdly, the pedagogical implications are offered in hope of informing international and intercultural education (Section 8.4); fourthly, the space is devoted to the reflection on this piece of research in terms of the effectiveness of the research instruments and the possibility of the alternative approach (Section 8.5); lastly, suggestions are offered for future study directions (Section 8.6).

8.2 Answers to the Research Questions

The conceptual question this research tackles is: Do Chinese sojourning students adjust to Western culture of learning? If so, then how? Four sub-questions are formulated to guide operationalisation of this central question, and the findings of this study are expected to answer these questions and sufficiently address the central research question.

Answer to Q1: What beliefs and conceptions of learning do they think Chinese learning/teaching culture consists of?

The data in Chapter 5 suggest that there exists a Chinese model of learning in the participants mind, which comprises of three basic constructs, namely **what** to be learned, **how** to learn, and **why** to learn. The salient features about this learning model

include the emphasis on knowledge accumulation and transmission, the effortful manner of learning, respectful attitude towards the teacher and knowledge, and the pragmatic/ vocational and moral orientations. This cultural mode of learning gives more emphasis on 'learning virtues' than cognitive reasoning abilities underscored in Western culture of learning.

Answer to Q2: How do Chinese students perceive British teaching and learning culture?

The data in Chapter 6 present the salient features perceived by the participants about the British learning culture, including independent learning, verbal participation, critical learning, and teacher-student role relations. On the affect level, the participants would like to conform to the new teaching and learning norms and be responsive to the expectations from the new learning environment in order to make their learning successful. However, due to the implicit nature of the academic norms, the participants' initial perceptions about the new learning culture are nonetheless partial, and their learning behaviours may be ambiguous and unpredictable.

Answer to Q3: How they go about adjusting to this new learning culture?

The data in Chapter 6 show that the participants adopt both emotion-focused strategies and problems-focused acculturative methods in order to fit in the new learning culture. Emotion strategies adopted include: adjusting the state of heart-mind to be more open to and comfortable with differences, and be realistic about one's goals and willing to conform to the new learning culture. Problem-focused strategies include cognitive, metacognitive and social-affective acculturative methods, manifesting certain characteristics of the Chinese learning culture. The metacognitive and social-affective strategies internalized through primary and secondary socialisations transferred positively to the new learning culture and facilitated their academic adjustment. Among the coping resources, co-national networking, especially those cultural mediators, turned out to be very effective in providing insider's advice and guidance. So the interacting of two cultures of learning makes it possible for the sojourner to

negotiate in the new learning space and make selective adjustment.

Answer to Question 4: What changes take place to their beliefs and conceptions of learning?

Adjustment to the new learning culture is an intercultural learning process, bringing about changes and development of these sojourning students' conceptions and beliefs about learning and knowing, as shown in Chapter 7. In what-dimension, the changes took place in their conceptions of knowledge mainly in terms of the certainty of knowledge and the attitudes toward knowledge, and the new understanding of the relation between knowledge accumulation and creativity. In respect of abilities, the participants came to attach greater importance and value to higher cognitive abilities, such as relating, constructing, questioning, and critical thinking. In how-dimension, the participants cultivated alternative ways of learning, emphasizing both cognitive and affective learning strategies. In why-dimension, changes were mainly evidenced by their more expanded views of self-perfection and life aspirations, including development of intercultural awareness and a new intercultural learning identity.

Thus, to the central question 'do Chinese learners adjust to the Western culture of learning', we can confidently give a positive answer that Chinese sojourning students do adjust to the Western teaching and learning culture through mobilising and negotiating the adjustive resources of their inherited culture of learning on the one hand, and constantly assimilating and accommodating to the new values and practices on the other hand. During the initial stage, the Chinese sojourning students perceive the British learning culture through the lens of their own culture of learning, which may result in partial understanding and mimicry in the initial period of cultural encountering. Nonetheless, the social-affective aspects featured in Chinese culture of learning are appropriately and effectively transferred to the new learning culture while the new learning norms, including higher order cognitive skills, demanded by the new learning culture are observed and imitated, then acquired and mastered with appreciation over time. The interactions and integrations of the two cultures of

learning in the participants bring about new forms of learning culture, which greatly enrich their academic repertoire and make it possible for them to be mediating between the two learning cultures and functioning competently with socio-cultural appropriateness if required in either.

Therefore, this study argues that Chinese learning culture should not be seen as an obstacle as Chinese students adjust to a Western learning environment, and also, cultures of learning should not be viewed as fixed or determining; they are dynamic, responsive and accommodative. The interactions of the two cultures of learning accelerate not only the development of the student's intellectual and intercultural maturity but also the formation of an intercultural learning identity.

8.3 Contributions of the Findings to the Existing Literature

This study is mainly located in the literature of students' conceptions of learning, Chinese culture of learning, and intercultural adjustment theories as reviewed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. In this section, in view of the findings of this study, I will discuss to what extent this study could contribute to these existing literature.

8.3.1 Contributions to the Theories about Students' Conceptions of Learning

The phenomenographic research on the conceptions of learning has been much cognitively oriented as reviewed in Section 3.2 of Chapter 3. The findings about Chinese conceptions of learning of this study suggest that learning is not just a cognitive activity but also involves emotional control, attitudinal appropriateness and existential meanings. Therefore, the constructs of conceptions of learning should also include students' personal epistemological beliefs (Brownlee, *et al.*, 2002) as well as Why-dimension—the ultimate purpose of learning.

As for learning conceptions and learning approaches, the so-called deep and surface

learning approaches are not necessarily congruent with qualitative and quantitative conceptions of learning respectively, because values and beliefs about learning and learning behaviours are not always correspondent with each other. Therefore, judging a student's learning approach must take into consideration various cultural and contextual factors, especially when the student is studying in a second language and different culture of learning.

8.3.2 Contributions to Chinese Learning Culture

Considering the academic interests and intellectual background, the existing literature on Chinese learner and Chinese learning culture is, to much extent, based on the contrast against Western, especially NABAN (North America, Britain, Australia and New Zealand) academic tradition. In other words, it puts much emphasis on a dimension of difference and overlooks the underlying common goal shared by these two learning cultures, that is, to cultivate affectively mature, cognitively competent, and ethically sound beings. The present study bears similarities with previous studies on Chinese inherited learning culture but departs from them in terms of their prediction what happens to it in intercultural interaction with different learning cultures. This study shows that the essentialist cultural constructs, such as, collectivism, power distance, face (*mianzi*), could not fully either predict or explain Chinese students' learning behaviours and beliefs, especially when they are physically away from the constraints of Chinese learning culture milieu.

In addition, the differences between the two learning cultures are not so much in surface and deep approaches to learning as in social-affectively focused and cognitively focused aspects of learning. The social-affective aspects of learning emphasized in Chinese culture of learning play an important role for this group of Chinese students in making adjustments to the new learning culture. Their modifications in beliefs about learning through acquiring new valued practices not only result in their intellectual development but also manifest the malleability and

openness of Chinese culture of learning. Therefore, this study argues for the merits of Chinese learning culture in facilitating Chinese sojourning students' adjustment to the new learning culture on the one hand and the nature of the compatibility, non-fixedness and dynamics of the cultures of learning, especially when they interact with each other in an intercultural setting.

8.3.3 Contributions to Intercultural Adaptation Theories

Previous intercultural adaptation models, either concerned with the psychological wellbeing of the sojourners or focused on the sociocultural aspects, are aiming at finding universal acculturation pattern without paying much attention to the positive roles played by sojourners' own cultural resources and their acculturative methods as well as the interactions of cultures in contact. The findings of this study suggest that academic adjustment involves emotional, behavioural and cognitive domains, including shifts in beliefs and values systems. The intertwining and interdependent relations of these constructs suggest the productivity of combining psychological approach and sociocultural approach in interpreting the themes and patterns emerging during the different stages of adjustment. In other words, the study tends to support the view that the process of intercultural psychological adjustment resists generalisation (Berry, 1994). Though the acculturative learning models are more reliable in predicting the sojourner's success in a new learning culture, academic sojourners' adjustment to the new culture of learning may take place at different levels and dimensions: behavioural, cognitive, or affective level, and not necessarily in a synchronous manner. So the sojourner may fully adjust to the new learning environment on a behavioral level but without relinquishing his/her own valued conceptions and beliefs or he/she may embrace the new values and beliefs but fail to perform competently on behavioral level.

Apart from positive attitude towards the British teaching and learning norms, knowledge and skills, described in Byram's (1997) intercultural competence model

are essential constructs to complete the adjustment process, because sojourners' willingness or even eagerness in attitude does not accordingly result in their apparent cognitive or behavioural changes. The present study highlights that intercultural adaptation is not a spontaneous transformation, but a learning process, and lends support to Rudmin's (2006; 2009) claim that it is possible to acculturate purely for reasons of utility, cost and benefit estimations. Moreover, the sojourning student's acquisition of knowledge and skills about the new learning culture is associated with his or her own subjective sense of success, which may not been measured appropriately by the institutional standards.

In view of Chinese students' intellectual and intercultural competence development, intercultural sojourners may develop new self-awareness and identity as a result of intercultural learning experience, which could break through the constraints of their ethnic cultural identity. In other words, those who are highly identified with their nationality may also experience evident modifications in their beliefs and value systems and gain new perspective on the origin culture. This accords with Burnett & Gardner's (2006) statement that acculturation to social culture and academic culture could be very different in terms of priority and constraints to the sojourner student and challenge the assumed link between cultural identification and intercultural adjustment.

8.4 Pedagogical Implications

Though language inadequacy is more often identified as the main culprit in the literature on the intercultural sojourn, it may disguise the underlying cultural or contextual factors in explaining or interpreting international students' learning behaviours. Likewise, the preoccupations with different learning cultures are also less useful in predicting the success of intercultural adjustment.

8.4.1 Implications for Prospective Chinese Sojourners

This study adds empirical evidence to the statement that academic adjustment is a testing process, initially painful, but the outcome is usually positive (Brown & Holloway, 2008). Emotional stress and academic obstacles are greatest upon arrival and fluctuating through the whole sojourn, so psychological preparedness and emotional/adversity quotients, including self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-control of mood, are important emotional adjustive resources in the struggle to hold onto an inner sense of competence to overcome the obstacles during academic adjustment.

Creating or joining a co-national network to seek emotional and functional support is an effective cultural resource to maintain a sound heart-mind state, not necessarily at the cost of linguistic and intercultural learning as predicted; however, the sojourner also need to negotiate the in-group tendency and keep wider interaction with the host culture or other international students instead of exclusive co-nationals contact to enjoy a whole experience.

Adjusting to a Western culture of learning is a cultural learning process after all. Coming from culturally distant culture of learning, Chinese sojourning students should be sensitive and receptive enough to the new teaching practices and learning norms while actively acquiring knowledge and skills about the new learning norms and requirements. Therefore, to develop intercultural competence is the key to successful intercultural and academic adjustment.

The desirable suzhi 素质 for and from studying in a new culture of learning include:

1. Be open-minded to cultural differences in teaching and learning;

2. Be reflective on one's own learning beliefs and learning behaviours;

3. To assimilate and accommodate new values and norms practiced in the

different culture of learning with appreciation;

4. Be ready to rectify and modify one's own learning behaviours and learning beliefs systems with good reasons;

5. To foster ethnographic observing skills to discover the rules governing the new reality when learning in a different culture from one's own;

6. To develop critical awareness of Self and Other and bring them into relations.

8.4.2 Implications for Western Institutions

This study shows that Chinese learners are neither perfect nor deficient. The institutions which are dedicated to meeting the academic needs of Chinese students should be careful about those unexamined assumptions about Chineseness of Chinese students. The inadequacy in Chinese students' preparation for British graduate programs should not be misinterpreted as lack of ability or willingness to accept a new mode of learning and knowing. Though there are differences regarding cultures of learning, higher order thinking skills are at odds with no cultural learning styles.

Western educators should treat them as learners who aspire to acquire both subject knowledge and higher order thinking skills, the universal values of good learning. We have reasons to believe that Chinese postgraduate students' core beliefs about learning are compatible with the British learning culture. Instead of adopting an assimilation approach or depreciating the student's inherited cultural learning resources, the educator should encourage international students to mobilize those favorably transferred strategies from their inherited learning culture and, in the meanwhile, draw upon and explore alternative or new ways of learning. To make sojourning students aware of different norms and values of academic cultures and challenge their inherited culture of learning will enhance rather than restrict their academic performance and adjustment. 'Such behaviours are thus not seen as representative of a dominant culture that requires them to assimilate but instead, are seen as coping mechanism, which

ensure their ability to move freely within the culture' and the students 'did not feel that their own values or cultural practices were compromised' (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004: 81). As suggested by Kumaravadivelu (2003), second language students should use their own cultural background as a springboard to master the academic discourse. Therefore, the institution should create the learning environment which allows for diversity in academic discourses not at the expense of undermining their academic standards, so that sojourning students could 'negotiate the tensions' between the two cultures of learning and create their own learning culture, which may transform and enrich Western learning culture. As Spack argued, the success of a pedagogical model

> *can be measured not by whether students adopt particular discourse practices but rather by how productively they can negotiate their way through diverse discourses.*
>
> Spack (1997: 51)

The study also reveals that students who major in social sciences may have more difficulty than their counterparts in the fields of hard sciences. So the institutions may provide more help in terms of tutorial and academic writing class. The British lecturers also need not just to make explicit the values and rationale behind British norms of teaching and learning but also should create social situations to facilitate the international students to engage in ethnographic discovery for themselves rather than simply introducing these cultural norms with coercive power.

In addition, studying abroad has a more fundamental impact on the learner, which may not be sufficiently measured. Wenger contends that '[e]ven failing to learn what is expected in a given situation usually involves learning something else instead.' (Wenger, 1998: 8) Therefore, the institutions should view Chinese students or other international students not only as a learning being, but also a cultural and intercultural being, who are situated between two languages and learning cultures, because learning is more a socio-cultural activity than cognitive activity. Though the transformative or life-changing impact of studying abroad has been empirically reported and widely

acknowledged, the evaluation of learning outcomes of international students is still academically focused. In fact, the failure to fulfill the academic requirement does not make their overseas learning experience any less meaningful. So, it is high time that holistic assessment of international students were described and validated, despite the fact that international students may have their own goals and priorities for study abroad. In concrete measures, the institutions may adopt combined assessment systems to favourably accommodate to the international students, especially concerning language aspects and incorporate institutional objectives and sojourning students' personal agenda into international educational purpose.

This study also argues that in an intercultural education context, improving academic skills should incorporate units to develop both the staff and the students' intercultural competence (Mclean & Ransom, 2005) and developing globally competent citizens who are comfortable with diversity both at home and abroad should be the aim of institutions who are dedicated to international education (Gilbert, 1995).

8.4.3 Implications for British Lecturers

Many of the difficulties international students experience in their study derive from a clash of educational cultures (Ballard and Clanchy, 1997: vi). Different cultures value different skills and qualities and therefore have different teaching and learning practices, including attitudes to knowledge and learning, approaches to learning, modes of participation and teacher-student relationships, etc. British lecturers should be aware of the differences but to focus on them is counterproductive. Chinese sojourning students may be teacher-dependent, deferential to authority, lacking critical thinking skills and genres of academic writing, prone to memorization, or even plagiarism, but Harris' allegation that 'raised in a conformist educational system, they are happier with memorizing and reproducing information than with problem-oriented and more active teaching strategies' (1997: 87) was not true.

The findings of this study show that Chinese sojourning students are very receptive

and adaptive to the new teaching and learning environment. Owing to both their cultural beliefs in efforts, humility, and willingness to work hard, and the contextual conducive factors, such as the supportive network, both co-national and host, facilitative learning environment, and harmonious relationship with supervisors, Chinese international students can perform very well academically through adjusting their conceptions of and approaches to learning with changing learning cultures. Moreover, Chinese students would like to invest efforts in their studies, take responsibility for their learning and attribute their failures more to themselves than to external factors. These characteristics of Chinese students should make teaching them easier, rather than more difficult (Biggs, 2003: 131). Therefore, lecturers are suggested to adopt a contextual approach or educational approach (Biggs, 2003)[55] to focus on what the student is doing instead of what the student is.

To develop students' learning autonomy and intellectual capacities has been the primary focus of higher education across the world. Chinese students appreciate these universal values as well. However, considering the variations in understanding, or rather misunderstandings of the learning norms, which are likely arising during the initial stage, the lecturers who teach and supervise Chinese students are suggested to apply a systematic approach to unpack the key concepts and teach the metacognitive skills necessary for success in the new academic culture. Perhaps a metalanguage is needed to interpret the academic language the international students are supposed to work with. To develop a critical awareness of cultural differences in academic requirements and appropriate skills is of vital importance for effective teaching. The success as a teacher in an intercultural setting does not depend on how much he or she knows or accommodates to sojourning students' inherited culture of learning so much

[55] Biggs (2003) summarized three hierarchical foci of teaching international students:
Level 1: teaching as assimilation: international students 'must undergo an intellectual and cultural sea-change if they are to succeed' (Ballard and Clanchy1997: iv);
Level 2: teaching as accommodation: to accommodate the international students' alien learning styles;
Level 3: teaching as education: extract the appropriate learning behaviour from all the students, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds.

as on a teacher's *xuepin* (学品, scholarship integrity) and conducive interpersonal relationship developed in and outside the classroom.

Practical strategies are as follow:

1. To interpret and paraphrase key concepts: independent learning, critical thinking, referencing, originality, verbal participation, etc.

2. Be explicit in clarifying the rationale behind the practices and criteria;

3. To provide explicit, constructive and encouraging feedback;

4. To provide good models for academic work and explain why;

5. To exemplify good referencing practice and clarify what counts as plagiarism and what not;

6. To foster effective reading and critical thinking skills, distinguish arguments, evidence, opinion, etc. from one another;

7. To create a safe and conducive learning environment to make every member feel valued in contributing their ideas;

8. To make explicit the distinction between collaboration with peers and collusion in assignments.

8.4.4 Implications for Intercultural Education

Recruitment of international students itself does not lead to international or intercultural education. Selby distinguishes international education and intercultural education in the following words:

> *International education leads students to learn about the objective, material culture of others—their political and social institutions, their language, art, and literature—while intercultural education leads students to learn about the subjective meaning people ascribed to events and relationships with institutions and other people, and ultimately to themselves.*
>
> (Selby, 2008: 4)

To develop globally competent citizens who can function effectively and appropriately both at home and abroad has become the mission of international institutions of higher education. The development of intercultural competence should be the main objective of international education. Therefore, fostering (inter)cultural learning among international students can counter the predominantly ethnocentric approach to higher education found in most university systems (Furnham and Bochner, 1982) and prepare students to function academically well in different cultures of learning (Knight and de Wit, 1995).

The present study also establishes a clear link between a sojourn student's intercultural learning experience and intellectual development, which is 'a universal feature of the final stage of the academic sojourn' (Brown & Holloway, 2008: 242). Removal from one's own culture habitat is a sufficient catalyst to stimulate reflection on self and on one's inherited culture and study abroad is the ultimate expression of experiential and affective learning (Savicki, 2008: xvi), which, given time and reflection, enables one to see oneself through the eyes of others and gain relativism in perspectives, and ultimately, a changed person—an intercultural identity, with international vision and intercultural awareness.

8.5 Reflections on the Methodology of the Study

Native ethnography

Methodologically speaking, it is quite an advantage for an insider to investigate indigenous learning culture, but, undoubtedly, lack of distance perhaps may result in the researcher overlooking the mundane or failing to differentiate the figure and the ground in the whole picture. Nonetheless, the native ethnography adopted in this study proved to be an effective method for understanding the nuances of the meaning attached to the words and concepts of the studied and fulfilled the purpose of studying the process of the Chinese sojourning students' academic adjustment to the new learning culture and their changes and modifications in beliefs about learning over

time. Bilingual native ethnographer's betwixt-and-between speaking position is indeed an advantage point of fusing the *etic* and the *emic* and probing and understanding the hybridity as a result of cultural interactions.

An alternative approach: Critical ethnography methodology?

In my data, there is considerable evidence of individual agency and creativity in their use of cultural resources to adjust to and function effectively in the new culture. Nonetheless, there is also cultural marginalization, real or perceived, which points to the need of a more interventional and emancipatory approach, for instance, critical ethnography (Thomas, 1993), deliberately engaging the participants in reflective practices of the events occurring in their both academic and life experience.

Bremer *et al*. (1996) advocated for the use of critical ethnography in second language development research. He said, critical ethnography 'would lift it beyond developmental patterns and learners strategies to an understanding of the role of second language development in the lives of a particular group, would contribute to an insider's perspective on attitudes and motivation and help to account for the detail in the speaker's struggle to understand, in terms of the way in which cultural practices enter into interaction' (Bremer, *et al*., 1996: 220). Obviously, this methodology will be equally productive in the research on students studying in different learning cultures. Despite the conflicting theories about whether participants should be involved in the process of data analysis, involving participants as co-investigators or co-ethnographers may be a promising and beneficial research design for future studies.

Reflexivity of the researcher

Each qualitative project is unique, for the researcher has become the primary 'instrument' of data collection and analysis (Glesne, 1999). However, this does not undermine the trustworthiness of qualitative research if the researcher recognizes clearly how his or her own position privileges or affects the research process. Though researchers are cautioned to be wary of the inclination to favor their assumptions and

stance, I feel that my personal experiences of teaching and learning in China and in Britain privileged me in both understanding and interpreting my participants' experiences.

Personal narratives during the study and a retrospective examination of the whole research process allow me to be aware of not only my personal growth as a novice researcher but more importantly that my own personal preference, assumptions, and even psychological traits may impact the inquiry. Among the short notes in my research memo, the following are revealing:

> *Is my selection of informants random or just convenient? Do I subconsciously choose 'good' students? Am I more interested in their successful experiences? How shall I deal with those 'shadowed data'?* [RM April 23, 2006]

I noted that the participants did not only talk about their experiences but also interpreted and commented on other Chinese students' learning behaviours, most of which were considered negative and disapproved, such as F4's flatmate's pathological state, a substantial number of Chinese students who were 'muddling through' in the Business school, and the 'tourists students', as apposed to 'learners', in F1's accounts.[56]

Through engaging in such on-going inner dialogues with myself, I could keep adjusting my roles in the field. After transcribing all the interviews, I took note:

> *Apparently, the participants were not 'treated' the same way. Some interviews run one and a half hour (the transcripts of each amount to more than 30 pages), and some only last about 40 minutes (14 pages long). Do I like listening to some participants more than others?* Or *is that because I did not probe enough or they simply did not have much to say about the issue? How directive I should be? Why I am so passive and afraid of interrupting them? If I were more active in directing the conversation, perhaps I can obtain better data?* (Feb.24-2007)

[56] F4 said her flatmate refused to take medicine in order to ask for permission to extend her deadline of submission essays; F1 said some Chinese students were 'tourists', 'keen on travelling and taking photos with foreigners' and did not taking studies seriously; M1 said in the Business School some Chinese students stuck together, creating a kind of cultural enclave, isolating themselves from both host cultural context and other Chinese co-nationals. M5's 'little brother' (a Mainland Chinese boy) in their team was a loner as well.

By constant reflection and introspection, my personal epistemological stance is subjected to change as well. I come to realize that the knowledge presented in this thesis is not generated by the researcher alone but being negotiated and co-created with the participants, who are situated in the interview context and interactions. Some participants were obviously more emotionally engaged with this research, so their stories were likely more revealing than others. That one participant talked more than others during each round interview to eulogize his (Chinese) supervisor's *xuepin* could not exclude the possibility that he knew that his supervisor was also my friend. Perhaps, I should exercise more judgment and tease out those nuances and present the data in a more impartial and objective manner.

Generalisability of the findings of the research

We are cautioned to make claims about the generalisability of the findings of this study. However, it is possible to infer that Chinese sojourning postgraduate students may well experience similar challenges and changes during their first year of studying in the UK universities. Therefore, the findings of this research can be tapped and transferred to similar educational settings for theoretical and practical reference.

8.6 Suggestions for Further Research Directions

This study supports the view that study abroad represents a new way of knowing, (knowing through experience, through conflicts and struggle, through adjustment and accommodation). It is a new perspective in education, a new approach to learning that is holistic, synergistic, and multifaceted (Carlson, *et al.*, 1990:144). The changes experienced by sojourning students have eluded simple interpretation from a single perspective, psychological or anthropological, and cannot be measured by conventional reductionist approaches (Mestenhauser, 1983, 2002). Future studies on study abroad should be dedicated to discovering new ways to explain and measure the process of change, which is the essence of education.

Biggs (2003) takes the view that the cultural gap confronted by international students,

that is, non-Anglo-Celtic students, is not different in kind, but only in extent, from the cultural gaps between secondary school and the university culture experienced by Anglo-Celtic students. However, the intertwining of cognitive unfamiliar demands with cultural unfamiliar practices as shown in this study makes the picture too complicated to give a conclusive claim. Therefore, the answers to the question whether the changes are caused by studying abroad or simply because of their moving from undergraduate to postgraduate level of studies are open to further research and discussion.

In this research, non-epistemological questions, such as the role of teacher and learner and other broad questions about learning and teaching are used to tap into students' underlying epistemological beliefs. This way of integrating the participants' general beliefs of knowledge into their academic context, i.e. their discipline, will shed light on the debate about whether epistemological beliefs are academic domain specific (Buehl & Alexander, 2001; Hofer, 2000; Stodolsky *et al.*, 1991) or domain independent (Schommer and Walker, 1995). Generally speaking, the study weakly supports the hypothesis that students majoring in 'soft' fields, such as humanities and social sciences, believed less in the certainty of knowledge and the 'orderly process' of acquiring knowledge than students majoring in 'hard' fields, i.e. science or engineering. All the participants tended to believe that social sciences could be learned on their own, but, as for science, teachers, experts, and authorities 'were viewed as the source of knowledge and truth was more attainable' (Buehl & Alexander, 2001: 408). However, considering the small sample size of the study, further work needs to be done in this aspect before reaching a conclusive result.

The data of this study rely heavily on Chinese sojourning students' own accounts of their learning experiences in the British learning culture without collecting sufficient data about how their British lecturers and supervisors interpret their or other Chinese students' learning behaviours. So, inviting British academic voices should be a valuable dimension for future studies on sojourning students' academic adjustment to

the British culture of learning. Furthermore, future studies may well benefit from the correlation studies on and among Chinese sojourning students' academic achievements, intellectual development, and intercultural competence development.

Another question the present study cannot confidently answer is whether the changes or development of the sojourner in their beliefs system about learning and knowing are irreversible or not. Therefore, follow-up studies in their following academic years or re-entry into Chinese context are invited to provide empirical evidence for the transformative nature of study abroad.

Last but not least, the code-mixing[57] phenomena in the participants' interview accounts are less tapped for data analysis in this study but worth merited attention in the future study.

8.7 Concluding Remarks

Learning is about 'being-becoming-belonging' (Kidd, 1973), a voyage involving changes in behaviour, beliefs, even the sense of self. It is about how to be **a person** in society and encompass others; it is also about achieving 'a fusion of the intellectual and emotional, of meaning and value', (Brookfield, 2000; Russell, 2007). Studying abroad, sojourning students are faced with certain 'disjuncture' (Javis, 2006) and disequilibrium (Fromm, 1947), which are likely to be blessings in disguise, for these dissonances stimulate the sojourner to constantly reflect upon their inherited beliefs about learning and knowing and provide the potential to transcend the superficial boundary between cultures of learning and generate eclectically a new culture of learning for themselves.

[57] In their interview accounts, in some cases, the participants preferred to use English words for concepts which were either completely new or where they felt there was no satisfactory equivalent in Chinese; sometimes, even there might be an equivalent in Chinese, English terms were introduced into their Chinese discourse anyway. This code-mixing could be pursued systematically in detail for further evidence of their changes in conceptions.

References

Adler, P. A., & Adler, P. (1987). *Membership roles in field research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Adler, P. S. (1975). The transitional experience; an alternative view of culture shock. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, *15*(3), 13-23.

Adler, P. S. (1977). Beyond cultural identity: reflections upon cultural and multicultural man. In R. W. Brislin (Ed.), *Topics in Culture Learning: concepts, applications, and research* (pp. 24-41). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Adler, P. S. (1987). Culture shock and the cross-cultural learning experience. In L. F. Luce, & E.C. Smith (Eds.) *Toward Internationalism: Readings in cross-cultural communication* (pp. 24-35) (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Newbury.

Agar, M. H.(1972). Talking about doing: lexicon and event. *Language in Society*, *3*, 83-89.

Agar, M. (1986). *Speaking of Ethnography*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Agar, M. H. (2000). *The Professional Stranger: An informal introduction to ethnography*. New York: Academic Press.

Anderson, L. E. (1994). A new look at an old construct: cross-cultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *18*, 293-328.

Andrade, M. S. (2006). International students in English-speaking universities: Adjustment factors. *Journal of Research in International education, 5*(2), 131-154.

Argyle, M., Henderson, M., Bond, M. Yuichi, L. (1986). Cross-cultural variations in relationship rules. *International Journal of Psychology*. 21(3), 287-315.

Asad, T. (1986). The concept of cultural translation in British social anthropology. In J. Clifford & G. E. Markus (Eds.), *Writing Culture: the poetics and plitics of ethnography* (pp. 141-164). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Aspland, T. (1999a). Struggling with Ambivalence in Supervisory Relations. In A. H. S. Johnston (Ed.), *Supervision of Postgraduate Research in Education*. Coldstream, Voctoria: AARE.

Aspland, T. (1999b). You learn round and I learn square：Mei's story. In Y. R. O. Zuber-Skerritt (Ed.), *Supervising postgraduates from non-English speaking backgrounds* (pp. 25-38). Buckingham: The Society for Research into Higher

Aspland, T., & O'Donoghue, T. (1994). Quality in supervising overseas students? In

O. Zuber-Skerritt & Y. Ryan (Eds.), *Quality in Postgraduate Education* (pp. 59-76). London: Kogan Page.

Atkinson, D. (1997). A critical approach to critical thinking in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly, 31*(1), 71-94.

Atkinson, R. (1998). *The Life Story Interview: qualitative research methods* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Au, C., & Entwistle, N. J. (1999). 'Memorisation with understanding' in approaches to studying: cultural variant or response to assessment demands? *Paper presented at the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction Conference*. Gothenburg: August 1999.

Ballard, B. (1987). Academic adjustment: the other side of the export dollar. *Higher Education Research & Development, 6*(2), 109 - 119.

Ballard, B. (1991). *Helping Students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds to Learn Effectively*. Melbourne: Educational Research and Development Unit, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Ballard, B. (1995). Creative tensions: teaching in programmes for international students. In P. Thomas (Ed.), *Teaching for Development: an International Review of Australian Formal and Non-formal Education for Asian and the Pacific*. Canberra: National Center for Development Studies, Australian National University.

Ballard, B., & Clanchy, J. (1984). *Studying abroad: A Manual for Asian Students*. Kuala Lumpur: Longman.

Ballard, B., & Clanchy, J. (1991). *Teaching Students from Overseas; a brief guide for lecturers and sueprvisors*. Melbourne: Longman.

Ballard, B., & Clanchy, J. (1997). *Teaching International Students: a brief guide for lecturers and supervisors*. Deakin: ACT: IDP Education Australia.

Bamford, J., Marr, T., Pheiffer, G., & Weber-Newth, I. (2002). Some features of the cultural and educational experience and expectation of the international postgraduate students in the UK, *BEST Conference 2002: Supporting the Teacher: Challenging the Learner*.

Bamford, J., Marr, T., Pheiffer, G., & Weber-Newth, I. (2006). International postgraduate students: some features of their expectations and experience. *The Cyprus Journal of Sciences, 4*, 25-38.

Barker, J. (1997). The purpose of study, attitudes to study and staff-student relationships. In D. McNamara, & R. Harris (Ed.), *Overseas Students in Higher Education* (pp. 108-123). London: Routledge.

Barker, M., Child, C., Gallois, C., Jones, E., & Callan, V. J. (1991). Difficulties of

overseas students in social and academic situations. *Australian Journal of Psychology, 43*(2), 79-84.

Barker, T. (2001, May19-21). Transferring cultures of learning and teaching: The case of Chinese students on foundation programmes in the UK. Paper presented at *the 3rd International Symposium on ELT in China*, Beijing.

Barnett, R. (1994). *The Limits of Competence: Knowledge, Higher Education and Society*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Baxter-Magolda, M. B. (1992). *Knowing and reasoning in college: Gender-related patterns in students' intellectual development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Beaty, E., & Morgan, A. (1992). Developing Skill in Learning. *Open Learning, 7*(3), 3-11.

Beaty, E., Gibbs, G., & Morgan, A. (1997). Learning orientations and study contracts. In F. Marton, D. Hounsell, & N. Entwistle (Ed.), *The Experience of Learning* (pp. 72-88). Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Becker, C. B. (1986). Reasons for the lack of argumentation and debate in the Far East. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 10*, 75-92.

Becker, H. S. (1998). *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Belcher, D. (1994). The apprenticeship approach to advanced academic literacy graduate students and their mentors. *English for Specific Purposes*, *13*, 23-34.

Belcher, D., & Braine, G. (1995). Introduction. In D. Belcher, & G. Braine (Eds.), *Academic writing in a second language: Essays on research and pedagogy* (pp. xiii-xxxi). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *women's Ways of Knowing*. New York: Harper Collins.

Bell, J. S. (1991). Becoming Aware of Literacy: University of Toronto.

Bennett, J. (1977). Transition shock: Putting culture shock in perspective. *International and Intercultural Communication Annual, 4*, 45-52.

Bennett, J. (1993). Cultural marginality: identity issues in intercultural training. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience* (pp. 109-135). Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.

Bennett, M. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience* (pp. 21-71). Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.

Bennett, M. (2008). On becoming a global soul--A path to engagement during study abroad. In V. Savicki (Ed.), *Developing Intercultural Competence and*

Transformation (pp. 13-31). Sterling: Stylus Publishing LLC.

Bennett, M. J. (1988). Foundations of Knowledge in international education exchange: Intercultural communication'. In J. M. Reid (Ed.), *Building the Professional Dimension of Educational Exchange* (Vol. pp.121-136). Yarmouth: Intercultural Press Inc.

Bennett, M.J. (1979). Overcoming the Golden Rule: Sympathy and empathy. In D. Nimmo (Ed.) *Communication Yearbook 3*. International Communication Association.

Benson, P. (2001) *Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning*. London: Longman.

Benson, P., Chik, A. & Lim, H. (2003). Becoming Autonomous in an Asian Context: Autonomy as a Socialcultural Process. In D. Palfreyman, & R. C. Smith (Ed.), *Learner Autonomy Across Cultures: Language Education Perspectives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd.

Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. London: Penguin.

Berno, T., & Ward, C. (2003). *Cross-cultural and educational adaptation of Asian students in New Zealand.* Wellington: Asia 2000 Foundation of New Zealand.

Berry, J. (1990). Psychology of acculturation. In R. Brislin (Ed.), *Applied Cross-cultural Psychology* (pp. 232-253). California: Sage Publications.

Berry, J. (1992). Acculturation and adaptation in a new society. *International Migration, 30*, 69-84.

Berry, J. W. (1994). Acculturation and psychological adaptation: An overview. In Bouvy, A. M, van de Vijver, F.J. R, Boski, P, & Schmitz, P. G. (Eds), *Journeys Into Cross-Cultural Psychology* (pp.129-41). Lisse: Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger Publishers.

Berry, J. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 46*, 5-68.

Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29*, 697-712.

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Biggs, J. B. (1984). Learning strategies, student motivation patterns and subjectively perceived success. In J. R. Kirby (Ed.) *Cognitive Strategies and Educational Performance* (pp. 111- 134). Orlando, Florida: Academic Press.

Biggs, J. B. (1987). *Student Approaches to Learning and Studying*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Biggs, J. B. (1988). The role of the metacognition in enhancing learning. *Australian Journal of Education, 32*, 127-138.

Biggs, J. B. (1990). Asian Students' Approaches to Learning: Implications for Teaching Overseas Students. Paper presented at *Australian Tertiary Learning Skills and Language Conference*, Brisbane.

Biggs, J. B. (1991). Approaches to learning in secondary and tertiary students in Hong Kong: some comparative studies. *Educational Research Journal, 6*, 27-39.

Biggs, J. B. (1995). Assessing for learning: Some dimensions underlying new approaches to educational assessment. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 41, 1-8.

Biggs, J. B. (1996a). Western misconceptions of the Confucian-heritage learning culture. In D. A. Watkins, & Biggs, J.B. (Ed.), *The Chinese learner: Cultural, psychological, and contextual influences* (pp. 45-67). Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Center.

Biggs, J. B. (1996b). Approaches to learning of Asian students: A multiple paradox. In J. Pandey, Sinha, D., & Bhawuk, D.P.S. (Eds.), *Asian contributions to cross-cultural psychology* (pp. 180-199). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Biggs, J. B. (1997). Teaching Across and Within Cultures: The issue of international students. In R. Murray-Harvey & H. Silins (Eds.), *Teaching in Higher Education: Advancing international perspectives* (pp. 1-22). Adelaide: Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.

Biggs, J. B. (1999). What the student does: teaching for enhanced learning. *Higher Education Research and Development, 18(1)*, 57-75.

Biggs, J. B. (2003). *Teaching for Quality Learning at University: what the student does* (2nd ed.): The Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press.

Biggs, J. B., & Watkins, D. A. (1996). The Chinese learner in retrospect. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences* (pp. 269-285). Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Biggs, J. B., & Watkins, D. A. (2001). Insights into teaching the Chinese learner. In D. A. Watkins, & Biggs, J. B. (Eds.), *Teaching the Chinese learner: Psychological and pedagogical perspectives* (pp. 277-300). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER.

Bloom, B. S. (Ed.). (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objective. Handbook 1: Cognitive domain*. New York: Longman.

Bochner, S. (1977). Friendship patterns of overseas students; a functional model. *International Journal of Psychology*, *12*(4), 277-294.

Bochner, S. (1994). Cross-cultural differences in the self concept: A test of Hofstede's individualism/collectivism distinction. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. 25(2), Jun 1994, 273-283.

Bochner, S., McLeod, B. M., & Lin, A. (1977). Friendship patterns of overseas students: A functional model. *International Journal of Psychology,* 12, 277-297.

Boekaerts, M. (1993). Being concerned with well-being and with learning. *Educational Psychologist, 28*, 149-167.

Bond, M. H. (1991). *Beyond the Chinese face: Insights from psychology*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Bond, M. H., & Hwang, K. (1986). The social psychology of Chinese people. In M. Bond (Ed.) *The Psychology of The Chinese People* (pp. 213-266). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bond, M. H., & Lee, P.W.H. (1981). Face saving in Chinese Culture: A discussion and experimental study of Hong Kong Students. In A. Y. C. King & R. P. Lee (Eds.) Social Life and Development in Hong Kong (pp. 289-304). Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.

Boucher, H. C., Peng, K. Shi, J., & Wang, L. (2009) Culture and Implicit Self-Esteem: Chinese Are "Good" and "Bad" at the Same Time. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 40(1), 24 - 45

Boud, D (1981) Moving Towards Autonomy. In D. Boud (Ed.) *Developing Student Autonomy in Learning.* London: Kogan Page.

Boud, D. (1988). Moving towards autonomy. In D. Boud (Ed.) *Developing Student Autonomy in Learning* (pp. 17-39), (2nd ed.). London: Kogan Page.

Boulton-Lewis, G. M., Marton, F., Lewis, D. C. & Wilss, A. (2000a). Learning in formal and informal contexts: conceptions and strategies of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students. *Learning and Instruction, 10*, 393-414.

Boulton-Lewis, G. M., Marton, F., Lewis, D. C. & Wilss, A. (2000b). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students' conceptions of formal learning and experiences of informal learning. *Higher Education, 39*, 469-488.

Boulton-Lewis, G. M., Wilss, L., & Lewis, D. C. (2001). Changes in conceptions of learning for Indigenous Australian university students. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 71*, 327-341.

Bourdieu, P. (1979). Symbolic Power. *Critique of Anthropology,* 4 (13/14): 77-85.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J.-C. (1994). Introduction: Language and the relationship to language in the teaching situation. In P. Bourdieu, J.-C. Passeron, M. de SaintMartin. (Eds.), *Academic Discourse*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J.-C. (1997). *Reproduction*. London: Sage.

Bradley, D., & Bradley, M. (1984). *Problems of Asian students in Australia: Language, culture and education*. Canberra: Australia: Australian Government Printing Service.

Braine, G. (2002). Academic literacy and the nonnative speaker graduate student. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 1(1)*, 59-68.

Bremer, K., Roberts, C., Vasseur, M., Simonot, M., & Broder, P. (1996). *Achieving understanding: Discourse in intercultural encounters*. London: Longman Group Limited.

Brennan, L., & Durovic, J. (2005). Plagiarism" and the Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) student, in Educational Integrity: Values for Teaching, Learning and Research. Paper presented at the *2nd Asia-Pacific Educational Integrity Conference*. University of Newcastle.

Brenner, M., Brown, J., & Canter, D. (Eds.). (1985). *The research interview: uses and approaches*. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.

Brewer, J. D. (2000). *Ethnography*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Brislin, R (1981), *Cross-cultural Encounters, Face-to-Face Interaction.* New York, NY: Pergamon.

Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-translation for cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1*, 185-216.

Brislin, R. W., & Yoshida, T. (Eds.). (1994). *The content of cross-cultural training: an introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brookfield, S. (1986). *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. (2000). Adult cognition as a dimension of lifelong learning. In J. Field and M. Leicester (Eds.) *Lifelong learning: Education Across Lifespan* (pp. 89-101). London: Routledge.

Brookfield, S. (Ed.). (1985). *Self-Directed Learning: from theory to practice* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Brown, L., & Holloway, I. (2008). The adjustment journey of international postgraduate students at an English university: An ethnographic study. *Journal of Research in International Education, 7*, 232-249.

Brownlee, J., Boulton-Lewis, G., & Purdie, N. (2002). Core beliefs about knowing and peripheral beliefs about learning: developing an holistic conceptualisation of epistemological beliefs. *Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology, 12*, 1-16.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press.

Bryman, A., & Burgess, R. G. (Eds.). (1994). *Analysing Qualitative Data*. London: Routledge.

Buehl, M. M., & Alexander, P. A. (2001). Beliefs about academic knowledge. *Educational Psychological Review, 13*(4), 385-418.

Bullen, E., & Kenway, J. (2003). Real or imagined? Staff representations of international women postgraduate students. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 24(1),* 35-50.

Bulmer, M. (1982) When is disguise justified? Alternatives to covert participant observation. *Qualitative Sociology*, 5(4), 251-264

Burgess, R (1982). *Introduction in Field Research: A sourcebook and Field Manual*. London: Allen & Unwin

Burgess, R. G. (1984). *In the field: an introduction to field research*. London: Alan & Unwin.

Burnapp, D. (2006). Trajectories of adjustment of international students: U-curve, learning curve, or Third Space. *Intercultural Education*, *17*(1), 81-93.

Burnett, C., & Gardner, J. (2006). The one less travelled by....: The experience of Chinese Students in a UK university. In M. Byram, & Feng, A. (Ed.), *Living and Studying Abroad: Research and Practice* (pp. 64-90). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Burns, R. B. (1991). Study and stress among first year overseas students in an Australian university. *Higher Education Researach and Development, 10*(1), 61-77.

Byram, M. (1989). Intercultural education and foreign language teaching. *World Studies Journal, 7*(2), 4-7.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Byram, M. (2003). On being 'bicultural' and 'intercultural'. In G. Alfred, M. Byram & M. Fleming (Eds.), *Intercultural Experience and Education* (pp.50-66). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Byram, M. (2008). *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship*. Clevendon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M., & Feng, A. (2006). Introduction. In M. Byram, & Feng, A. (Ed.), *Living and Studying Abroad* (pp. 1-10). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters LTD.

Cadman, K. (1997). Thesis writing for international students: A question of identity?

English for Specific Purpose, 16, 3-14.

Cadman, K. (2000). 'Voices in the air': Evaluations of the learning experiences of international postgraduates and their supervisors. *Teaching in Higher Education, 5*(4), 475-491.

Candy, P. (1988). On the attainment of subject-matter autonomy. In Boud, D. (Ed.) *Developing Student Autonomy in Learning* (pp.59-76). (2nd Ed.) London: Kogan Page.

Candy, P. C. (1991). *Self-direction for Lifelong Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cano, F. (2005) Epistemological beliefs and approaches to learning: Their change through secondary school and their influence on academic performance. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 75(2), 203-221

Carlson, J. S., Burn, B.B., Useem, J., & Yachimowicz, D. (1990). *Study Abroad: The Experience of American Undergraduates in Western Europe and in the United States*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Caroll, J., & Ryan, J. (Eds.). (2005). *Teaching International Students: Improving learning for all*. London: Routledge.

Carson, J. G., & Nelson, G. L. (1996). Chinese students' perceptions of ESL peer response group interaction. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 5*, 1-19.

Casson, R. (1983). Schemata in cognitive anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 12*, 429-462.

Chalmers, D., & Volet, S. (1997). Common misconceptions about students from South-East Asia studying in Australia. *Higher Education Research and Development, 16*(1), 87-99.

Chan, C. K. K. (2001). Promoting learning and understanding through constructivist approaches for Chinese learners. In D. A. W. J. B. Biggs (Ed.), *Teaching the Chinese Learners: Psychological and pedagogical perspectives* (pp. 181-203). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER.

Chan, K. W., & Elliott, R. G. (2002). Exploratory study of Hong Kong teacher education students' epistemological beliefs: Cultural perspectives and implications on beliefs research. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 27*, 392-414.

Chan, S. (1997). Migration, cultural identity and assimilation effects on entrepreneurship for the overseas Chinese in Britain. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 3(4), 211-22.

Chan, S. (1999). The Chinese learner-A question of style? *Education and Training, 41*(6/7), 294-304.

Chang, T. S. (1938). Thought, language, and culture *Sociological World* (in Chinese),

10, 17-54,

Chang, W. C. (2000). In search of the Chinese in all the wrong places! *Journal of Psychology in Chinese Societies, 1*(1), 125-142.

Chanock, K. (2004). Autonomy and responsibility: same or different? *Proceedings of the Independent Learning Conference 2003*.

Chao, R. K. (1996). Chinese and European American mothers' views about the role of parenting in children's school success. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 27*, 403-423.

Chapple, K. (1999). *Good practices in knowledge creation and management*. London: Focus.

Chapple, S. (1998). How do you foster enthusiasm and participation in tutorials particularly by international students? Paper presented at *the 7th Annual Teaching Learning Forum*, Perth, Australia.

Chen, C., Lee, S.-Y., & Stevenson, H. W. (1995). Response style and cross-cultural comparisons of rating scales among East Asian and North American students. *Psychological Science*, 6, 170-175.

Chen, G. M., & Starosta, W. J. (2003). Intercultural Awareness. In L. A. Samovar, & R. E. Porter (Eds.), *Intercultural Communication: A Reader* (pp. 344-353): Thomson Wadsworth.

Chen, J. (1990). *Confucius as a teacher: Philosophy of Confucius with special reference to its educational implications*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press.

Chen, L. (2008). The ideas of 'educating' and 'learning' in Confucian thought. In R. T. Ames, & Hershock, P. D. (Eds.), *Education and Their Purposes* (pp. 310-326). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Chen, M. J. (1994). Chinese and Australian concepts of intelligence. *Psychology and Developing Societies, 6*(2), 103-117.

Chen, S. H. (2009) Intercultural team teaching: A study of local and foreign EFL teachers in Taiwan. Unpublished PhD thesis stored at Durham University Library.

Chen, X., Rubin, K., & Sun, Y. (1992). Social Reputation and Peer Relationships in Chinese and Canadian children: a cross-cultural study. *Child Development, 63*, 1336-1343.

Cheng, X. (2000). Asian students' reticence revisited. *System, 28*, 435-466.

Chin, C., & Brown, D. E. V. p. (2000). Learning in Science: a comparison of deep and surface approaches. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching 37* (2), 109-138.

Chirkov, V. I., Safdar, S., de Guzman, J. & Playbord, K. (2008). Further examining

the role motivation to study abroad plays in the adaptation of international students in Canada. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 32*, 427-440.

Chirkov, V. I., Vansteenkiste, M., Tao, R., & Lynch, M. (2007). The theory of motivation to study abroad in the adaptation of international students: A self-determination theory approach. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 31*(2), 199-222.

Chiu, L. H. (1972). A cross-cultural comparison of cognitive styles in Chinese and American children. *International Journal of Psychology, 7*, 235-242.

Choi, G. (1997). Acculturative stress, social support, and depression in Korean American families. *Journal of Family Social Work, 2*(1), 81-97.

Choi, I. & Choi, Y. (2002). Culture and Self-Concept Flexibility. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* 28(11), 1508-1517.

Choi, M. (1997). Korean students in Australian universities: intercultural issues. *Higher Education Research & Development, 16*(3), 263-282.

Chu, M. (1997). *Asian-Chinese students' learning in New Zealand secondary schools.* Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Waikato, Hamilton.

Church, A. T. (1982). Sojourner adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin, 91*, 540-572.

Clark, R., & Gieve, S. N. (2006). On the Discursive Construction of 'The Chinese Learner'

Cliff, A. F. (1995). Postgraduate students' beliefs about learning and knowledge. *Research and Development in Higher Education, 19*, 105-110.

Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: complementary research strategies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Cohen, J. (2006). Social, Emotional, Ethical, and Academic Education: Creating a Climate for Learning, Participation in Democracy, and Well-Being. *Harvard Educational Review, 76*(2).

Cole, M. (1985). The zone of proximal development: where culture and cognition create each other. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *Culture communication and cognition: Vygotskian perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cole, M. (1996). *Culture in Mind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 19*(5), 2-14.

Conway, M. & Ross, M. (1984). Getting what you want by revising what you had. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 47(4), 738-748.

Cortazzi, M. (1990). Cultural and Educational Expectations in the Language Classroom In B. Harrison (Ed.), *Culture in the Language Classroom* (pp. 54-65).

London: Macmillan.

Cortazzi, M. & Jin, L. (1996). Cultures of learning: Language classroom in China. In H. Coleman (Ed.), *Society and the language classroom* (pp.169-206). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cortazzi, M. & Jin, L. (1997). Communication for learning across cultures. In D. McNamara & R. Harris (Eds.) *Overseas Students in Higher Education: Issues in Teaching and Learning* (pp. 76-90). London & New York: Routledge.

Cotterall, S. (1995). Readiness for Autonomy: Investigating Learner Beliefs. *System, 23*(2), 195-205.

Cousin, G. (2006). Threshold concepts, troublesome knowledge and emotional capital. In J. Meyer & R. Land (Eds.). *Overcoming barriers to student understanding: Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge* (pp. 134–147). Abingdon: Routledge.

Crabbe, D. A. (1993). Fostering autonomy from within the classroom: the teacher's responsibility. *System, 21*, 443-452.

Crittenden, K. S. (1991). Asian self-effacement or feminine modesty?: Attributional patterns of women university students in Taiwan. *Gender and Society, 5*, 98-117.

Cronin, M. & Sparrow, H. (1999). Focusing on feedback: an expectation of effective written to promote learning for external students, *Paper presented at Teaching and Learning Forum*. Edith Cowan University.

Crooks, T. J. (1988) The impact of classroom evaluation practices on students. *Review of Educational Research 58*, 438–81.

Cross, J. & Hitchcock, R. (2007). Chinese students' (or students from China's) views of UK HE: differences, difficulties and benefits, and suggestions for facilitating transition. *The East Asian Learner, 3(2),* 1-31.

Currie, G. (2007). 'Beyond our imagination': The voice of international students on the MBA. Management Learning, 38(5), 539-556

D'Andrade, R. (1987). A folk model of the mind. In D. Holland & N. Quinn (Eds.) *Language and Thought* (pp.112-148), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

D'Andrade, R. (1992). Schemas and Motivation. In R. G. D'Andrade & Strauss, C. (Eds) *Human Motives and Cultural Models* (pp.23-44), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dahlgren, L.-O. (1997). Learning Conceptions and Outcomes. In F. Marton, D. Hounsell, & N. Entwistle (Eds.), *The Experience of Learning* (pp. 23-38). Edinburgh Scottish Academic Press.

Dahlin, B., & Regmi, M. (1995). Conceptions of Learning among Nepalese Students, paper presented at the *6th Bi-annual Conference of the European Association for*

Research in Learning and Instruction. Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

Dahlin, B., & Regmi, M. (1997). Conceptions of Learning among Nepalese Students. *Higher Education 33*(4), 471-493.

Dahlin, B., & Watkins, D. (2000). The role of repetition in the processes of memorizing and understanding: A comparison of the views of Western and Chinese secondary school students in Hong Kong. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 70*, 65-84.

Dahlin, B., Watkins, D. A., & Ekholm, M. (2001). The role of assessment in student learning: the views of Hong Kong and Swedish Lecturers. In A. D. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *Teaching The Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives* (pp. 47-74): CERC & ACER.

Dart, B. C., Burnett, P. C., Purdue, N., Boulton-Lewis, G., Campbell, J., & Smith, D. (2000). Students' conceptions of learning, the classroom environment, and approaches to learning. *Journal of Educational Research, 93*, 262-270.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Ed.). (1998). *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Dey, I. (1993). *Qualitative data analysis: a user friendly guide for social scientists*. London: Routledge.

Ding, Y. (2007). Text memorization and imitation: the practices of successful Chinese learners of English. *System, 35*, 271-280.

Dion, K. L., and Dion, K. K. (1996). Chinese Adaptation to Foreign Cultures. In B. Michael (Ed.) *The Handbook of Chinese Psychology* (pp. 457-478). HongKong: Oxford University Press.

Dong, Y. (1996). Learning how to use citations for knowledge transformation: non-native doctoral students' dissertation writing in science. *Research in the Teaching of English, 30*, 428-457.

Douglas, J. D. (1976). *Investigative social research: individual and team filed research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Durkin, K. (2004). The Middle Way: Exploring Differences in Academic Expectations. Perceptions of Critical Thinking of East Asian Students in the UK. Paper presented at *the International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities*. Tuscany.

Durkin, K. (2008a). The Middle Way: East Asian Master's students' perceptions of critical argumentation in U.K. universities. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 12*(1), 38-55.

Durkin, K. (2008b). The adaptation of East Asian masters students to western norms of critical thinking and argumentation in the UK. *Intercultural Education, 19*(1),

15-27.

Eberhard, W. (1971). *Moral and Social Values of the Chinese: collected essays*. Taipei: Cheng Wen Publishing Company.

eChina-UK. (2006). The e-China-UK Programme. Retrieved July 26, 2007 from http://www.echinaprogramme.org

Edwards, V., & An, R. (2006). Meeting the needs of Chinese students in British higher education. Retrieved March 15, 2007 from http://ncll.org.uk/10_about/50_research/10_research_projects/MeetingTheNeeds.pdf

Egege, S., & Kutieleh, S. (2004). Critical thinking: Teaching foreign notions to foreign students. *International Education Journal: Educational Research Conference 2003 Special Issue, 4*(4), 75-85.

Elton, L., & Laurillard, D. (1979). Trends in research on student learning. *Studies in higher education, 4*(1), 87-102.

Ennis, R. H. (1996). *Critical Thinking*. London: Prentice Hall.

Ennis, R. H. (2000). An outline of goals for a critical thinking curriculum and its assessment. Retrieved August 12, 2003 from the www: http://www.criticalthinking.net

Entwistle, N. (1981). *Styles of Learning and Teaching: an integrated outline of educational psychology for students, teachers and lecturers*. Chichester: John Wiley.

Entwistle, N. (1987). A model of the teaching-learning process. In Richardson, J.T.E., Eysenck, M.W., & Warren Piper, D. (Eds) *Improving Learning: New Perspectives (*pp.178-98), Kogan Page, London.

Entwistle, N. (1997a). Contrasting Perspectives on Learning. In F. Marton, D. Hounsell & N. Entwistle (Eds.), *The Experience of Learning* (pp. 3-22). Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Entwistle, N. (1997b). Introduction: Phenomenography in Higher Education. *Higher Education Research and Development, 16*(2), 127-134.

Entwistle, N. (2005). Learning Outcomes and Ways of Thinking across Contrasting Disciplines and Settings in Higher Education. Enhancing Teaching-Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses Project, retrieved May 22, 2008 from http://www.etl.tla.ed.ac.uk/docs/EntwistleLOs.pdf

Entwistle, N. J. (1991). Approaches to learning and perceptions of the learning environment. *Higher Education, 22*, 201-204.

Entwistle, N. J. (1998). Improving teaching through research on student learning. In J. J. F. Forest (Ed.), *University teaching: International perspectives* (pp. 73-112).

New York: Garland.

Entwistle, N. J. (2000). Approaches to studying and levels of understanding: The influences of teaching and assessment. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 15, pp. 152-218). New York: Agathon Press.

Entwistle, N. J. (2004). Teaching and learning in diverse university settings: Analytic frameworks for integrating different data sources, *TLRP annual conference*. Cardiff.

Entwistle, N. J., & Entwistle, D. M. (2003). Preparing for examinations: The interplay of memorising and understanding, and the development of knowledge objects. *Higher Education Research and Development, 22*, 19-42.

Entwistle, N. J., & Ramsden, P. (1983). *Understanding Student Learning*. London: Croom Helm.

Entwistle, N. J., & Tait, H. (1990). Approaches to learning, evaluations of teaching, and perferences for contrasting academic environments. *Higher Education, 19*, 169-194.

Entwistle, N., & Marton, F. (1994). Knowledge objects: understandings constituted through intensive academic study. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 64*(161-178).

Entwistle, N., & Peterson, E. R. (2004). Conceptions of learning and knowledge in higher education relationships with study behaviour and influences of learning environments. *International Journal of Educational Research, 41*, 407-428.

Entwistle, N., & Tomlinson, P.D. (Eds.) (2007). *British Journal of Educational Psychology Monograph Series II Number 4: Student Learning and University Teaching*. Leicester: British Psychology Society.

Erez, M. & Early, P.C. (1993). *Culture, Self-Identity, and Work*. OUP USA

Erickson, M. H. (1973). *Deprivation and disadvantage? Prepared by Margret. Moss for the language and learning course team*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Evanoff, R. (1999). Towards a constructivist theory of intercultural dialogue. In N. H. Y. Kano (Ed.), *International Communication in the 21 Century* (pp. 109-153). Tokyo: Sanseido.

Evanoff, R. (2000). The concept of 'third cultures' in intercultural ethics. *Eubios Journal of Asian and International Bioethics, 10*, 126-129.

Evanoff, R. (2004). Universalist, relativist, and constructivist approaches to intercultural ethics. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 28*(439-458).

Evanoff, R. (2006). Integration in intercultural ethics. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 30*, 421-437.

Eysenk, H. (1970). *Readings in theoretical and methodological issues*. London: Staples Press.

Farr, M. (1993). Essayist literacy and other verbal performances. *Written Communication, 10*, 4-38.

Feng, A. (March, 2006) The concept of synergetic culture in researching intercultural communication. Paper presented at *the Annual Cultnet Symposium* held at Durham University, UK.

Feng, A. (February 2007) Culture of learning and teaching: Enhancing the academic experience of international students. Staff seminars at Durham University, UK.

Feng, A. (2009). Becoming Interculturally Competent in a Third Space. In A., Feng & M. Byram (Eds.) *Becoming Interculturally Competent through Education and Training*. Bristol: Multlingual Matters.

Fernandez, S. I. (1994). Learning to participate in the discourse community: a case study of the writing of two postgraduate students. Med dissertation, University of Bristol.

Festinger, L. (1957). *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (1984). *Social Cognition*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Flowerdew, J., & Li, Y. (2009). English or Chinese? The trade-off between local and international publication among Chinese academics in the humanities and social sciences. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 18*, 1-16.

Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (1995). On the notion of culture in second language lecturers. *TESOL Quarterly, 29*(2), 345-373.

Fromm, E. (1947). *Man for Himself*. London: Routledge.

Furnham, A. (1988). The adjustment of sojourners. In Y. Y. Kim & W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Cross-cultural Adaptation: Current Approaches* (pp. 42-61). California: Sage Publications.

Furnham, A., & Bochner, S. (1982). Social difficulty in a foreign culture: An empirical analysis of cultural shock. In S. Bochner (Ed.), *Cultures in Contact: Studies in Cross-cultural Interaction* (pp. 161-198).

Furnham, A., & Bochner, S. (1986). *Cultural Shock: Psychological Reactions to Unfamiliar Environments*. London: Methuen.

Gallois, C., Giles, H., Jones, E., Cargile, A., & Ota, H. (1995). Accommodating intercultural encounters, elaborations and extensions. In R. Wiseman (Ed.)

Intercultural Communication Theory (pp. 115-147). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gao, G., & Ting-Toomey, S. (1998). *Communicating effectively with the Chinese*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gao, X. (2006). Understanding changes in Chinese students' uses of learning strategies in China and Britain: a socio-cultural re-interpretation. *System,* 34, 55-67.

Gardner, D. K. (trans.) (1990). *Learning to Be a Sage: selections from the conversations of Master Chu*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Gardner, H. W. (1989). *To Open Minds: Chinese Clues to the dilemma of Contemporary Education*. New York: Basic Books.

Gardner, R. C. (1988). The socio-educational model of second-language learning: Assumptions, finding, and issues. *Language learning, 38*(1), 101-126.

Garrott, J. R. (1995). Chinese cultural values: New angles, added insights. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 19*(2), 211-225.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Geertz, C. (1974). "From the Native's Point of View": On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 28(1), 26-45.

Geertz, C. (Ed.). (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.

Gellner, E. (1970). From the native's point of view. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 28*(27-45).

Gibbs, G., Morgan, A., & Taylor, E. (1984). The world of the learner. In D. H. F. Marton, & N. Entwistle, N.J. (Ed.), *The Experience of Learning* (pp. 165-188). Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Gieve, S., & Clark, R. (2005). 'The Chinese approach to learning': Cultural trait or situated response? The case of a self-directed learning programme. *System, 33*, 261-276.

Gilbert, R. (1995) 'Education for citizenship and the problem of identity in postmodern political culture', in J. Ahier, & A. Ross (Eds.) *The Social Subjects Within the Curriculum: Children's Social Learning in the National Curriculum*. London, UK, Falmer Press.

Gill, S. (2007). Overseas students' intercultural adaptation as intercultural learning: a transformative framework. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative Education, 37*(2), 167-183.

Gillham, B. (2000). *Case study research methods*. London: Continuum.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In A Different Voice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Don Mills, Ontario, Canada: Longman.

Gold, R. L. (1958). Roles in sociological field observations. *Social Forces, 36*, 217-223.

Goldberger, N. R. (1996). Cultural imperatives and diversity in ways of knowing. In J. T. N. Goldberger, B., B. Clinchy, & M. Belenky (Ed.), *Knowledge, difference and power* (pp. 335-371). New York: Basic Books.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. New York: Bantam.

Gonzalez y Gonzalez, E. M. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2006). Decolonizing Qualitative Research: Non-traditional Reporting Forms in the Academy. Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 7 (4), Art. 1, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de0114-fqsobo418.

Gorden, M., Cantwell, R. H., & Moore, P. J. (1998). Developing understanding; international student explanations of how they learn, *Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education Conference*. Adelaide.

Gow, L., & Kember, D. (1990). Does higher education promote independent learning? *Higher Education 19*, 307-322.

Gow, L., Balla, J., Kember, D., & Hau, K. T. (1996). The learning approaches of Chinese people: A function of socialization processes and the context of learning? In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The Handbook of Chinese Psychology* (pp. 109-123). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Gow, L., Kember, D., & McKay, J. (1996). Improving student learning through action research into teaching. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural , Psychological and Contextual Influences* (pp. 243-265). Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Gribble, K. & Ziguras, C. (2003). Learning to Teach Offshore: Pre-Departure training for lecturers in transnational programs. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 22 (2), 205-216.

Gu, Q., & Brooks, J. (2008). Beyond the accusation of plagiarism. *System, 36*, 337-352.

Gu, Q., & Maley, A. (2008). Changing places: a study of Chinese students in the UK. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 8*(4), 224-245.

Gu, Q., & Schweisfurth, M. (2006). Who adapts? Beyond cultural models of 'the' Chinese learner. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19*(1), 74-89.

Gudykunst, W. B., & Kim, Y. Y. (2003). *Communicating with Strangers: an approach to intercultural communication* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.

Guilfoyle, A., & Thai, A. (2006). International Postgraduate Transitions via Expectations: Interactions with Quality, Outcomes and Diversity in the Developed System

Hall, E. T. (1966). *The Hidden Dimension*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond Culture*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.

Hammersley, M. (Ed.). (1990). *Classroom ethnography: empirical and methodological essays*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Hammond, M., & Collins, R. (1991). *Self-directed Learning: Critical Practice*. London: Kogan Page.

Hammond, S. C., & Gao, H. (2002). Pan Gu's Paradigm: Chinese education's return to holistic communication in learning. In X. Lu, W. Jia & D. R. Heisey (Eds.), *Chinese Communication Studies*. Westport, Connecticut: Ablex.

Harris, K. R. (1990). Developing self-regulated learners: the role of private speech and self-instruction. *Educational Psychology, 25*, 35-49.

Harris, M. (1976). History and significance of the emic/etic distinction. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 5*, 329-356.

Harris, R. (1995). Overseas students in the United Kingdom university system *Higher Education, 29*(1), 77-92.

Hau, K. T., & Salili, F. (1991). Structure and semantic differential placement of specific causes: Academic causal attributions by Chinese students in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Psychology, 26*, 175-193.

Hau, K. T., & Salili, F. (1996). Prediction of Academic Performance among Chinese Students: Effort can compensate for lack of ability. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes, 65*(2), 83-94.

Heine, S. J. (2001) Self as cultural product: An examination of East Asian and North American selves. *Journal of Personality, 69*, 881-906.

Heine, S. J., Lehman, D. R., Peng, K., & Greenholtz, J. (2002). What's wrong with cross-cultural comparisons of subjective Likert scales? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82 (6), 903-918.

Heine, S. J., Takata, T., & Lehman, D. R. (2000). Beyond self-presentation: Evidence

for self-criticism among Japanese. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26, 71-78.

Hellstén, M. & Prescott, A. (2004). Learning at university: the international student experience. *International Education Journal*, 5(3), 344-351.

Hellstén, M. (2002). Students in transition: Needs and experiences of international students in Australia. *Paper presented at the 16th Australian International Education Conference, Hobart, Tasmania*.

Higgs, J. (1988). Planning learning experience to promote autonomous learning. In D. Boud (Ed.), *Developing student autonomy in learning* (pp. 40-58). London: Kogan Page.

Hinds, J. (1986). Reader vs writer responsibility: a new typology. In U. Connor & R. Kaplan (Eds.), *Writing across languages; Analysis of L2 text* (pp. 141-152). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Ho, D. Y. F (1991). Cognitive socialization in Confucian heritage cultures. Paper presented to Workshop on Continuities and Discontinuities in the Cognitive Socialization of Minority Children. US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C., June 29-July 2.

Ho, D. Y. F. (1993). Relational orientation in Asian social psychology. In U. Kim & J. W. Berry (Eds.), *Indigenous Psychologies* (pp. 240-259). Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Ho, E., Holmes, P., & Cooper, J. (2004). Review and evaluation of international literature on managing cultural diversity in the classroom.

Ho, I. T. (2001). Are Chinese teachers authoritarian? In D. Watkins, & Biggs, J. B. (Ed.), *Teaching the Chinese learner: psychological and pedagogical perspectives* (pp. 99-114). Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Ho, J., & Crookall, D. (1995). Breaking with Chinese cultural traditions: learner autonomy in English language teaching. *System, 23*(2), 235-243.

Hofer, B., & Pintrich, P. (1997). The development of epistemological theories: Beliefs about knowledge and knowing and their relation to learning. *Review of Educational Research, 67*, 88-140.

Hofer, B., & Pintrich, P. (Eds.). (2002). *Epistemology: The psychology of beliefs about knowledge and knowing*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Hoff, J. G. (2008). Growth and transformation outcomes in international education. In V. Savicki (Ed.), *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation* (pp. 53-73). Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Hofstede, G. (1983). The cultural relativity of organizational practices and theories. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 14(2), 75-89.

Hofstede, G.. (1984). Culture's Consequences: international differences in work-related values. Newbury, CA: Sage Publications.

Hofstede, G. (1991) Culture and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Berkshire, UK: McGraw-Hill.

Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Holec, H. (Ed.). (1988). *Autonomy and Self-directed Learning: Present Fields of Application*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Holliday, A. R. (1994). *Appropriate Methodology and Social Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holliday, A. R. (1999). Small cultures. *Applied Linguistics, 20*(2), 237-264.

Holliday, A. R. (2002). *Doing and Writing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

Holmes, P. (2000). Strangers, sojourners, selves: the intercultural communication experiences of ethnic Chinese students in western tertiary education. PhD thesis. University of Waikato, Hamilton.

Holmes, P. (2003). Developing and sustaining a multicultural learning environment: An investigation of communication with cultural others in the multicultural classroom, Paper presented at the *17th Australian International Education Conference*. Melbourne, Australia.

Holmes, P. (2004). Negotiating differences in learning and intercultural communication. *Business Communication Quarterly, 67*(3), 294-307.

Hounsell, D. (1984). Essay planning and essay writing. *Higher Education & Research*, 3(1), 13-31.

Hounsell, D. (1997). Contrasting conceptions of essay-writing. In F. Marton, D. Hounsell, & N. Entwistle (Eds.), *The Experience of Learning: implications for teaching and studying* (pp. 106-125). Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Howard, R. M. (1993). A plagiarism pentimento. *Journal of Teaching Writing, 11*, 233-246.

Howard, R. M. (1995). Plagiarism, authorships and the academic death penalty. *College English, 57*(7), 788-806.

Howard, R. M. (1999). The new abolitionism comes to plagiarism. In L. Buranen, & Roy, A. (Eds.), *Perspectives on Plagiarism and Intellectual Property in a Postmodern World* (pp. 87-95). Albany: Stage University of New York Press.

Hsu, Wen-Yau, Chen, Mei-Chueh, Wang, Te-Hsien, & Sun, Sung-Hsien. (2008). Coping strategies in Chinese social context. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 11 (2), 150-162.

Huang, J. (1997). *Chinese Students and Scholars in American Higher Education*.

Westport, CT: Praeger.

Huberman, M., & Miles, M. (Eds.). (1998). *The Qualitative Researchers' Companion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hui, L. (2005). Chinese cultural schema of Education: Implications for communication between Chinese students and Australian educators *Issues in Educational Research, 15*(1), 17-36.

Hunter, A. (2008). Transformative learning in international education. In V. Savicki (Ed.), *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation* (pp. 92-107). Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Jackson, N. (2004). Developing the concept of metalearning. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 41*(4).

Javis, P. & Parker, S. (Eds.) (2005) *Human Learning: A Holistic Approach*. London: Routledge.

Javis, P. (1992). *Paradoxes of Learning: On Becoming an Individual in Society*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Javis, P. (2006). *Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Human Learning*. London: Routledge.

Jehng, J. J., Johnson, S. D., & Anderson, R. C. (1993). Schooling and students' epistemological beliefs about learning. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 18*, 23-35.

Ji, L., Peng, K., & Nisbett, R. E. (2000). Cultural, control, and perception of relationships in the environment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*, 943-955.

Jia, X. (2005). A contrastive analysis of Chinese and American rhetoric. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 14*(2), 90-101.

Jiang, W., & Zhang, B. (2001, May 19-21). Plagiarism: Different cultural perspectives. Paper presented at the *3rd International Symposium on ELT in China,* Beijing.

Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (1993). Cultural orientation and academic language use. In D. Graddol, Thompson, L., & Byram, M. (Eds.), *Language and Culture* (pp. 84-97). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters LTD.

Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (1998a). Dimensions of dialogue: Large classes in China. *International Journal of Educational Research, 29,* 739-761.

Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (1998b). The Culture the learner brings: A bridge or a barrier. In M. Byram, & M. Fleming (Eds.), *Intercultural Learning in Intercultural Perspective* (pp. 98-118). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (2006). Changing practices in Chinese cultures of learning.

Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19(1), 5-20.

Jones, A. (2005). Culture and context: critical thinking and student learning in introductory macroeconomics. *Studies in Higher Education, 30*(3), 339-354.

Jones, J. (1999). From silence to talk: Cross-cultural ideas on students' participation in academic group discussion. *English for Specific Purpose, 18,* 243-259.

Kantanis, T. (2001). *Transition to self-directed learning: issues faced by students in adjusting to the first-year at university*: Monash Transition Program.

Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning, 16*, 1-20.

Kardash, C. M., & Scholes, R. J. (1996). Effects of preexisting beliefs, epistemological beliefs and need for cognition on interpretation of controversial issues. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*(2), 260-271.

Kauffmann, N. L., Martin, J. N., Weaver, H. D., & Weaver, J. (1992). *Students Abroad, Strangers at Home: Education for a Global Society*. Yarmouth: Intercultural Press, Inc.

Kelly, P., & Bennoun, R. (1984). *Students from Indo-China: Educational issues*. Canberra: Australian Center for Indochinese Research.

Kember, D. (1996). The intention to both memorize and understand: another approach to learning? *Higher Education, 31*(341-354).

Kember, D. (2000). Misconceptions about the learning approaches, motivation and study practices of Asian students. *Higher Education, 40*, 99-121.

Kember, D. (2001) Beliefs about knowledge and the process of teaching and learning as a factor in adjusting to study in higher education, *Studies in Higher Education,* 26(2), 205–221

Kember, D., & Gow, L. (1990). Cultural specificity of approaches to study. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 60*(356-363).

Kember, D., & Gow, L. (1991). A challenge to the anecdotal stereotype of the Asian student. *Studies in Higher Education, 16*(2), 117-128.

Kern, R. G. (1995). Students' and teachers' beliefs about language learning *Foreign Language Annals, 28*(1), 77-92.

Kidd, J. R. (1973). *Relentless Verity: Education for Being-Becoming-Belonging*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University.

Kiely, R. (2004). A chameleon with a complex: Searching for transformation in international service-learning, *Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning*, 10(2), 5-20.

Kiley, M. (2003). Conserver, strategist or transformer: The experience of postgraduate

student sojourners. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *8*(3), 345-356.

Kim, H. S. (2002). We talk, therefore we think? A cultural analysis of the effect of talking on thinking. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(4), 828-842.

Kim, Y. Y. (1988). *Communication and cross-cultural adaptation: an integrative theory*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

Kim, Y. Y. (1992, May). Development of intercultural identity. Paper presented at *the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association,* Miami FLA.

Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kim, Y. Y., & Ruben, B. D. (1988). Intercultural transformation. In Y. Y. Kim., & W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Theories in intercultural communication* (pp. 299-321). London: Sage.

Kim, Y.Y., (2008). Intercultural personhood: Globalization and a way of being, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* **32**, 359–368.

King, A. Y. C. (1992). *Chinese Society and Culture [zhongguo shehui yu wenhua] (in Chinese)*. Hong Kong Oxford University Press.

Kirby, J. R., Woodhouse, R. A., & Ma, Y. (1996). Studying in a second language: the experiences of Chinese students in Canada. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences* (pp. 141-158). Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Kirkpatrick, A. (1997). Traditional Chinese text structures and their influence on the writing in Chinese and English of contemporary mainland Chinese students. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *6*(3), 223-244.

Kitchener, K. S. (1983a). Cognition, metacognition, and epistemic cognition: A three-level model of cognitive processing. *Human Development, 26*(4), 222-232.

Kitchener, K. S. (1983b). Educational Goals and Reflective Thinking. *Educational Forum, 48*(1), 75-95

Knight, J., & De Wit, H. (1995). Strategies for internationalisation of higher education: historical and conceptual perspectives. In De Wit, H. (Ed.) *Strategies for the Internationalisation of Higher Education: A Comparative Study of Australia, Canada, Europe and the United States of America* (pp. 5-32). Amsterdam, Netherlands: European Association for International education.

Knight, P. (1996). Independent study, independent studies and 'core skills' in higher education. In J. T. P. Knight (Ed.), *The management of independent learning* (pp. 29-37). London: Kogan Page.

Knowles, M. (1975). *Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers*. London: Prentice-Hall.

Kraidy, M. M. (2002). The global, the local, and the hybrid; a native ethnography of glocalization. In S. Taylor (Ed.), *Ethnographic research: a reader* (pp. 187-211). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language and Culture*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press

Kramsch, C. (1999). Thirdness: The Intercultural Stance. In T. Vestergaard (Ed.), *Language, Culture and Identity* (pp. 41-58): Center for Languages and Intercultural Studies, Aalborg University.

Kramsch, C. (2006). The Multilingual Subject. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 16*(1), 97-110.

Kramsch, C. 1993. *Context and Culture in Language Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Krause, K.-L., Hartley, R., James, R., & McInnis, C. (2005). *The first year experience in Australian universities: Findings from a decade of national studies*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). Problematizing cultural stereotypes in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly, 37*(4), 609-719?

Kumpulainen, K., & Renshaw, P. (2007). Cultures of Learning: A theme issue. *International Journal of Educational Research,*

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: an introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. London: Sage Publications.

Langston, C. A. (1994). Capitalizing on the coping with daily-life events: Expressive responses to positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67,* 1112-1125.

Lau, D. C. (1983). *Confucius: Analects*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Laurillard, D. (1979). The processes of student learning. *Higher Education 8(4),* 395-409

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lazarus, R. S. (1976). *Patterns of Adjustment* (3rd. Ed.), New York: Basic Books Inc.

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping*. New York: Springer.

Lê, T., & Shi, L. (2006). Chinese-background Students' Learning Approaches, *ARRE Conference*. Adelaide.

LeCompt, M. D., & Preissle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research* (2nd ed.). New York: Academic Press.

Lee, C. (1999). Learning through tutorial discussion and learners' culture: some preliminary observations from the views of Hong Kong Chinese tertiary students. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 12*, 255-264.

Lee, M. & Sheared, V. (2002). Socialization and immigrant students' learning in adult education programs. In M. V. Alfred (Ed.) *Learning and sociocultural contexts: Implications for adults, community, and workplace education* (pp. 27-36). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lee, W. O. (1996). The cultural context for Chinese learners; conceptions of learning in the Confucian tradition In D. W. a. J. Biggs (Ed.), *The Chinese Learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (pp. 25-41). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER.

Leinhardt, G. (1992). What research on learning tells us about teaching. *Educational Leadership (April)*, 20-25

Leonard, D., Pelletier, C., & Morley, L. (2002). *The Experience of International Students in UK Higher Education: A Review of Unpublished Research*. London: UKCOSA.

Leung, D. Y. P. & Kember, D. (2003). The relationship between approaches to learning and reflection upon practice. *Educational Psychology*, 23(1), 61-71.

Levy, R. I. (1973). Tahitians. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Li, F. (2004). American and Chinese Learners. In D. Y. Dai. & R. J. Sternberg (Eds.), *Motivation, Emotion, and Cognition: Integrative Perspectives on Intellectual Functioning and Development* (pp. 385-418). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Li, J. (2001). Chinese conceptualization of learning. *Ethos, 29*, 111-137.

Li, J. (2002). A cultural model of learning: Chinese 'heart and mind for wanting to learn'. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 33*, 246-267.

Li, J. (2003). U.S. and Chinese cultural beliefs about learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95*(2), 258-267.

Li, J. (2006). Self in learning: Chinese adolescents goals and sense of agency. *Child Development, 77*(482-501).

Li, J., & Fischer, K.W. (2004). Thought and Affect in American and Chinese Learners' Beliefs About Learning. In D. Y. Dai, & Sternberg, R. J. (Eds.), *Motivation, Emotion, and Cognition: Integrative Perspectives on Intellectual Functioning and Development* (pp. 385-418). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Li, M. (1990). Moral education in the People's Republic of China. *Journal of Moral Education, 19*(3), 159-171.

Li, M. (2004). Culture and classroom communication: A case study of Asian students in New Zealand language school.

Li, M., Baker, T., & Marshall, K. (2002). Mismatched expectations: a case study of Asian students in New Zealand, *Paper presented at the New Zealand Applied Business Education Conference*. Christchurch College of Education.

Li, N., Lee, K., & Kember, D. (Eds.) (2000).Towards self-direction in study methods: The ways in which new students learn to study part-time. *Distance Education*, 21(1), 6-28.

Li, X., & Jia, X. (2006). Why don't you speak up? East Asian students' participation patterns in American and Chinese ESL Classroom. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 15*(1), 192-206.

Liberman, K. (1994). Asian student perspectives on American university instruction. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*(2), 173-192.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Cuba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Little, D., & Dam, L. (1998). Learner Autonomy: what and why? *Language Teacher Online, 22*(10).

Littlewood, W. (1996). Autonomy: An anatomy and a framework. *System, 24*(4), 427-435.

Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics, 20*(1), 71-94.

Littlewood, W. (2000). Do Asian students really want to listen and obey? *ELT Journal, 54*(1), 31-35.

Liu, D. (2005). Plagiarism in ESOL students: is cultural conditioning truly the major culprit? *ELT Journal, 59*(3), 234-241.

Liu, J. (2000). Understanding Asian students' oral participation modes in American classrooms. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 10(1), 155-189.

Liu, J. (2002). 'Negotiating silence in American classrooms: three Chinese cases'. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 2(1), 37-54

Liu, N.-F., & Littlewood, W. (1997). Why do many students appear reluctant to participate in classroom learning discourse? *System, 25*(3), 371-384.

Lowyck, J., Elen, J., & Clarebout, G. (2004). Instructional conceptions: Analysis from an instructional. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 41(6), 429-444

Lysgaard, S. (1955). Adjustment in a foreign society: Norwegian Fulbright grantees

visiting the United States. *International Social Science Bulletin, 7*(1), 45-51.

Maclntlre, P. D., Clement, R., Dornyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998).Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *Modern Language Journal*, 82, 545-562.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991a). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion and motivation. *Psychological Review, 98*(2), 224-253.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991b). Culture variation in the self concept'. In J. Strauss & G. R. Goethals (Eds.), *The Self: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (pp. 18-47). New York: Springer.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1999). *Designing Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2004). *Intercultural Communication in Contexts* (3rd Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Marton, F. (1981). Phenomenography-describing conceptions of the world around us. *Instructional Science, 10*, 177-200.

Marton, F., & Booth, S. (1997). *Learning and Awareness*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Marton, F., & Ramsden, P. (1988). What does it take to improve learning? In P. Ramsden (Ed.), *Improving Learning: new perspectives*. London: Kogan Page.

Marton, F., & Säljö, R. (1976). Qualitative difference in learning: 1. outcome and process. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 46*, 115-127.

Marton, F., & Tsui, A.B.M. (2004) *Classroom discourse and the space of learning*, Mahwah, NJ:

Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G., & Beaty, E. (1993a). Conceptions of learning. *International Journal of Educational Research, 19*, 277-300.

Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G., & Tse, K. T. (1996). Memorization and understanding: The keys to the paradox? In D. Watkins & J. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (pp. 69-84). Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G., & Tse, K.T. (1993b). *The Paradox of the Chinese Learner* Educational Research and Development Unit, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Marton, F., Hounsell, D., & Entwistle, N. (1997). *The Experience of Learning*. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Marton, F., Watkins, D., & Tang, C. (1997). Discontinuities and continuities in the experience of learning: An interview study of high-school students in Hong Kong. *Learning and Instruction, 7*(1), 21-48.

Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a Psychology of Being*. Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand.

Matthews, B. (2004). Life values and approaches to learning: a study of university students from Confucian heritage cultures. In *Studies in comparative and international education series*. Adelaide: Flinders University Institute of International Education.

May, M., & Bartlett, A. (1995). "They've got a problem with English": perceptions of the difficulties of international post-graduate students. In P. Thomas (Ed.), *Teaching for development: an International Review of Australian Formal and Non-formal Education for Asia and the Pacific*. Canberra: National Center for Development Studies, Australian National University.

Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In D. J. Sluyter (Ed.), *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Educational Implications*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Mazzard, T., Soutar, G. N., Smart, D. & Choo, S. (2001). *Perceptions, information and choice: Understanding how Chinese students select a country for overseas study*. Canberra: Australian Educational International.

McCargar, D. F. (1993). Teacher and student role expectations: cross-cultural differences and implications. *The Modern Language Journal*, *7*(2), 192-207.

McClure, J. W. (2003). The experiences of Chinese international postgraduates studying in Singapore. EdD thesis. Griffith University, Queensland. Retrieved on May 20, 2007 from http://www4.gu.edu.au:8080/adt-root/uploads/approved/adt-QGU20040218.082542/public/02Whole.pdf

McInnis, C., & James, R. (1994). *Gap or gulf: Student perspectives on the transition to university in Australia*. Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology.

McLean, P., & Ransom, L. (2005). Building intercultural competencies: Implications for academic skills development. In Caroll, J., & Ryan, J. (Eds.) *Teaching International Students: Improving learning for all* (pp. 45-62. London: Routledge.

McNamara, D., & Harris, R. (Ed.). (1997). *Overseas Students in Higher Education: Issues in Teaching and Learning*. London: Routledge.

Mestenhauser, J. A. (1983). Learning from sojourners. In D. Landis & R. W. Brislin (Eds.), *Handbook of Intercultural Training* (pp. 153-186), Vol. 2. Elmsford, NY: Pergamon.

Mestenhauser, J. A. (2002). In search of a comprehensive approach to international education: a systems perspective. In Grünzweig, W., & Rinehart, N. (Eds.)

Rockin' in Red Square: critical approaches to international education in the age of cyberculture (pp. 165-208). Münster: LIT.

Meyer, J. H. F. & Boulton.-Lewis., G. M. (1997). Variation in students' conceptions of learning: an exploration of cultural and discipline effects. *Research and Development in Higher Education, 20*, 481-487.

Meyer, J. H. F. & Kiley, M. (1998). An Exploration of Indonesian Postgraduate Students' Conceptions of Learning. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 22*(3), 287-298.

Meyer, J. H. F. & Vermunt, J. (2000). Dissonant study orchestration in higher education: manifestation and effects. *European Journal of Psychology of Education, Special issue 15*.

Meyer, J. H. F. (1991) Study orchestration: the manifestation, interpretation and consequences of contextualized approaches to studying. *Higher Education,* 22, 297–316.

Meyer, J. H. F. (1998). A medley of individual differences. In B. Dart, & G. M. Lewis (Eds.), *Teaching and learning in higher education*. Melbourne: ACER.

Meyer, J. H. F. (2000). An overview of the development and application of the Reflections on Learning Inventory (RoLI), Paper presented at the *RoLI Symposium,* Imperial College, London, July 25th.

Meyer, J. H. F. (2004). An introduction to the RoLI™. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 41(4) , 491 – 497.

Meyer, J. H. F., & Land, R. (2003). Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge: linkages to ways of thinking and practising within the disciplines'. In C. Rust (Ed.), *Improving Student Learning ---- Ten Years On*. Oxford: Oxford Center for Staff and Learning Department.

Meyer, J. H. F., & Land, R. (2005). Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge (2): epistemological considerations and a conceptual framework for teaching and learning. *Higher Education, 49*, 373-388.

Meyer, J. H. F., & Land, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Overcoming barriers to student understanding: Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge*. London: Routledge.

Meyer, J. H. F., & Shanahan, M. (2003). The troublesome nature of a threshold concept in Economics' *the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction*. Padova.

Meyer, J. H. F., & Vermunt. (2000). 'dissonant orchestration'.

Mezirow, J. (1978). *Education for perspective transformation*. New York: Center for Adult Education, Columbia University.

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. A. (1990). *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood: A guide to transformative and emancipatory learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miller, C. M. L., & Parlett, M. (1974). *Up to the mark: a study of the examination game*. London: Society for Research into Higher Education.

Miller, R. L., & Brewer, J. D. (2003). *The A-Z of social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mills, C. (1997). Interaction in classes at a New Zealand university: some international students' experiences. *New Zealand Journal of Adult Learning, 25*(1), 54-70.

Mohan, B., & Lo, W. (1985). Academic writing and Chinese students: transfer and developmental factors. *TESOL Quarterly, 19*(3), 515-533.

Mok, I., Chik, P. M., Ko, P. Y., Kwan, T., Lo, M. L., Martion, F., et al. (2001). Solving the paradox of the Chinese teacher? In J. B. Biggs & D. A. Watkins (Eds.) *Teaching Chinese Learners: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives* (pp. 161-179). Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Montuori, A., & Fahim, U. (2004). Cross-cultural encounter as an opportunity for personal growth *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 44*(2), 243-265.

Morgan, T., & Harris, P. (1982). *Managing Cultural Synergy*. Houston: Gulf Publishing Co.

Morgan, T., & Harris, P. (1991). *Managing Cultural Differences*. Houston: Gulf Publishing Co.

Morse, J. M. (2001). Using shadowed data. *qualitative Health Research, 11*(3), 291-292.

Mugler, F., & Landbeck, R. (1997). Learning in the South Pacific and Phenomenography across Cultures. *Higher Education Research and Development, 16*(2), 227-239.

Mullingan, D., & Kirkpatrick, A. (2000). How much do they understand? Lectures, students and comprehension. *Higher Education Research and Development, 19*(3), 311-335.

Mullins, G., Quintrell, N., & Hancock, L. (1995). The Experience of international and local students at three Australian universities. *Higher Education Research and Development, 14*(3), 201-231.

Munro, D. J. (Ed.). (1985). *Individualism and Holism: studies in Confucian and Taoist values*. Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan.

Murayama, I. (1995). The status of strategies in learning: a brief history of changes in researcher's views. *Learning Learning, 2*(3), 7-12.

Murphy-Lejeune, E. (2003). An experience of interculturality: Student travellers abroad. In G. Alfred, Byram, M. and Fleming, M. (Ed.), *Intercultural Experience and Education* (pp. 101-113). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Myburgh, C. P. H., Niehaus, L., & Poggenpoel, M. (2002). International learners' experiences and coping mechanisms within a culturally diverse context. *Education*, 123, 107-129.

Niles, F. S. (1995). Cultural differences in learning motivation and learning strategies: A comparison of overseas and Australian students at an Australian university. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 19*(3), 369-385.

Ninnes, P., Aitchison, C., & Kalos, S. (1999). Challenges to Stereotypes of International Students' Prior Educational Experience: undergraduate education in India. *Higher Education Research and Development,, 18*(3), 323-342.

Nisbett, R. (2003). *The Geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently-and why*. New York: Free Press.

Nisbett, R., & Miyamoto, Y. (2005). The influence of culture: holistic versus analytic perception. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 9(10), 467-473.

Nisbett, R., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2001). Culture and systems of thought: Holistic vs. analytic cognition. *Psychological Review, 108*, 291-310.

Norton, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly, 29*, 9-31.

Norton, B. (2000a). *Language and Identity in Language Learning*. London: Longman.

Norton, B. (2000b). *Identity and language learning; Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change*. Harlow: Longman.

O'Malley, J., & Chamot, A. (1990) Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oberg, K. (1960). Culture shock: adjustment to new culture environments. *Practical Anthropology, 7*, 177-182.

Opotow, S. (1990). Moral exclusion and inclusion. *Journal of Social Issues, 46*(1), 1-20.

Ouyang, H. (2004). *Remaking of face and community of practices: An ethnographic study of what ELT reform means to local and expatriate teachers in today's China*. Beijing: Peking University Press.

Oxford R. (1997). Cooperative learning, collaborative learning, and interaction: Three communicative strands in the language. *Modern language journal*, 81(4), 443-456.

Oxford, R. (1990) Language Learning Strategies: what every teacher should know. New York: Newbury House.

Paine, L. W. (1990). The teacher as virtuoso: A Chinese model for teaching. *Teachers College Record, 92*(1), 49-82.

Parker, D. R. (1999). Teaching, learning, and working with international students: A case study. Education Resources Information Center Reprinted Document. ED438756.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (2nd Ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Paul, R. (1993). *Critical thinking: What every person needs to survive in a rapidly changing world*. Robert Park, CA: Sonoma State University, Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique.

Paulston, C. B. (1992). Linguistic Minorities and Language Policies: Four Case Studies. In W. Fase, K. Jaspaert, & S. Kroon (Eds.) *Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages.* Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Pavlenko, A., & Lantolf, J. (2000). Second language learning as participation and the (re)construction of selves. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.) *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (pp. 155-177). New York: Oxford University Press.

Pearson, C. Beasley, C. (1996). Reducing learning barriers amongst international students: A longitudinal development study. *The Australian Educational Researcher, 23*, 79-96.

Pelletier, C. (2004) The experiences of international students in the UK higher education: a review of unpublished research. Project report commissioned by UKCOSA.

Pelto, P. J., & Pelto, G. H. (1978). *Anthropological Research: the structure of inquiry* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peng, K., Nisbett, R. E., & Wong, N. Y. C. (1997). Validity problems comparing values across cultures and possible solutions. *Psychological Methods, 2,* 329-344.

Peng, K., Nisbett, R.E. (1999). Culture, dialectics, and reasoning about contradiction. *American Psychologist, 54*, 741-754.

Pennycook, A. (1996). Borrowing others' words: Text, ownership, memory, and

plagiarism. *TESOL Quarterly, 30*, 201-230.

Pennycook, A. (1997). Cultural alternatives and autonomy. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning*. London: Longman.

Perkins, D. N. (1999). The many faces of constructivism. *Educational Leadership, 57*(3), 6-11.

Perry, W. (1988). Different worlds in the same classroom. In P. Ramsjen (Ed.) *Improving learning: New perspectives* (pp. 145-161). London: Kogan Page.

Perry, W. G. (1970). *Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years: A scheme*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Phan, L. H. (2006). Plagiarism and overseas students: stereotypes again? *ELT Journal, 60*(1), 76-78.

Philips, D. (1988). Academic adjustment to the needs of overseas students. *Babel, 2*, 10-17.

Phuong-Mai, N., Terlouw, C., & Pilot, A. (2005). Cooperative learning vs. Confucian heritage culture's collectivism: confrontation to reveal some culture conflicts and mismatch. *Asia Europe Journal, 3*, 403-419.

Pike, K. (1967). *Language in relation to a unified theory of the structure of human behaviour* (2nd Ed.). Mouton: The Hague.

Pilcher, N., Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. (2006). "An immense variability"? British university supervisors' perceptions of mainland Chinese learners. Retrieved February 13, 2007, from http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/education/eal/eal-2-2/vol2_2_pilcher_cotazzi_jin.pdf

Pintrich, P. R. (2002) The role of metacognitive knowledge in learning, teaching and assessing. Theory into Practice 41 (4), 219-225.

Pintrich, P. R., Marx, R. W., & Boyle, R. A. (1993). Beyond conceptual change: the role of motivitional beliefs and classroom contextual factors in the process of conceptual change. *Review of Educational Research, 63*(2), 167-199.

Plaks, A. (trans.) (2003). *Ta Hsueh and Chung Yung*. London: Penguin Books.

Pratt, D. D. (1992). Chinese conceptions of teaching and learning: a Westerner's attempt at understanding. *International Journal of Lifelong Learning, 11*(4), 301-309.

Pratt, D. D., Kelly, M., & Wong, K. M. (1999). Chinese conceptions of 'effective teaching' in Hong Kong: Towards culturally sensitive evaluation of teaching. *International Journal of Lifelong Learning, 18*, 241-258.

Prosser, M. & Trigwell, K. (1997). Perceptions of the teaching environment and its

relationship to approaches to teaching. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 67*, 25-35.

Prosser, M., & Trigwell, K (1999). *Understanding Teaching and Learning: The Experience in Higher Education.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Purdie, N., & Hattie, J. (2002). Assessing students' conceptions of learning. *Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology, 2*, 17-32.

Purdie, N., Hattie, J., & Douglas, G. (1996). Student Conceptions of Learning and Their Use of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies: A Cross-Cultural Comparison. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*(1), 87-100.

Quinn, N. & Holland, D. (1987). Culture and Cognition. In D. Holland & N. Quinn (Eds.) *Language and Thought* (pp.3-40), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ramburuth, P. (1997). Learning style preferences and approaches to learning of international students studying in Australia. University of New South Wales, Sydney.

Ramburuth, P. & McCormick, J. (2001). Learning diversity in higher education: a comparative study of Asian international and Australian students. *Higher Education, 42*(3), 333-350.

Ramsay, S. (1996). Learning and adjustment processes for local and international first year university students: Transition to active learning. Paper presented at *the 2nd Pacific Rim Conference on the First Year in Higher Education,* Victoria.

Ramsay, S., Barker, M. & Jones, E. (1999). Academic Adjustment and Learning Processes: a comparison of international and local students in first-year university. *Higher Education Research and Development, 18*(1), 129-144.

Ramsden, P. (1979). Student learning and perceptions of the academic environment. *Higher Education, 8*(4), 411-427.

Ramsden, P. (1981). *A study of the relationship between student learning and its academic context.* University of Lancaster.

Ramsden, P., & Entwistle, N. J. (1981). Effects of academic departments on students' approaches to studying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology. Vol 51(3),* 368-383.

Rastall, P. (2006). The Chinese learner in Higher Education: Transition and Quality issues. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19*(1), 1-4.

Remond, M. V. (2000). Cultural distance as a mediating factor between stress and intercultural communication competence. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 24*(1), 151-159.

Remond, M. V., & Bunyi, J. M. (1993). The relationship of intercultural

communication competence with stress and the handling of stress reported by international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 17*(2), 235-254.

Renshaw, P. D. (1995). *Social interaction as the context of study for South-East Asian students.* Paper presented at the *6th European Conference for Research on Learning and Instruction,* Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

Renshaw, P. D. (1999). Learning and culture: Rethinking 'the Chinese learner' at Australian universities. In J. Lu (Ed.), *Education of the Chinese: The global prospect of national cultural tradition* (pp. 48-71). Nanjing: Nanjing University Press.

Renshaw, P. D., & Volet, S. E. (1995). South-East Asian students at Australian universities: A reappraisal of their tutorial participation and approaches to study. *Australian Educational Researcher, 22*, 85-106.

Reybold, L. E. (2001). Encouraging the transformation of personal epistemology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 14*(3), 413-428.

Reybold, L. E. (2002). Pragmatic epistemology: ways of knowing as ways of being. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 21*(6), 537-550.

Richardson, J. T. E. (1994). Culture specificity of approaches to studying in higher education: a literature survey. *Higher Education, 27*(4), 449-468.

Riding, R. J. & Sadler-Smith, E. (1997). Cognitive style and learning strategies: some implications for training design. *International Journal of Training and Development, 1(3)*, 199-208.

Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative Analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Riley, P. (1988). The ethnography of autonomy. In A. Brookes & P. Grundy (Eds.), *Individualization and Autonomy in Language Learning*. London: Modern English Publications/ The British Council.

Riley, P. (1997). The guru and the conjurer: aspects of counseling for self-access. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning* (pp. 114-131). London: Longman.

Riley, P. (2003). Self-Access as Access to 'Self': Cultural variations in the notions of self and personhood. In D. Palfreyman & R. C. Smith (Eds.), *Learner Autonomy Across Cultures: Language Education Perspectives* (pp. 92-109). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Roberts, C., Byram, M., Barro, A., Jordan, S, & Street, B. (2001). *Language Learners as Ethnographers*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Robin, H. J. & Robin, I. S. (1995). Qualitative Interviewing: the art of hearing data.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Robinson-Pant, A. (2005). *Cross-cultural perspectives on educational research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Robinson-Pant, A. (2009). Changing academies: exploring international PhD students' perspectives on 'host' and 'home' universities. *Higher Education Research and Development, 28*(4), 417-429.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research* (2nd Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Rodríguez, L., & Cano, F. (2006). The epistemological beliefs, learning approaches and study orchestrations of university students. *Studies in Higher Education, 31(5),* 617-636.

Rokeach, M. (1968). *Beliefs, attitudes and values*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Ross, M. (1989). Relation of implicit theories to the construction of personal histories. *Psychological Review*, 96(2), 341-357.

Rothbaum, F., Weisz, J. R., & Snyder, S. S. (1982). Changing the world and changing the self: A two-process model of perceived control. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 42*, 5-37.

Rudmin, F. (2009). Constructs, measurements and models of acculturation and acculturative stress. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 25*, 1-18 (in press).

Russell, H. (2007). Learning for being: an ontological and existential approach. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 26(4), 363-384.

Rutherford, J. (Ed.) (1990). *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Ryan, J. & Hellmundt, S. (2005) Maximising international students' 'cultural capital'. In Carroll, J. and Ryan, J. (Eds) *Teaching International Students: Improving Learning for All* (pp. 13-16). London: Routledge.

Ryan, J. (2000). *A Guide to Teaching International Students.* Oxford: Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development.

Ryan, J. (2005). Improving teaching and learning practices for international students: Implications for curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. In J. Ryan & J. Carroll (Eds.), *Teaching International Students: Improving Learning for All* (pp. 92-100). London: Routledge.

Ryan, J., & Carroll, J. (2005). Canaries in the coalmine: international students in Western universities. In J. Carroll. & J. Ryan (Ed.), *Teaching International Students*. London: Routledge.

Ryan, M. P. (1984). Monitoring text comprehension: Individual differences in

epistemological standards. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 76*, 1226-1238.

Ryan, Y., & Zuber-Skerritt, O. (1999). Supervising Postgraduate NESB students in an era of internationalization. In Y. Ryan & O. Zuber-Skerritt (Eds.), *Supervising Postgraduates from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds* (pp. 3-11). Buckingham: SRHE & Open University Press.

Ryder, A., Alden. L. & Paulhus, D. (2000). Is acculturation unidimensional or bidimensional? A head-to-head comparison in the prediction of personality, self-identity, and adjustment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 49-65.

Sadler-Smith, E., & Tsang, F. (1998). A comparative study of approaches to studying in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 68*(1), 81-93.

Salili, F. (1995). Explaining Chinese students' motivation and achievement: A sociocultural analysis. In M. L. Maehr, & P. R. Pintrich (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement: Culture, motivation and achievement* (Vol. 9, pp. 73-118). Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press.

Salili, F. (1996). Accepting personal responsibility for learning. In D. Watkins, & Biggs, J. (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, psychological, and contextual influences* (pp. 85-105). Hong Kong: CERC The University of Hong Kong/ACER.

Salili, F. (2001). Teacher-student interaction: attributional implications and effectiveness of teachers' evaluative feedback. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *Teaching The Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives* (pp.77-98). Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Salili, F., Chiu, C. Y., & Hong, Y. Y. (2001). *Student Motivations; the culture and context of learning*. New York: Kluwer Academic.

Säljö, R. (1979). *Learning in the learner's perspective I. Some common-sense conceptions* (No. Report 76). Gothenburg: Department of Education, University of Gothenburg.

Säljö, R. (1982). *Learning and Understanding*. Gothenburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Säljö, R. (1991). Introduction: Culture and learning? *Learning and Instruction, 1*, 179-185.

Salovey, P.& Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional Intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality, 9*, 185-211.

Samovar, L. A., & Porter, R. E. (2004). *Communication Between Cultures* (5th ed.). Belmont, California: Thomson.

Samuelowicz, K. (1987). Learning problems of overseas students: Two sides of a story. *Higher Education Research and Development, 6*(2), 121-133.

Samuelowicz, K., & Bain, J. D. (2001). Revisiting academics' beliefs about teaching and learning. *Higher Education, 41*, 229-325.

Sarkodie-Mensah, K. (1998). International Students in the US: Trends, Cultural Adjustments, and Solutions for a Better Experience. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 39 (3), 214-222.

Savicki, V. (Ed.). (2008). *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation*. Sterling: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Schmitt, D. (2005). Writing in the international classroom. In J. Carroll & J. Ryan (Eds.), *Teaching International Students: Improving Learning for All*. New York: Routledge.

Schommer, M. (1990). Effects of beliefs about the nature of knowledge on comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*, 498-504.

Schommer, M. (1993). Epistemological development and academic performance among secondary students. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 85*, 406-411.

Schommer, M. (1994a). An emerging conceptualization of epistemological beliefs and their role in learning. In R. G. P. A. Alexander (Ed.), *Beliefs about text and instruction with text* (pp. 25-40). Hallsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Schommer, M. (1994b). Synthesizing epistemological beliefs research: Tentative understanding and provocative confusions. *Educational Psychology Review, 6*(4), 293-319.

Schommer, M. (1998). The influence of age and education on epistemological beliefs. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 68*, 551-562.

Schommer, M., & Walker, K. (1995). Are epistemological beliefs similar across domains. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 87*, 424-432.

Schommer, M., Calvert, C. Gariglietti, G., & Reja, A. (1997). The development of epistemological beliefs among secondary students: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 89*(37-40).

Schommer-Aikins, M. (2004). Explaining the epistemological belief system: introducing the embedded systemic model and coordinated research approach. *Educational Psychologist, 39*(1), 19-29.

Schwienhorst, K. (2003). Neither here nor there? Learner autonomy and intercultural factors in CALL environments. In D. Palfreman, & R. C. Smith (Ed.), *Learner Autonomy Across Cultures: Language Education Perspectives* (pp. 164-180). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Scollon, R. (1994). As a matter of fact: the changing ideology of authorship and

responsibility in discourse. *World Englishes, 13*(1), 33-46.

Scollon, R., & Wong-Scollon, S. (1994). *The post-Confucian confusion* (No.39). Hong Kong: Department of English, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Scollon, S. (2001). Not to waste words or students: Confucian and Socratic discourse in the tertiary classroom. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (pp. 13-27). Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Searle, W., & Ward, C. (1990). The prediction of psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations 14*, 449-464.

Selby, R. (2008). Designing transformation in international education. In V. Savicki (Ed.), *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation: Theory, Practice and Application in Intercultural Education* (pp. 1-10). Sterling, Virginia: Stylus.

Selmer, J., & Lauring, J. (2009). Cultural similarity and adjustment of expatriate academics. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 33*, 429-436.

Senyshyn, R. M., Warford, M. K., & Zhang, J. . (2000). Issues of adjustment to higher education: International students' perspectives. *International Education Journal, 30*(1), 17-35.

Serpell, R., & Hatano, G. (1997). Education, schooling, and literacy. In J. Berry, P. Dasen & T. S. Saraswathi (Eds.), *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology* (Vol. 2 Basic Process and Human Development, pp. 339-375). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Shaules, J. (2007). *Deep Culture: the hidden challenges of global living*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Shaver, P., Schwartz, J., Kirson, D. & O'Connor, C. (1987). Emotion knowledge: further exploration of a prototype approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 52*, 1061-1086.

Shen, F. (1989). The classroom and the wider culture: identity as a key to learning English composition. *College Composition and Communication, 40*(4), 459-466.

Shi, L. (2006). The Successors to Confucianism or a New Generation? A Questionnaire Study on Chinese Students' Culture of Learning English. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19(1)*, 122-147.

Siu, P. C. P. (1952). The sojourner. *American Journal of Sociology, 58*(1), 34-44.

Skyrme, G. (2005). The reflective learner: Chinese international students' use of strategies to enhance university study. Working paper No. 16. Auckland, NZ: AIS St. Helens Centre for Research in International Education.

Smith, P. J., & Smith, S. N. (1999). Differences between Chinese and Australian

students: some implications for distance educators. *Distance Education, 20*(1), 64-80.

Smith, R. C. (2001). Group work for autonomy in Asia: insights from teacher research. *AILA Review, 15*, 70-81.

Smith, R. C. (2003a). Learner Autonomy. *ELT Journal, 62*(4), 395-397.

Smith, R. C. (2003b). Pedagogy for Autonomy as (Becoming-) Appropriate Methodology. In D. Palfreyman, & R. C. Smith (Ed.), *Learner Autonomy Across Cultures: Language Education Perspectives* (pp. 129-146). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, R.C. (2008). Key concepts in ELT: Learner autonomy. *ELT Journal 62(4),* 395-397.

Smith, S. N., Miller, R. J., Crassini, B. (1998). Approaches to Studying of Australian and Overseas Chinese University Students. *Higher Education Research & Development,* 17(3), 261 – 276.

Snyder, M. (1974). The self-monitoring of expressive behaviour. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 30,* 526-537.

Soja, E. W. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places.* Wiley-Blackwell.

Spack, R. (1997). The acquisition of academic literacy in a second language: A longitudinal case study. *Written Communication,* 14, 3-62.

Spack, R. (1997). The acquisition of academic literacy in a second language: A longitudinal case study, updated. In V. Zamel & R. Spack (Eds.), Crossing the curriculum: Multilingual learners in college classrooms (pp. 19-46). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Spencer-Oatey, H. (1997). Unequal relationships in high and low power distance societies: a comparative study of tutor-student role relations in Britain and China. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 28,* 284-302.

Spencer-Oatey, H. (2000) Rapport management: a framework for analysis. In: H. Spencer-Oatey (Ed.) *Culturally Speaking: Managing Rapport through Talk across* Cultures (pp.11–46). London: Continuum.

Spencer-Oatey, H., & Xiong, Z. (2006). Chinese students' psychological and sociocultural adjustments to Britain: An empirical study. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19(1),* 37-53.

Spradley, J. (1979). *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Spurling, N. (2006). Exploring adjustment: The social situation of Chinese students in UK higher education. *LATISS ----Learning and Teaching in the Social Sciences,*

3(2), 95-117.

Stephens, K. (1997). Cultural stereotyping and intercultural communication: working with students from the People's Republic of China in the UK. *Language and Education, 11*(2), 113-124.

Sternberg, R. J. & Grigorenko, E. L. (1997) Are cognitive styles still in style? *American Psychologist*. 52(7), 700-712.

Sternberg, R. J., & Zhang, L.F. (Eds.). (2001). *Perspectives on Thinking, Learning and Cognitive Styles*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Stevens, C. D., & Walker, B. M. (1996). How residential college students adjust socially and emotionally to first year university. *Higher Education Research and Development, 15*, 201-221.

Stevenson, H. W., & Lee, S. (1995). *The Academic Achievement of Chinese Students*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Stevenson, H. W., & Stigler, J. W. (1992). *The Learning Gap: Why our schools are failing and what we can learn from Japanese and Chinese education*. New York: Summit Books.

Stier, J. (2003). Internationalisation, ethnic diversity and acquisition of intercultural competencies. *Intercultural Education, 14*, 77-91.

Stigler, J. W. H., J. (1999). *The Teaching Gap: Best Ideas from the World's Teachers for Improving Education in the Classroom*. New York: Free Press.

Stodolsky, S., Salk, S., & Glaessner, B. (1991). Student views about learning math and social studies. *American Educational Research Journal* 28: 89–116.

Stokes, S. F. (2001). Problem-Based Learning in a Chinese Context: Faculty Perceptions. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *Teaching the Chinese Learners: Psychological and pedagogical perspectives* (pp. 205-218). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Svensson, L. (1997). Skill in learning and Organizing Knowledge. In F. Marton, D. Hounsell, & N. Entwistle (Ed.), *The Experience of Learning* (pp.59-71). Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swoden, C. (2003). Understanding academic competence in overseas students in the UK. *ELT Journal, 57*(4), 377-385.

Tan, J., & Goh, J. (1999). Assessing cross-cultural variations in student study

approaches - an ethnographic approach, *Paper presented at 8th Annual Teaching Learning Forum*. The University of Western Australia, Perth.

Tang, C. (1996). Collaborative learning: the latent dimension in Chinese students' learning. In D. A. Watkins, & Biggs, J.B. (Ed.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, psychological, and Contextual influences* (pp. 183-204). Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Center.

Tang, C., & Biggs, J. (1996). How Hong Kong students cope with assessment. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological, and Contextual Influences* (pp. 159-182). Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Tang, K. (1993). Spontaneous collaborative learning: A new dimension in student learning experience? *Higher Education Research and Development, 12*, 115-130.

Tang, T. K. W. (2001). The influence of teacher education on conceptions of teaching and learning. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *Teaching the Chinese Learners: Psychological and pedagogical perspectives* (pp. 221-238). Hong Kong & Melbourne: CERC & ACER.

Tasaki, A. (2001). Development of Intercultural Communication Competence in Conversation Class? *To integrate Intercultural Education into Foreign Language Education-Japanese Discourse, 1*, 55-66.

Taylor, E. W. (1994a). A learning model for becoming interculturally competent. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*(3), 389-408.

Taylor, E. W. (1994b). Intercultural competency: A transformative learning process. *Adult Education Quarterly, 44*(3), 154-174.

Taylor, S. J., & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods* (3rd Ed.). New York: John Wiley.

Thomas, J. (1993). *Doing Critical Ethnography*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage University Paper

Thomas, K., & Harrell, T. (1994). Counseling student sojourners; Revisiting the U-curve of adjustment. In G. Althen (Ed.), *Learning Across Cultures*. New York: NAFSA.

Ting-Toomey, S. & Chung, L.C. (2005). *Understanding Intercultural Communication*. Los Angeles, California: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1999). *Communication across Cultures*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Trafimow, D., Triandis, H. C., & Goto, S. G. (1991). Some tests of the distinction between the private self and the collective self. *Journal of personality and Social Psychology 60*, 649-655.

Triandis, H. C. (1972). *The Analysis of Subjective Culture*. New York: John Wiley &

Sons, Inc.

Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and Collectivism: New directions in social psychology*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Tu, W. (1993). *Way, Learning, and Politics: Essays on the Confucian Intellectual*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Tu, W. M. (1979). *Humanity and self-cultivation: Essays in Confucian thought*. Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press.

Tu, W. M. (1985). Selfhood and otherness in Confucian thought. In A. Marsella, G. DeVos, & F. Hsu (Eds.), *Culture and self: Asian and Western perspectives*. New York: Tavistorck.

Turner, Y. (2006). Chinese students in a UK business school: Hearing the Student Voice in Reflective Teaching and Learning Practice. *Higher Education Quarterly, 60* (1), 27-51.

Tweed, R. G., & Lehman, D. R. (2002). Learning considered within a cultural context: Confucian and Socratic approaches. *American Psychologist, 57*(2), 89-99.

Tweed, R. G., & Lehman, D. R. (2003). Confucian and Socratic learning. *American Psychologist, 58*(2), 148-149.

Twining, J. (1991). *Strategies for Active Learning*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

UKCOSA (2004). *Broadening Our Horizons: International Students in UK Universities and Colleges*. London: UKCOSA: The Council for International

Van Rossum, E. J., & Schenk, S. M. (1984). The relationship between learning conceptions, study strategy and learning outcome. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 54*, 78-83.

Vandermensbrugghe, J. (2004). The Unbearable Vagueness of Critical Thinking in the Context of the Anglo-Saxonisation of Education. *International Education Journal, 5*(3), 417-422.

Veenman, M., & Verheij, J. (2003). Technical students' metacognitive skills：Relating general vs. specific metacognitive skills to study success. *Learning and Individual Differences, 13*(3), 259-272.

Vermunt, J. D. (1996). Megacognitive, cognitive and affective aspects of learning styles and strategies: a phenomenographic analysis. *Higher Education, 31*, 25-50.

Vermunt, J. D. (1998). The regulation of constructive learning processes. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 68*(149-171).

Vermunt, J. D. (2007). The power of teaching-learning environments to influence student learning. *BJEP Student Learning and University Teaching, 1(1),* 72-89

Vermunt, J. D., & Verloop, N. (1999). Congruence and friction between learning and

teaching. *Learning and Instruction, 9*, 257-280.

Volet, S. E. (1999). Learning across cultures: appropriateness of knowledge transfer. *International Journal of Educational Research, 31*, 625-643.

Volet, S. E., & Renshaw, P. D. (1995). Cross-cultural differences in university students' goals and perceptions of study settings for achieving goals. *Higher Education, 30*, 407-433.

Volet, S. E., & Renshaw, P. D. (1996). Chinese students at an Australian university: Adaptability and continuity. In D. Watkins & J. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, psychological and contextual influences* (pp. 205-220). Hong Kong: CERC /ACER.

Volet, S. E., Renshaw, P. D., & Tietzel, K. (1994). A short-term longitudinal investigation of cross-cultural differences in study approaches using Biggs' SPQ questionnaire. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 64*, 301-318.

Volet, S., & Ang, G. (1998). Culturally mixed groups on international campuses: an opportunity for inter-cultural learning. *Higher Education Research and Development, 17*, 5-23.

Volet, S., & Kee, J. P. P. (1993). Studying in Singapore--studying in Australia: A student perspective, *Occasional Paper* (Vol. 1).

Vosniadou, S., & Kollias, V. (2002). Using collaborative, computer-supported, model building to promote conceptual change in science. In E. D. Corte, L. Verschaffel, N. J. Entwistle & J. V. Merrienboer (Eds.), *Powerful Learning Environments: Unravelling basic components and dimensions* (pp. 181-196). Oxford: Elservier Science.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1965). *Thought and Language* (E. H. G. Vokar, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: M.I.T Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: the Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wakefield, C. S. (2008). A missing link to intercultural communication: Teaching critical thinking, *International conference of intercultural communication: Identity and Intercultural Communication*. Shanghai Normal University.

Wan G, (2001), The Learning Experiences of Chinese Students in American Universities: a cross cultural Perspective. *College Student Journal* 35 (1): 28-45.

Wang, H. (2004). *The Call from the Stranger on a Journey Home: Curriculum in a third space*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Wang, Y. (2004). Pursuing cross-cultural graduate education: a multifaceted investigation. *International Education, 33*(2), 52-72.

Ward, C., & Kennedy, A. (1993a). Psychological and socio-cultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions: A comparison of secondary students overseas and at home. *International Journal of Psychology*, 28 (2), 29–147.

Ward, C. & Kennedy, A. (1993b) Where's the culture in cross-cultural transition? Comparative studies of sojourner adjustment. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 24 (2), 221–249.

Ward, C. (2001). *The impact of international students on domestic students and host institutions.* Contract literature review, Ministry of Education.

Ward, C., & Kennedy, A. (1999). The measurement of sociocultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 23*(4), 659-677.

Ward, C., & Rana-Deuba, A. (1999). Acculturation and Adaptation Revisited. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 30*, 422-442.

Ward, C., & Rana-Deuba, A. (2000). Home and host culture influences on sojourner adjustment. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 24*(3), 291-306.

Ward, C., Bochner, S., & Furnham, A. (2001). *The psychology of culture shock* (2 ed.). East Sussex: Routledge.

Ward, C., Okura, Y., Kennedy, A., & Kojima, T. (1998). The U-curve on trial: a longitudinal study of psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transition. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations 22*(3), 277-291.

Warnick, B. R. (2008). *Imitation and Education: A philosophical Inquiry into learning by example*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Watkins, D. & Regmi, M.P. (1995). 'Assessing approaches to learning in non-western cultures: A Nepalese conceptual validity study', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 20, 227–236.

Watkins, D. (1998). A cross-cultural look at perceptions of good teaching. In J. J. F. Forest (Ed.), *University Teaching: International perspective* (pp. 19-34). London: Garland Publishing Inc.

Watkins, D. A. (1996). Learning theories and approaches to research; A cross-cultural perspective. In D. Watkins, & J. Biggs (Ed.), *The Chinese Learner; Cultural, psychological and textual influences*. Hong Kong and Melbourne: CERC and ACER.

Watkins, D. A. (2000). Learning and teaching: A cross-cultural perspective. *School Leadership & Management, 20* (2), 161-173.

Watkins, D. A., & Biggs, J. B. (2001a). The paradox of the Chinese learner and beyond. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.) *Teaching the Chinese learner: Psychological and pedagogical perspectives* (pp. 3-23). Hong Kong/Melbourne:

Comparative Education Research Centre/Australian Council for Educational Research.

Watkins, D. A., & Biggs, J. B. (Eds.). (2001b). *Teaching the Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives*. Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

Watkins, D., & Biggs, J. (Eds.). (1996). *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences*. Hong Kong: Centre for Comparative Research in Education & Australian Council for Educational Research.

Watkins, D., & Regmi, M. (1990). An investigation of the approach to learning of Nepalese tertiary students. *Higher Education, 20*, 459-469.

Watkins, D., & Regmi, M. (1992). How universal are student conceptions of learning? A Nepalese investigation. *Psychologia, 25*, 101-110.

Watkins, D. & Regmi, M. (1995). 'Assessing approaches to learning in non-western cultures: A Nepalese conceptual validity study', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 20, 227–236.

Watkins, D., Regmi, M., & Astilla, E. (1991). The Asian-as-rote learner stereotype: myth or reality? *Educational Psychology, 17*, 89-100.

Webb, G. (2005). *Internationalisation of curriculum: An institutional approach*. New York: Reutledge.

Weisz, J. R., Rothbaum, F. M., & Blackburn, T. C. (1984). Standing out and standing in: the psychology of control in America and Japan. *American Psychologist, 39*, 955-969.

Wen, Q., & Marton, F. (1993, August). Chinese views on the relation between memorization and understanding. Paper presented at *the 5th European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction Conference*, Aix-en-Provence.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wengraf, T. (2001). *Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wheeler, G. (2009). Plagiarism in the Japanese universities: Truly a cultural matter? . *Journal of Second Language Writing, 18*, 17-29.

Wichert, R. (1996). Acculturation and Intercultural Identity in the Post-Modern World. Retrieved May 10, 2009, from http://www.wichert.org/icid.html

Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson, L., & Kavan, H. (2003). *Dialogues with Dragons: Helping Chinese Students' academic achievement'*. Paper presented at the ATLAANZ, University

of Waikato.

Winchester, I. (2002). On the Applicability of Western Models to China. *Journal of Educational Thought, 36*(2), 105-110.

Wong, C. S., & Law, K. S. (2002). The effects of leader and follower emotional intelligence on performance and attitude: An exploratory study. *Leadership Quarterly, 13*，243-274.

Wong, K. & Wen, Q. (2001). The impact of university education on conceptions of learning: a Chinese study. *International Education Journal*, 2(5), 138-147.

Woodrow, D., & Sham, S. (2001). Chinese pupils and their learning styles. *Race, Ethnicity and Education, 4* (4), 377-394.

Wray, L. (2008) Jack's story: Study of a Chinese Postgraduate Student at a UK University. The East Asian Learner, 4(1), 20-35

Wright, S., & Lander, D. (2003). Collaborative group interactions of students from two ethnic backgrounds. *Higher Education Research and Development, 22*, 237-252.

Wu, H. (2001, May 19-21). *Investigating Chinese university students' readiness for learner autonomy: Performance, perceptions and problems.* Paper presented at the 3rd Third International Symposium on ELT in China, Beijing.

Wu, L. (2008). On the different social scripts of teaching and learning between Chinese and Westerners. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 16* (1), 115-122.

Wu, S. (2002). Filling the pot or lighting the fire? cultural variations in Conceptions of Pedagogy. *Teaching in Higher Education, 7* (4), 387-395.

Xu, R. (2004). Chinese Mainland Students' Experiences of Teaching and Learning at a Chinese University: Some Emerging Findings, *BERA 2004*. UMIST, Manchester.

Yang, C. (2006). *Learning strategy use of Chinese PhD students of social sciences in Australian universities.* Unpublished PhD thesis. Griffith University. Retrieved March 14, 2008, from http://www4.gu.edu.au:8080/adt-root/uploads/approved/adt-QGU20061010.155822/public/02Main.pdf

Yang, S. Y., & Sternberg, R. J. (1997). Taiwanese Chinese people's conceptions of intelligence. *Intelligence,25*(1), 21-36.

Yoshikawa, M. (1978). Some Japanese and American cultural characteristics. In M. Prosser (Ed.), *The cultural dialogue: An introduction to intercultural communication* (pp. 220-239). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Yoshikawa, M. (1987). The double-swing model of intercultural communication between the East and the West. In L. D. Kincaid (Ed.), *Communication Theory* (pp. 319-330). San Diego: Academic press.

Yoshikawa, M. (1988). Cross-cultural adaptation and perceptual development. In Y. Y. Kim, & W. B. Gudykunst (Ed.), *Cross-cultural adaptation: current approaches* (pp. 140-148). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Youn, I. (2000). The culture specificity of epistemological beliefs about learning. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 3*, 87-105.

Yu, A.-B. (1996). Ultimate life concerns, self, and Chinese achievement motivation. In M. Bond (Ed.), *The Handbook of Chinese Psychology* (pp. 227-246). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Yu, A.-B., & Yang, K.S. (1994). The nature of achievement motivation in collectivist societies. In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S. C. Choi & G. Yoon (Eds.), *Individualism and Collectivism* (pp. 239-250). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zamel, V. (1997). Toward a Model of Transculturation. TESOL Quarterly, 31(2), 341-352.

Zamel, V. (1998). Questioning academic discourse. In V. Zamel & R. Spack (Eds.), *Negotiating Academic Literacies: Teaching and learning across languages and cultures*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Zeng, K. (1999). *Dragon Gate: Competitive Examinations and their Consequences*. London: Cassell.

Zhang, C., Stillitoe, J., & Webb, J. (2003). Positive model: Facilitating cultural diversity in the first year international business students' learning at Victoria University, *Paper presented at the 7th Pacific Rim First Year in Higher Education Conference: Enhancing the transition to higher education: Strategies and policies that work*. Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.

Zhang, L., & Watkins, D. (2001). Cognitive development and student approaches to learning: An investigation of Perry's theory with Chinese and U.S. university students. *Higher Education 41*, 239-261.

Zhang, Q. J. (2005). It's more than a piece of paper: Chinese students' experience of learning in Australia. Darwin, Australia: Charles Darwin University.

Zhang, Z., & Xu, J. (2007). Understanding Chinese international graduate students' adaptation to learning in North America: A cultural perspective.*Higher Education Perspective, 3*(1).

Zheng, X., & Berry, J. W. (1991). Psychological Adaptation of Chinese Sojourners in Canada. *International Journal of Psychology, 26*(4), 451-470.

Zhou, Y., & Todman, J. (2008) Chinese postgraduate students in the UK; a two-way reciprocal adaptation. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication,* 1(3), 221-243.

Zimmerman, B. J., & Schunk, D. H. (1989). *Self-regulated learning and academic*

achievement: Theory, research and practice. New York: Springer.

Zusho, A., & Pintrich, P. R. (2003). A process-oriented approach to culture: Theoretical and methodological issues in the study of culture and motivation. In F. Salili & R. Hoosain (Eds.), *Teaching, learning, and student motivation in a multicultural context* (pp. 33-65). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Appendix I

Table 2.1 Bennett's (1993) Intercultural Sensitivity Model

(1) **Denial**: the refusal or inability to recognize genuine cultural differences due to social isolation or intentional separation.

(2) **Defense**: a recognition of cultural differences coupled with a tendency to denigrate other cultures as a reaction to the perceived threat to one's sense of reality and one's cultural identity, and regard one's own culture as superior.

(3) **Minimization**: superficial differences in matters of food, clothing, etc. are recognized but trivialized; human commonality is emphasized in terms of either physical universalism or transcendent universalism. In Bennett's words, 'human similarity seems more profound than cultural difference' (Bennett, 1993:41).

(4) **Acceptance**: cultural differences are accepted, even appreciated, because the contextual nature of both behaviour and values is recognized at a deeper level of cultural relativity. This stage represents a major shift from an ethnocentric stance to cultural relativism.

(5) **Adaptation**: the development of communication skills which allow the individual not only to accept but to empathize with different cultural points of view or to shift from one cultural point of view to another. Cultural pluralism is a further aspect of adaptation.

(6) **Integration**: the individual constructs an ethnorelative identity not based on any one particular culture. In integration stage the individual has internalised other cultural frames of references and enjoys more than one worldview.

Table 2.2 Berry's (1990) Acculturation Strategies Model

(1) **Marginalization**: the least adaptive strategy, referring to abandoning heritage cultural identity while also failing to participate in the host culture;

(2) **Separation**: maintaining the heritage cultural identity, yet refusing to participate in the host culture;

(3) **Assimilation**: refers to giving up the heritage cultural identity and fully participating in the host culture;

(4) **Integration**: this strategy makes it possible to maintain one's heritage cultural identity and develop new repertoire to allow identification with and participation in the host culture.

(Berry & Sam, 1997).

Table 2.3 Yoshikawa's (1988) Double-Swing Model

(1) **Contact**: the initial contact is analogous to 'honeymoon' (Oberg, 1960) in which the individual fails to recognize the new realities; the individual views the host culture from their own perspective and the differences experienced in the new culture are perceived as more fresh and exciting than threatening.

(2) **Disintegration**: 'culture shock' period, in which the individual is overwhelmed by the cultural differences and bewildered by the divergent worldviews.

(3) **Reintegration**: refers to the individual's effort to adjust to the new environment. However, the identity crisis experience at this stage may well lead the individual back to disintegration stage.

(4) **Autonomy**: in this stage, an increasingly autonomous outlook is achieved and some individuals begin to create a new cultural identity for themselves. Yoshikawa termed it 'the third culture'. That means the individual 'gains the ability to experience new situations in a new way' (Yoshikawa, 1988: 142).

(5) **Double-Swing**: refers to individuals' fully flexible state between the two cultures, 'independent, yet simultaneously interdependent' (Yoshikawa, 1988: 142).

Table 2.4 Burnett & Gardner (2006) Five-Stage Model

(1) **Encounter**: characterized as high expectation of the new culture and high motivation to adapt to it, though, sometimes the circumstances are frightening. Encounter is similar to Yoshikawa's Contact stage, but the term, according to Burnett and Gardner, 'better describes the notion of meeting or confronting the new experiences than the suggested passivity of meeting Contact' (Burnett & Gardner, 2006: 86).

(2) **Disorientation**: fits the description of Disintegration (Yoshikawa, 1988), but not as strong as the later implies; one's own cultural scripts are no longer applicable in the new environment, which leaves the individual in a disoriented or disequilibrium state.

(3) **Reaction**: students made adjustments to better cope with the new culture, and began to appreciate the cultural differences of the host culture and were learning to act in culturally appropriate ways.

(4) **Independence**: refers to students' independence not only in the practical aspects of their lives but also independent thinking to construct their own opinions and viewpoints; 'a growth in personal flexibility' (Chen & Starosta, 1998:174, cited in Burnett & Gardner, 2006: 88).

Internalisation: refers to 'the ability of the individual to internalise the experience of cultural differences within their sense of identity' (Burnett & Gardner, 2006:89). That means the different cultural perspectives of home and host culture had undergone a process of Internalisation within the individual, which allows him or her to react as appropriate to the cultural context at any particular time, but without necessarily changing one's identity. (Source: Burnett & Gardner, 2006)

Tables 2.5 Kim's (2001) Theorems:

Theorem 2 The greater the host communication competence, the lesser the ethnic interpersonal and mass communication

Theorem 4 The greater the host interpersonal and mass communication, the lesser the ethnic interpersonal and mass communication

Theorem 6 The greater the ethnic interpersonal and mass communication, the lesser the intercultural transformation

Theorem 10 The greater the ethnic group strength, the lesser the host communication competence

(Kim, 2001: 91)

Table 2.6 Byram's (1997) Intercultural Competence Model

(1) *Savoir-être*: 'curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own'.

(2) *Savoir*: 'knowledge of social group and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interactions'.

(3) *Savoir-comprendre*: 'the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own'.

(4) *Savoir-apprendre/faire*: 'the skill of discovery and interaction: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction'.

(5) *Savoir s'engager*: 'critical cultural awareness/political education: an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries'.

Source: Byram (1997: 57-63)

Table 3.1 Perry's (1970) Nine-staged Intellectual and Ethical Development Model

Position 1: the student sees the world in polar terms of we-right-good vs. other-wrong-bad. Right Answers for everything exist in the Absolute, known to Authority, whose role is to mediate (teach) them. Knowledge and goodness are perceived as quantitative accretions of discrete rightnesses to be collected by hard work and obedience (paradigm: a spelling test).

Position 2: the student perceives diversity of opinion, and uncertainty, and accounts for them as unwarranted confusion in poorly qualified authorities or as mere exercises set by Authority 'so we can learn to find The Answer for ourselves'.

Position 3: the student accepts diversity and uncertainty as legitimate but still temporary in areas where Authority 'hasn't found The Answer yet'. He supposes Authority grades him in these areas on "good expression' but remains puzzled as to standards.

Position 4: (a) The student perceives legitimate uncertainty (and therefore diversity of opinion) to be extensive and raises it to the status of an unstructured epistemological realm of its own in which 'anyone has a right to his own opinion', a realm which he sets over against Authority's realm where right –wrong still prevails, or (b) the student discovers qualitative contextual reasoning as a special case of 'what They want' within Authority's realm.

Position 5: the student perceives all knowledge and values (including Authority's) as contextual and relativistic and subordinates dualistic right-wrong functions to the status of a special case, in context.

Position 6: the student apprehends the necessity of orienting himself in a relativistic world through some form of personal Commitment (as distinct from unquestioned or unconsidered commitment to simple belief in certainty).

Position 7: the student makes an initial Commitment in some area.

Position 8: the student experiences the implications of Commitment, and explores the subjective and stylistic issues of responsibility.

Position 9: the student experiences the affirmation of identity among multiple responsibility and realizes Commitment as an ongoing, unfolding activity through which he expresses his life style.

(Source: Perry 1970: 9-10)

Table 3.2 Perry's (1988) Four Stances of Intellectual and Ethical Development Model

(1) Dualism: Knowledge is equated with facts; experts can provide answers; everything is black and white; ambiguities are avoided; thinking is non-reflective and concrete; life is 'unexamined'.
(2) Multiplicity: ambiguities are grudgingly acknowledged; there are no truths, no ultimate answers; judgements arise out of personal biases; the absence of clearly defined norms leads to license.
(3) Contextual relativism: ambiguity is regarded as a fact of life; knowledge and norms are regarded as contextual; theories are regarded as human 'constructs'; differing interpretations imply a need to 'balance' various points of view.
(4) Commitment in relativism: contextual relativism is taken for granted, but it is nonetheless possible to intentionally commit oneself to one particular point of view based on a reasoned examination of the various options; other views are tolerated provided they can also be supported with evidence and sound reasoning.

Table 3.3 Säljö (1979) Five Conceptions of Learning

1. Learning as the increase of knowledge
2. Learning as memorizing
3. Learning as the acquisition of facts, procedures, etc., which can be retained and /or utilized in practice
4. Learning as understanding or the abstraction of meaning
5. Learning as an interpretative process aimed at the understanding of reality.

Table 3.4 Marton *et al.*'s (1993a) Conceptions of Learning

(A) increasing one's knowledge
(B) memorizing and reproducing
(C) applying
(D) understanding
(E) seeing something in a different way
(F) changing as person
(Source: Marton *et al.* 1993a: 283-284)

Table 3.5 Motivations and strategies in student approaches to learning

Approaches to learning	Motivation	Strategy
Surface Approach	**Surface Motivation** (SM) is instrumental: to meet requirements minimally; a balance between working too hard and failing.	**Surface Strategy** (SS) is reproductive: to limit target to bare essentials and reproduce through rote learning.
Deep Approach	**Deep Motivation** (DM) is intrinsic: study to actualise interest in what is being learned; to develop competence in academic subjects.	**Deep Strategy** (DS) is meaningful: read widely, inter-relating with previous relevant knowledge.
Achieving Approach	**Achieving Motivation** (AM) is based on competition and ego-enhancement: to obtain highest grades, whether or not material is interesting.	**Achieving Strategy** (AS) is based on organising time and working space; to follow up suggestions; behave as a 'model' student.

Table 3.6 Belenky *et al.*'s (1986) Five Women's Ways of Knowing

Silence: a position in which women experience themselves as mindless and voiceless and subject to the whims of external authority

Received knowledge, a perspective from which women conceive of themselves as capable of receiving, even reproducing, knowledge from the all-knowing external authorities but not capable of creating knowledge on their own.

Subjective knowledge: a perspective from which truth and knowledge are conceived of as personal, private and subjectively known or intuited.

Procedural knowledge: a position in which women are invested in learning and applying objective procedures for obtaining and communicating knowledge.

Constructed knowledge: a position in which women view all knowledge as contextual, experience themselves as creators of knowledge and value both subjective and objective strategies for knowing.

(Source: Belenky *et al.* 1986:15)

Table 3.7 Beaty *et al.*'s (1997) Orientations of Learning (cited in Entwistle, 2004: 412)

Learning orientations	**Intrinsic**	**Extrinsic**
Vocational	Seeking effective and relevant training for a career	Obtaining a qualification of recognized worth
Academic	Pursuing the subject for its own sake	Progressing further up the academic ladder
Personal	Broadening one's own horizons and providing challenges	Compensating for past failures
Social	Concern for helping people or contributing to society	Enjoying opportunities for an active social life

Table 3.8 Brownlee *et al.*'s (2002) holistic conceptualisation of epistemological beliefs from a core-periphery beliefs perspective

Hofer & Pintrich (1997)	**Schommer (1990, 1993)**	**Säljö (1979) & Marton *et al.* (1993)**
Core beliefs (Beliefs about the nature of knowledge and knowing)	Omniscient Authority Certain Knowledge Simple Knowledge	
Peripheral beliefs (Beliefs about learning, instruction and intelligence	Quick Learning Innate Ability	Conceptions of learning

(A simplified version, adapted from Brownlee, *et al.*, 2002: 12)

Table 3.9 Learning behaviours exercised by independent self vs. interdependent self

The independent self	The interdependent self
● Be disposed to express individual, unpredictable views ● Prefer horizontal, equal relationships ● Be willing to enter into confrontation and competition ● Be willing to express open criticism ● Attach importance to individual goals and 'self-actualization'	● Pay attention to the group when forming opinions and attitudes ● Feel comfortable in vertical unequal relationships ● Emphasize harmony and cooperation in the group ● Attach importance to preserving 'face' (their own and others') ● Attach importance to supporting group goals and expectations.

(Cited from Littlewood, 1999: 80, based on Markus and Kitayama, 1991a, 1991b)

Table 3.10 Chinese university students' conceptions of 'good teacher' (Cortazzi & Jin, 1998)

a. The Chinese students' expectation that a good teacher **has deep knowledge** is significantly higher than that of the British students;

b. The Chinese perception that **a good teacher is patient** is significantly lower than that of the British, but significantly higher than that of the Japanese or Malaysians.

c. The Chinese perception that **a good teacher is a good moral example** is significantly higher than that of the British and Japanese, about the same as the Malaysians.

d. The Chinese belief that **a good teacher is friendly** is significantly higher than that of the Malaysians and the British, and about the same as that of Japanese.

e. The belief held by Chinese students that **a good teacher explains clearly** is significantly lower than that by the British.

f. The Chinese rating of that **a good teacher organizes a variety of activities** is about the same as that of the Japanese, higher than that of the Malaysians, but significantly lower than that of the British.

g. The Chinese belief that **a good teacher has an answer to students' questions** is significantly higher than that of the British but significantly lower than that of the Japanese and Malaysians.

Table 3.11 Chinese students and British teachers' views of each other's roles (Cortazzi & Jin, 1997: 85)

Chinese Students' view of teacher roles	Chinese Students' view of Student roles
• be an authority, expert • be a model: know that, how to •be a model of how to find out • be a parent; friend • know students' problems • give answers, clear guidance: teach us what to do	• develop receptivity, collective •harmony, apprenticeship, •deductive learning • respect teacher: learn by listening • learn methods, technical advances develop critical thinking • focus on product, result

British Teachers' view of teacher roles	British Teachers' view of student roles
•be a facilitator, organizer •be a model of how to find out •be a friendly critic	•develop independence, research skills •participate: engage in dialogue and reflection •individuality, creativity, inductive learning •ask if there are problems •focus on process of learning, • •should know what to do or work it out find own answers

Appendix II

Original Chinese version of interview data in the thesis

I am aware of the potential threat of translating the participants' interview accounts from Chinese into English, which is, after all, not my native language, so to ensure data trustworthiness, the transcripts of the interview excerpts are provided here for facilitating the reader to interpret the first hand data.

Transcription protocol is as follows:

Notations	**Significations**
[…]	Content was omitted when quoted
[word]	Description of the context or paralinguistic features
word	Original English word used by the participants.
Bold words and phrases	Highlighted for interpretation
(comment by researcher)	Added by the researcher to clarify meaning
(?)	Unclear sounds or words
(…)	Unfinished sentence or longer pause

Data presented in Chapter 5

(1) 学习无非就是获取知识嘛。我们来这就是要学习我们本领域里的先进知识。没有一个坚实的基础，一切都是空中楼阁。所说的，没有量的积累就没有质的飞跃。(M6A)

(2) 正规学习主要是汲取你的专业知识，从浅入深，逐渐获得完整体系。(M2A)

(3) 我还是觉得大学应该有一个很好的知识体系架构，在大学以前我们学的都是些 common sense，常识而已，到了大学以后，才开始分专业领域，上了大学首次接触那种专业知识，我觉得重要的还是要打基础，基本的很重要．所以，我觉得在大学里，老师可以提供一个完整的架构在专业领域上，我觉得这是很重要的。以基础为本，才可以做自己的科研和批评，达到 critical．你要是没有基础的架构的话，就好像无的放矢吧。要有强大的学术背景作你的后盾。(F5B)

(4) 有没有老师可大不一样。老师在课堂上讲的都是关键的点，一门课的精髓，所以你能学得很快。当然，你可以自己学，但是会慢得多。可能你要看五六遍才能抓住要点。(M3B)

(5) 教科书必不可少，都是精选的，是整门课程知识的浓缩。它们肯定经过实践检验，不容置疑的。(M3A)

(6) 我觉得教师给 reading list 太多，很难都读完，在台湾，我比较主张一本教科书主义，整

体架构最好是以一本书为基础，体系、概念以一本书为主，有整个的 guidelines,然后，再看其他的期刊文章其他作者其他的书。你要以一本书为主。如果书太杂的话，你就没有一定的体系概念，你就会觉得比较乱。这的老师给的 reading list 太多，你反而不知道要念哪些，你又不能全都念，就觉得压力更重，觉得什么都没念，总觉得脑子里塞了很多东西，又都没有整理，很乱。所以我认为应当适当分配，给学生适当的量，有些东西是一定要念的，课堂上要教要讨论的。至于其他的东西，可以让学生自己去钻研，所以应该区分一下那些文章的重要性。(F5A)

(7) 我跟我同学说我特健忘，记不住都学了什么，都还给老师啦！那个韩国同学告诉我是忘记也很重要，因为我们必须倾空脑子来装新的知识….就像你捡了个西瓜，你必须得把它放下再去捡别的东西。(F4B)

(8) 我认为背东西还是挺重要的。他们不背乘法表，总用计算器，所以我们做心算的时候就比他们快得多。他们说脑袋是用来思考更重要的事情，不是装死知识的。可我说既然你也不知道你的脑子有多大容量你为什么不去尽量多储备点东西呢？（Finance PhD student, Fieldnote-Feb-2006）

(9) 我现在在这儿背得越来越少了，有了 Google。但是背还是必不可少。我从来没听说过有人学东西不背东西的。(M5A)

(10) 我认为我们背之前应该理解。当然你不理解也能背下来，但是记不了多久。很快就忘。就像政治课上教的的东西，我们考前一两天开始背笔记，考试的时候转到答卷上。可一出考场，忘得一干二净。(M1B)

(11) 我擅长在考试前突击背，就提前那么一两天吧。但这不是真正的学习，一走出考场就什么都想不起来了。(F1B)

(12) 有时我会背下那些重要的观点，然后等什么时候读得更多了以后能有一个‘顿悟’。(F7A)

(13) 很多时候你不可能第一遍就懂了，但你会有印象。随着你对这科知识的深入，不定什么时候你就突然茅塞顿开。(F4B)

(14) 如果你真理解了，你就能讲给那些不知道的人并能让他们也懂。有些时候我以为我明白了可是当我试图用我自己的话解释时，我突然发现还不行，因为实际上我还没有真正懂。(F6B)

(15) 这里用的教科书和我在国内大学用的一模一样。但我发现虽然我都学过了，考试也过了，可里边的内容其实没真理解。我们那时就教科书的内容，从来没分析过他们理论背后的假设或者论据什么的，还有什么应用条件等。(MSc student from the Business school)

(16) 他们句子里每个词我都明白，但是就是不懂人家在讲什么，比如说，他们会说 Eleven-plus…你就不知道他们说什么，更谈不上对这个事情的理解啦。(F1A)

(17) 我们的教育传统完全是知识传授。‘自古学必有师，师者，传道、授业、解惑也。’(F6A)

(18) 我觉得东西方的教育产出是不一样的：他们教学生如何思考，如何批判。当你读书的时候，你要想为什么，你能找到什么漏洞；可我们的教育不强调这个。我们强调知识传授，不教小孩子批评他们所学的东西，这种态度在大学以后就会产生很大不同。西方学生就会超过东方学生。（M6A）

(19) 知识是来用的。如果你不会应用，说明你还没有掌握；如果你掌握了，你就会用。(M4B)

(20) 应用就是实践，用原理和理论来解决具体问题，那么在用的时候，人的能力就会得到提高和更新。(F7A)

(21) 你不仅要学知识；你要知道如何把它应用（到实践中去）。在应用过程中，你的能力也会培养起来。而且我认为培养能力是最重要的。(M1B)

(22) 应用能力和创新比知识更重要。知识应该用来解决问题。在我们的领域（物理），我们的目标就是要解决问题。当然，创新来自知识的积累。(M5A)

(23) 世上无难事只怕有心人。[…] 如果你对你的专业有兴趣那很好啊；如果不是你就要受着，学得更苦，因为没有别的选择，这是成长的一部分。[…] 我不知道是否努力的人都能成功，但我非常相信那些能成功的人一定都是非常努力的。(F6A)

(24) 态度最重要。如果他们（老师们）看你真的很用功，他们也不忍心让你过不了。(F2FN Nov01-06)

(25) 我认为考试蛮重要的，因为它会逼着你不断作复习。而这样的重复是有助于理解和记忆的。(M5B)

(26) 对于中文资料，可能你不需要看很多遍就能理解好了。但是看英语的就慢得多啦，有时我要读四五遍才能了解主要内容。(F3A)

(27) 一遍遍读总会有新意出现，字里行间的意思。就像看小说，每次看都不一样，都有新的感悟。（F7FNJan 15-2006）

(28) 学海无涯啊。无论你知识多么渊博，你还需要不断提升。知识是无穷的。[…] 我们到这就是要向人家学所以你才能进步。（M5A）

(29) 你就是一个学生，你的职责就是要不断地虚心学习… (F2A)

(30) 尊敬师长啊什么的，我们就是这样教育长大的，是我们民族美德。当然，老师也应当尊重学生。（F2A）

(31) 求学也是一种缘分啦。要能遇上一个对脾气的老师也是三生有幸的事啊！（F1FN-Dec30-2005）

(32) 跟谁学当然会很不同啦。师傅的功力不一样，徒弟自然出手不一样啊。（M6FN-Feb-2006）

(33) 我相信成功的学习者一定都很用心，善于发现事物，他们知道他们的缺点并有意识地向他人学习以弥补自己的不足。（M5FN Nov-20-2005）

(34) 学习需要专心。总有分散你的事，所以你必需有很强的自制力，不受外界影响，什么感情问题啦，社交活动，甚至经济问题拉。（M7FN April-2006）

(35) 我只想尽早结束学业。人说学校学的东西只有 20%对将来工作有点用。文凭只是敲门砖，让你能入这一行。要在实践中学。边做边学。书本知识很难用到实践中。（M3A）

(36) 学习意味着在某个方面特别精通，专攻某一个领域。如果你学物理，物理就是你的饭碗。对于法律专业的学生，学位文凭就是从业的执照。（M5FNDec11-05）

(37) 受教育一直是通往名利，走仕途之路。但是学习首先是人的精神追求。我不否认现在人们变得越来越实际啦。（F2FNOct 25-2005）

(38) 学就是要学好，无论学什么。你的分数代表你的学业成绩和水平。你学得好自然就对自己有信心。[…]从不知到知之是自己的成长。我倾向是你的学业成绩也是你的能力的战线。(M7FN Jan05-2006)

(39) 教育是跟人打交道的。教育的根本功能是育人，所以学习的最终结果应该是一个有修养的人。（F1B）

(40) 其实学习法律跟我人生的理想有关系，我国小的时候就想念法律，国小的时候就想出国念书。我这个人比较理想化吧。从小就对自己的人生有一定的想法，[…] 其实我学法律是想从政，其实这根孔子教育有很大的关系，儒家思想就是经世济民，读书就是要经世济民．我从小就很喜欢念古文，我希望从政就是想使国家变得更好。就是这样。学法律也是因为台湾的政治人物几乎都是法律出身，你会发现不只在台湾，在世界各地也是这样情况。这是为什么我学法律的原因。（F5A）

(41) 从我天性上说，我不会对某个学术领域非常有兴趣，我选了一样东西该做到什么就做到什么。并不是说我对法律没有兴趣，却是蛮有兴趣的，但我对其他领域的兴趣也很浓厚，我自小数理是比较好的，譬如说，我对会计都比较有兴趣，医学也蛮有兴趣，选法律也是有我自己的原因了，选了这个领域就做我该做了，踏踏实实去做啦。(F5A)

(42) 人家就是比你要先进，有人说差二十年也许差得更多。你落后你就挨打，你就要向人家学习，赶上再超过他。(M2A)

Data Presented in Chapter 6

[1] 从小学我一直就是好学生，即使不是尖子…..可突然你发现你在课堂上就像鸭子听雷，我就很恐惧。你整个人的信心都没了。(F4A)

[2] 那些学生不停地说啊说啊，一个没完另一个又开始说。我坐在那儿真的是如坐针毡….特煎熬，心想着赶紧下课吧。(F2A)

[3] 所有的课都安排在周末，特别集中，从早上九点到晚上六点。老师讲完了还有讨论，我上课一句话也讲不出来，简直就要崩溃了。（F1A）

[4] 有时真叫你狠抓狂，我就告诉自己‘不要慌，Calm down。过段时间就好了’。只要你头几个月坚持下来，一切就好了。[…] 你一定要控制自己的情绪，一旦陷入消沉你就很难自拔。(F6FN)

[5] 压力肯定是不可避免的，毕竟在一个新的环境里，你来之前就知道肯定要经历的，是个很好的锻炼。[…] 父母把你送到国外就是希望你能长大。你知道我们叫留学是‘洋插队’。我是报喜不报忧，什么不适应了，听不懂老师讲的，没胃口，失眠了，都不讲，我不想让她们太担心，反正过一阵儿就 OK 了。(F3A)

[6] 真的让我感到很意外。完全意料之外。[…] 开始有些不好意思，不过，再一想，你感到别人对你的尊重，所以你应当不辜负人家（的尊重）。（M7FN Jan20-06）

[7] 我经常在图书馆一学就是一整天，从早上九十点到晚上七八点，你想读什么就读什么也不觉得累。[…] 你就会明白为什他们可以独立学习。(F3B)

[8] 这里我有很大的自由，那像我那时候刚来这里，刚一到我就去报到，就去找他，我就问他那我们什么时候开始啊？他说你准备好开始的时候就开始了。就像是我来决定什么时候开始做事。然后我们 team 那边很自由，你可以自己安排你的假期，你不用跟学校(请假)，譬如说你自己安排一个两个礼拜的假期，你就去了。所以有时候人就会不在。 就象上个礼拜，有个学生去滑雪，去法国滑雪，她就去玩去啦，没什么啊。就说每个人在这都很自由，你想干嘛都很自由。不像是在台湾，因为我有在台湾的研究所做事，如果老板还在工作，没人敢先走。这里就不一样了。教授不会看着你。（M5A）

[9] 老师不会看着你，你必须从心里里自觉自愿地想学习。（F2A）

没人催着你；完全取决于你自己的主动性和自觉性。（F4FN Dec 05-05）

[10] 结果变成什么东西都是我自己（决定），我需要买什么器材跟我做实验有关的，我就填张单子他们就买给你。在台湾，你需要书面申请，还要说很多话説服老板你需要买仪器和材料[…] 既然你想做什么就能做，你就必须要仔细，否则你就在浪费别人的钱[…] 人家跟你很多自由，因为人家相信你，所以你必须安安分分做事[…] 我发现如果我不做事那么什么事就都没有做。而如果我主动起来，那么就能做很多事。(M5A)

[11] 世界上没几个人在这个领域做研究，所以你肯定是孤独的。大概只有你的 supervisor 知道你在做什么。你想让别人帮你，可没人能帮。我只和我的 supervisor 谈我的研究…. (M6FN April 20-2006)

[12]我发现在这边，在我们的 department，他们所有的课都是 open 的，所以你可以自己选择你要不要去听，你可以自己选择要不要去参加那个 seminar 或者那个 lecture.所以我觉得这种情况你自己要完全知道自己要做什么，你自己觉得你自己少了什么，你再去 pick up 那些东西。我习惯自己安排自己的事情，安排自己的时间，自己的 schedule。如果是照着别人安排好的东西的话，我会觉得不太习惯。(M7A)

[13] 那我觉得很好的一点是我现在的 supervisor 说他的角色就是协助我的角色。当我们在聊的时候，他念的东西肯定比我多很多，所以他知道当我想做什么时候他可以提供什么样的 material 给我看。 […] 他不会替我做选择，都是我自己选的。然后他会跟我一起分析。 […] 所以我觉得在这个层次上来讲，我的 supervisor 做得很好，他让我清楚知道我要干嘛， 然后他也给我很大的自由度，让我自己去做决定，这样子。我觉得这是一个训练，是一个让你独立研究的训练。如果我一直 follow supervisor 让我做什么我就做什么的话，那我可能没有办法有这样的思考。(M7A)

[14] 我很难相信我们只有周末才上课，就像国内的成人教育。这哪是全日制啊！我甚至怀疑他们这个学历是不是正规的啊，你知道像在国内一些大学造价文凭骗钱。我们真都有一种被骗的感觉。（F2A）

[15] 7,000 多磅啊！恐怕要白花了。就连美国学生都觉得奇怪。简直是放羊啦。我们要是自己能学我们还来这干嘛？只有周一到周五天天上课，我才会觉得自己是在学习。(F1A)

[16] 这的老师都很忙，忙他们的 research，不能给课堂很多时间。国内，教学是主要的，但在这里，科研对于大学来说更重要。（M3B）

[17] 我们习惯每天看见老师。一旦老师没有就不知该怎么做了。他们认为你现在是个 Master 了，你应该有独立学习的能力了。(F3A)

[18]大多时候不是我不懂生词，而是把握不了它们的意思，汉语里没有。[问：举个例子？]比如说‘social inclusion’‘social exclusion’是他们的日常词。即使你把它们按字面翻译成‘社会包容’，‘社会排斥’，你还是不知道它们到底指的是什么。所以在这个阶段没人能帮你。你就得自己来摸索这些问题。(F3A)

[19]第一天，老师就告诉我们‘别指望老师，你们要自己学习’。完了之后又说‘有问题就问’。所以我们有了问题也不知道是该我们自己解决还是去找老师。（M1A）

[20] 我们都习惯听老师在课堂上讲。我很害怕讲话。这是我的性格，我觉得发不发言跟学多少没什么关系啊。(F2A)

[21]我们就很不习惯去 interrupt 打断啊。我觉得我们 Eastern people 会觉得蛮不礼貌的。第二，如果你问问题的话会影响整个课堂的进度了。（F5A）

[22]你可以私下 e-mail 给老师，就不用耽误大家的时间，自己又可以得到问题的解答．我赞成用这种方式．老师的做法很好，有些问题都很重要的话，老师会把它铺/put 在那个 DUO 讨论区上，然后大家都会知道．所以这种方式蛮好的．一方面有很有效率，不影响大家的时间，一方面你又可以得到解答．这样是最好的方式．（F5B）

[23]课堂讨论问题是很好的，但是教师应该组织好。学生程度不一样，给不出什么有价值的意见，都还没什么知识储备。反正我没觉得课堂讨论多有帮助[…]老师的答案也模棱两可。眼看课堂时间是有限的，所以有时我真觉得是浪费时间了。(M2A)

[24] 欧洲学生只是习惯发问题而已，他可能有问题就问了，有些问题是因为你没念书所以你才问，如果你念了书，就不会问。那些在课堂上表现好像很优秀的未必成绩就很好。当然，有些学生问的问题你就知道他是有念过书的。那些学生就是很了不起，我很佩服。用功念书。(F5B)

[25]我们中国学生不太善于问问题，我们想得太窄。在课堂上就很明显，西方学生经常能给出一个非常新颖的回答，但中国学生给老师的回答都挺常规的。(M1B)

[26]我们中国学生不够有创造性，课堂上较安静，更依赖老师一些，缺乏独立性。(M6FN)

[27]我们讨论课开始，我发现他们对中国有很多误解，我就非常生气，急着要纠正他们，可我的英文又不好，他们又听不懂，因此也没法说服人家。(F6B)

[28] 他们说得特别快，一下子就说完了，也没什么停顿。我也真想说点什么，可还得组织怎么说。组织好了，人家已经谈下一个题目了…而且我也怀疑谁愿意听我的想法。因为我一张嘴，语速明显就慢下来，节奏就被打破了 […] 我要说尽量说得跟他们一样快，就连我自己都不知道我在说什么。[…]所以我就坐在那儿，就是一个 listener。（F1A）

[29] 我的英文能力不是很好，口语也不强，所以上课就不太敢发问，怕被笑，因为我们班上有这个例子嘛．讲得不太好同学就会笑你嘛．老师也会摆出一副不以为然的脸．毕竟我学法律学了１０年，我个人认为我要提的问题都还是蛮不错的问题，但我担心自己的表达能力不好，所以我都不太敢问．不敢问老师，可能也不太敢问同学，那些欧洲学生，（对），所以因为语言能力的关系，会对自己产生一些影响．(F5B)

[30] 我觉得跟面子没太大关系，但是我在课堂上尽量不问问题，如果你的英语不是很流利，你在浪费别人的时间嘛。（M3FNFeb 10-06）

[31] 我不喜欢问问题，就是怕丢脸。我认为这是所有中国人的一个通病。（M6A）

[32] 我不想给我导师丢脸，因为我导师通常也在。他会问问题，讲座结束后我还可以问他。

[33]我不怕问问题。实际上在国内你没有很多问题，老师都教得很好，面面俱到，你不需要多想，就跟着老师的思路就行。在这儿你不得不文（问题），因为老师不讲那么多，结果就留下很多‘盲点’。(M3B)

[34]老师希望课堂更活跃些，但是中国学生都很沉默。有点尴尬。有时候没有中国学生发言我就说，也别太没面子啊。(M1FN Feb 22-06)

[35] 我觉得语言能力不是最大的问题。最大的问题是你没有背景知识，你不知道他们在说什么。现在我知道 Eleven-plus 等等一切，但我来这里不一定要学英国的教育制度… 我一说扩‘在中国’，那些学生根本就没兴趣了…我可以感觉到他们只谈论他们感兴趣的。他们对中国没兴趣。他们只关心英国的教育。可能，这有点主观，但我就是这么想的。我就扮演一个听众的角色。(F1A)

[36] 作为一个国际学生，我来这是学普遍的东西，教育的普遍理论。我不想学英国教育系统发生了什么，我对英国教育不感兴趣。我对教育，这门学科感兴趣。我没准备到这来讨论英国教育，但他们的讨论都是围绕英国教育体制。(F1A)

[37] 有些时候我特别想加入他们的小组讨论。我也想发出声音。不是我不知道如何用英语讲，事实上，你没什么好讲的。你就觉得你缺乏想法，你就知道你的思想太浅薄了。(F2FN Jan03-06)

[38] 他们西方人很爱讲废话的。譬如说，我们说地球是椭圆形的，他们西方人会让你讲为什么你认为地球是椭圆形的，你从哪些事实中看得它是椭圆形的，可是我们就觉得这不是众所皆知的嘛，你为什么还要推论它？他们好像就比较注重这些，可是我就很难想象为什么。（F5B）

[39] 我个人认为他们并不很注重创新．注重创新，你要想出新的解决办法。我目前看到他们的文章都是以批判为主．都是这样的话会有什么缺点，那样的话会有什么缺点。批判的最后就是无一是好，那大家不是更恐慌嘛。（F5B）

[40] 他们不喜欢 description 部分，他们要看你的论据，我们是不习惯批判思考，这需要训练，所以我们做不好。(M6B)

[41] 我们语言课程的老师跟我们说她教过很多中国学生。她觉得中国学生的文章总是写的面很广，太笼统，喜欢引用别人的观点作为论据。或者说他们（中国学生）就想显示事情怎样。她说‘在英国我们不喜欢这样的文章。我们喜欢短一些、题目窄一些的专门的文章。我们要 arguments 来证明为什么是这样。我们不要你写你对一个宽泛题目知道多少，而是要 argue，表达出你自己的想法和对别人想法的意见。最好是 deepen your arguments 在一点上’。(F4A)

[42]他们愿意你来批评别人，说这个理论有什么毛病，那个理论有什么毛病，然后给出你自己的意见。我觉得挺难的，但你还得这么来。我们习惯说一个理论有多好，不是消极批判，所以，我们还没习惯呢。(M3FN Jan28-06)

[43] 这里很鼓励你 Critical thinking，但是你在 critical 的时候也不能走得太远，偏离了点子。你要集中一个主题，然后摆出你的意见，但是不能走太远。就在这个圆圈里转。[王：什么圆圈？] 我觉得这个圆圈就由老师推荐的阅读书目圈起来的，这些阅读书目是中 backup。如

果你选了某个题目，你的指导老师就鼓励你去读那些资料来跟上（他的思路），你要把它们弄进你的文章，要踩点。我可以感觉到这就是指导教师要的，虽让他/她没有明确说。如果你的文章能踩上这些店，你就知道你做对了。（Pilot Study Interview）

[44]略。（原文为英文）

[45]我们对 plagiarism 的定义是不同的。在中国，如果一万字的论文有六百字是从别的地方抄来的，没人说这是 plagiaristic；但是在这儿，连续三个词不是你的就被认为是 plagiarism。[…] 对我来说可真不容易，我甚至都不想继续（写下去），因为还是挺难把握 plagiarism。中国学生都挺难把握的。(F1A)

[46] 我真不知道他们使用抄袭检测软件。不用别人的话和想法不可能的。我是有点担心，不过我想他们不会指责我抄袭，我写的我都明白。（M1B）

[47] 我还记得我学士论文都写了什么，要是在这评就一文不值。我所做的就是把以前关于这个题目的文献整理一下。如果我把它拿到这作为作业肯定是行不通的。那是剽窃啊。(F4A)

[48] 很多同学都担心能不能过。跑到我这里说‘哎，要是没有过怎么办哪，会不会被挂掉？”说真的我也不知道，你看，我不是老师，我不是给成绩的，因为没有经历过嘛，所以恐惧感在空气中不断蔓延。我不喜欢听他们哀哀切切的。我其实不喜欢人家跟我说这些，你明明知道我也给不了你答案，只能加重我的忧虑，我还只能安慰他们，你一定会过的，一定会过的，说真的我现在已经不喜欢这种谈话了。反正，我已经交上去了，我也不知道能不能过，那些读过 under 的还好，像我们只是读一年，，你肯定会有这种 insecurity,不安全感。（F4B）

[49] 不像在国内，考完试你就知道做没做对。一对标准答案，就能估计自己的分数。但是在这，谁知道啊？人为刀俎我为鱼肉。没拿到反馈成绩前你不会知道。(M3C)

[50] 略。（原文为英文）

[51] 略。（原文为英文）

[52]论文都是匿名的。老师评分时不知道（论文）是谁的。没有人情分。不像我们国内大学，跟老师关系好的学生就能拿高分，特别明显，评分很不公平。（F4A）

[53] 考核方式不一样。没有考试，所以你不需要自很多东西，像在国内准备考试那样。[…]这里也没什么竞争。没人在乎谁在班里排第一，每个人按着自己的步子走。甚至老师都不在乎谁学得好谁学的差。她/他不会因为你是好学生或是差学生就高看你一眼或低看你。(M3A)

[54] 你在八个短文题目里选两个写。这太容易啦。你知道，在国内，情况正好相反。也许你必须得从八个里面选六个，或者很不能你得全完成，根本没选择。（M1C）

[55] (在国内)我总听身边的人说西方的课堂多么自由轻松，我们也经常从电影里看到，[…]所以特向往出国有机会亲身经历一下。就我个人来说，我不喜欢紧张严肃的课堂。也不喜欢压力和竞争。(F2A)

[56]我没觉得这里和国内在教学风格上有多大差异。我们有些老师也是从国外大学回来的，他们的教学跟这的差不多，这里不光是学生都是中国人，而且很多老师也是中国人。(M1B)

[57] 我们感到什么‘shock’。我们老师告诉过我们在国外学习是什么样。他们说不像在中国，老师把什么都给你你只管听老师的。（出了国）什么都是你自己做，都要靠自己。(M3FN Nov24-05)

[58] Lecture 当然是最有效的啦，信息量最大。但是这的老师风格都不一样。有些挺拖沓的。他可以一堂课就纠缠一个问题，所以，到目前为止，一个半月都过去了，他还没讲多少。你都担心他能不能完成教学计划。不过上他的课也挺有意思的。(M3A)

[59] 我导师对我还是挺关心的。我倒没期望他怎么关心我，因为这毕竟也不是他的本职工作嘛，我还是挺感动，很感激他。(F3B)

[60] 你不能指望这的老师什么事都给你安排或者期望他们能请你去办公室谈谈心。他们没时间也没义务管你。(M3FN Dec12-05)

[61]你不觉得他太过于 critical 了吗？我其他的英国老师对我的英文都很宽容，可他对我的作业从不宽待。（F1B）

[62] 唉，你不得不承认我们（中国教育）就是不如人家（英国教育）。我上海工作的那家公司里的那些‘海归’项目做得就是有快又好。他们实践能力强得多。而我们这些‘土鳖’根本显不出来。你没法比。所以我是铁了心要来这儿学。（M2A）

[63] 诺贝尔得主不都是西方的嘛。为什么？那些华裔，像杨振宁、李政道，要不是在西方受教育也得不了奖。制度不一样的。我们的就培养不出大师。不过我们也在学习而且学得挺好。（M4FNMay 10-06）

[64] 我刚来这儿的时候心态就不对，挺矛盾的。一方面你想寻求新的；另一方面你还希望能像在家一样舒服。其实你就是为着不同来的，对不对？我认为很多中国学生都像我这样。心态不好，得调整。（M1FN Mar 22-06）

[65] 我尽量把心态调整好。往积极方面想呗。别让拿不到学位这种恐惧吓唬自己。我跟自己说，如果别人可以过，我也能。而且我发现只有轻松心态的才能觉得自己在学习。 (F2FN Feb 14-06)

[66] 我们来这就是跟人家学习，所以你必须要虚心，显示你的谦虚。（M6FN）

[67] 我们来之前期望挺多的。也许太高估我们的能力啦。多数时候压力来自自己，而不是别人。所以我们必须现实，对自己的目标，调整到正常状态。

[68] 选择来这学首先是它是一年嘛，比较划算，但是现在觉得一年是太短了。不能指望企及太多，除非你有足够的钱，可以不慌不忙地慢慢体会，你才会对他们的学术传统更好地了解。(M2FN May 22-06)

[69]我是同意‘入乡随俗’的。然而现实不是你想不想，因为你骨子里的一些东西不那么容易改变。而且，你还没有什么储备呢。当然，你要是能做到入乡随俗那很好，但也要时间，短时间可能还做不到。(F6FN Mar14-06)

[70] 我们毕竟在我们的体制里受教育这么多年了。即使你想我们也不可能彻底地改。就像学语言。无论你学得多努力，你永远也不可能达到母语者的无可挑剔的程度。（F4FN Feb02-06）

[71] 我们的心态应该 open 啊。我们愿意真诚地向人家学习，但同时也要不卑不亢。(M5A)

[72] 我现在觉得能融进去了，不像刚开始总觉得 ‘out of involve’。现在重要的不是你能否融进去；最重要的是你能够学到，以他们的方式学习。我不再担心我说话的速度或者句子结构，可能怪怪的。我不关心这些。我就是以自己的方式一步一步地学。我意识到这个差别，所以就有意识地敦促自己朝那个方向努力。我不会跟自己说既然在中国我不需要这些我就不学这

些。我应该逼自己，因为我已经看到 Masters 和 unders 的区别。这是我学习的过程，我学会怎样面对我的 difference, 决定该做些什么。(F1B)

[73] 我觉得我的想法变了，upgraded。现在我喜欢按他们的学习方式来读书，参与讨论，在讨论课上做一个听众。我不要总在讲话，你就听也能学到很多东西。我喜欢改变角色。我知道我应该讲话，这很重要，但目前暂时，在讨论课上，当个听众更重要。他们谈论的对我来说都是全新的，而且通过读书我也学到很多，等听他们讨论时我就会一下子觉得豁然开朗。我没法让自己当一个讲话者，因为我还不具备那些东西。况且，他们都是老师，他们会讲他们的学生，他们的学校，但是我什么都没有… 他们会谈他们的 treatment，特别清楚、具体。我觉得好像我也经历了他们那些事，尽管很短，但觉得参与其中了。光听挺好的。我们上 Bilingual 课的时候，我喜欢做一个讲话者，因为我经历更多一些。所以我觉得我在变，想法上和学习方法上都在变。我能意识到。我现在感觉挺好的。不再感到 frustrated。光做一个听众也不觉得 frustrated。（F1B）

[74] 我不能让他们像对待他们自己人一样对待我。你没有办法。我现在对 cultural identity 挺感兴趣的。我觉得只要你生就一张亚洲的脸你就会被外国人区别对待了…。我认识到这个差别我就不那么沮丧了，不能在学习上把它太当回事。我不能脑子里总缠着这些。我是不同的，可能也是最弱的，因为我不知道英国的教育制度，我不知道很么是 SNE。(F1B)

[75] 我真的特别欣赏他们对待差异的方式。不是歧视，而是尊重。倒没有什么特别的事。[…] 不仅是学习方法，还有意识，都发生变化了。我觉得也不是很难呐。(F1B)

[76] 我参加 Bible Studies 是因为我觉得很寂寞。那时我特别不高兴，无心学习。我遇到[一个台湾学生]，他介绍我来。现在我有人来谈心，感觉很好[…] 交流能缓解大家的压力，使你保持一个良好的学习状态。（F4FN Nov01-05）

[77] 我们学得英文只是学术的。我还没学会如何用英语表达情感呢。[…] 我试着用英语写（日记），可不行，就放弃了。

[78]他们的写作方法并不难。结构简单，洋八股呗。至于生成句子嘛，忌讳从汉语翻，你必须学他们那套。我知道一些中国学生先写汉语然后再翻译成英文，但是这个做法不是很有效。（M3B）

[79] 那时人家的规矩，你就跟着照猫画虎，… 我没觉觉得用处有多大。（M3B）

[80]我们班上一些欧洲学生特活跃，特健谈。他们的 presentations 也好。他们站在前边非常自然，自信，一点都不紧张。中国学生就不善于表演。我经常被选为 team leader 代表我们组作演示，因为他们（组里其他中国学生）总是找各种各样的借口推托不做。我的英语可能不标准；我尽量学他们讲话的做派。挺有意思的。(M1B)

[81]学习就是模仿嘛。开始你可能不明白什么事，但是你该接受它，然后在掌握它，因为你不能第一眼就能判断出它有用还是没用。用心实践以后你才能知道是否适用。(M7 FN Mar 20-06)

[82] 我在学习上没有什么更好的办法，你要肯付出辛苦。都是英文论文，读一遍不动，读几遍才弄明白[…] 用第二语言学要付出双倍的辛苦。（M5A）

[83] 可不像读汉语，看一眼就知道作者要干什么，（读）英文可能要花两三倍的时间，问题是你还记不住，就得一遍一遍回头看。（F3FN Feb02-06）

[84] 我们老师一节课能讲 30 页。课前我不可能都读啊，但我课下尽量赶，补上缺漏的。既然你能力有限，你就更努力些呗，没别的办法。(M3B)

[85] 有几次，只有那么几次啊，课前准备得很充分，课上完全投入，我知道别人在讲什么，我也能 participate 到他们的讨论中，感觉真的很好。但是大多数时候你没有时间和精力来做准备。（F7B）

[86] 我们还以为在这学习挺 easy，其实可不，可能课上不那么紧张，但是课下就都埋在书堆里。你要想做好，就需加倍努力，就这样还不能保证你比得过欧洲学生。还要拼脑力的。(M3 FN April 25-06)

[87] 如果没课，我通常一天都泡在图书馆里，什么都看，不光是金融方面的，相关领域的各类书都翻翻，包括政治方面的，每天都挺充实的。而且有了跟别人攀谈的谈资。（M2FN April 25-06）

[88] 我来这里的首要意图是我的基督教信仰。现在我在这里啦..那我最后的目标是要拿学位毕业。了解（英国）文化当然重要，但是如果有人来这的打算就是要体验体验它的文化不去学习那绝不可原谅。我觉得那太不负责任了。（M5 FN Mar 22-06）

[89] 你既然在英国学习，国内的人就期望你学成回国能将流利标准的英文。如果你的英语还不如没有没出国的人，那太丢人了。他们不知道你在国外学了多少东西，但他们一听你说话就知道你的英文有多好。我知道我的弱点，所以在这些方面多花些功夫。(F4FN Feb 02-06)

[90] 自从来了这儿就没人逼我学习。现在我妈打电话来就说‘别太辛苦了’‘好好照顾自己’。我吃的比成绩更让她操心。我必须自己不断给自己动力。我和 C 经常互相打气，要是我们特用功了，我们就给自己奖励一下，去意大利餐馆而吃一顿。（F2FN Nov-02-05）

[91] 我一遇到什么事，不管是不是学习上的，不知道怎么弄就自然先去向学长请教，听他们的意见，如果他们说这个你得问你的 supervisor，那我去问我的 supervisor 的时候就不会太紧张。（F6FN Jan 14-06）

[92] 我还清楚记得那天，就要上课了，我才知道我们要讨论下一个 topic,我没看，我以为我们要讨论令一个题目。一个印度女孩就主动告诉我那个那个题目的内容关于什么，还有她是怎么理解的，特别有见解 ，我根本想不到的。讨论课上，我没发言，但是老师和班里的讨论我都明白了。从那时起，我就敢问同学了，他们对文章怎么理解的，他们也不小看你，都愿意帮你，你就觉得收获很大。（F4B）

[93] 你写的一定要跟老师的观点一致，跟老师课上说的一致。如果你 get rid of 他的，光写你自己的想法，你的成绩就是 zero。I’m sure 就是这样。[…] 我觉得课堂上的 performance 跟考试结果没太大关系吧。有些中国学生在课上一言不发，考试时比那些活跃的老外成绩好多了。（(M1B)

[94] 我想在学习的过程中他们鼓励你要有创造性，但是不是在考试时。他出给你的题目，你回答问题，你切入角度，你写的东西，你必须符合老师的东西。也就是说，老师在课堂上怎么说的，你也得怎么写。比如说你在课堂上你可以，可以从中国一直讲到西伯利亚去，你可以讲的天花乱坠，去把你的观点表述的花枝招展的，这边老师都是，good, excellent, 都是这样为你评价，但是考试的时候他是不会给你分的。你要写的天花乱坠，答的天花乱坠，你要是书本上是这么解题的，你要是那么解，你肯定是零分。那也就是说，我觉得他这边可能在你去想东西方面他会要求你去，会鼓励你去创新，creative，但考试的时候他还是不鼓励你去

创新，他还是让你写我讲给你的东西。我觉得这两个价值体系，就是说，你可能在学习的过程中，in the process ,就是过程中，你要觉得很有自信，但在考试的时候，你面对的肯定是同样的，product 是一样的。你不会因为你的奇思妙想额外得分的。（M1B）

[95] 如果说语言不是一个很重要的问题，不能这样理解，我觉得语言还是挺重要的，这次我们考试啊，那前五六名的都是老外，都是外国人，中国人你再怎么，也还是考不过老外，包括答卷子的时候，答卷子的速度，写的东西都是英文，对不对，那老外明显在这方面占很大优势，也就是说，我，中国人答卷子的时候，大部分的学生都是看到这个问题现在脑子里用中文想，对不对，想完了以后，再把你想的东西变成中文。这样我觉得挺耗时间，有时也是表述不清的一个过程。老外不存在这方面的问题，他本来思考就是用母语来思考，那他写的时候也用母语来写，他想到什么，逻辑啊，层次啊，都可以用母语来表述。能表述得很完整，我觉得老外在这方面就是优势，就体现出来了。那你看前五六名都是老外。(M1B)

[96] 过去你知道标准答案，所有的学生答得都一样，但是现在答案是你自己做的。没有一个统一的标准答案，在这个意义上还是更困难些。(M3B)

[97]对我来说语言海上最大的问题。即便在这在学十年，我都怀疑我跟导师的交流能像本地学生那样清楚，所以我每次都把要跟他谈得的问题写一个 list，提前一两天 e-mail 给他，让他知道我有怎样的问题。写的东西就很有条理，也不会有遗漏，这样我也知道那些问题解决了，那些还没有。因此，我们的 meeting 总是很有效率… 有时我也在闲聊的时候准备些问题来问。(M7A)

[98] 当然了，和中国人交朋友会很容易，都讲中文也蛮舒服的…（可）你会变得越来越懒，就不会逼自己将英文啦。

[99] 我不知道她一直在大陆那组，她没告诉我。不过，我也没打算加入，她们都讲中文，你不能总想舒服。我觉得那是浪费时间。而且，法律专业也不鼓励 groupwork, 律师毕竟都是独立工作的。(F5 FN May09-06)

[100] 学商科的中国学生一定得有意识来搞‘关系’。你的同学可能就是你未来的商业伙伴，尤其是大家曾共患难…在国内，‘海归’已经成为一股势力。在外我们要互相帮助，不像国内的同行互相倾轧。(M1FN June 11-06)

Interview data presented in Chapter 7

(1) 我认为我们太迷信书本了，以为它们总是真的。事实上，它们通常也只是信息，还没有被证实的，或者还没有得到检验的。我们以前不太区分知识和信息，可现在各种各样的资讯铺天盖地，都灌进你脑子里，你不得不区分哪些是知识，那些知识资讯。(M3B)
(2) 想想看我们在课上学的那些东西，所谓的知识，其实书里的东西就是 data。只有你把它内化，它们才成为知识。一个好的老师应该让学生学会如何把 data 变成知识。这是非常重要的。(M6B)
(3) 老师本身对知识要有热情。如果他对只是没有热情，只是把教育当成一个工作的话，他觉得说那你还不如去找别的工作。因为如果你对知识没有热情的话，你要怎样让学生感到知识的美？你会怎么样学生知道念书不是只是要找工作，念书是要让自己的心灵更加解放。知识能够解放你的心灵。
(4) 我们大部分老师都是照本宣科。他们自己可能都不相信。这个学派认为什么什么，那个学派认为什么什么，而他们既不 challenge，也没有自己的观点。知识不是什么来炫耀的

东西。[…] 你自己必须要信，显示你的立场。我认为我对知识的态度改变了。（F1C）

(5) 从那堂课上我学会用新的方法来看待，看待知识，比方说，他讲存在与占有，两种学习的方式，一个是“to be”，一个是“to have”。你如果念书，只是把它都记起来，这叫占有。可是如果你念它并没有特意记它，而是看它的 ideas, arguments，看它前后连接，作者的观点主要思考的脉络是什么，然后有什么样的弱点，那对整篇文章做完批判后，就把它放开了，这种态度就是存在，to be ,而不是，to have. 存在的方式能够让你把 information 变成自己的东西。(M6B)

(6) 就是可能你刚一出来，那些信息会让你有些不知所措了，会跟你以前的那些信念就有冲突了[W: 那你是怎样化解的呢？] 我一开始就觉得特气愤，我就觉得这不对啊，跟我这么多年来的信念完全不是一回事嘛，就是很多都是由冲突的地方。我就觉得为什么在国外这么多人反而觉得这是对的，对我学得那些东西反而不屑一顾，甚至说那只是整个事的沧海一粟，很小的一部分，就是你不要再被那些东西辖制住了。就好像就有声音跟我说， 你知道得越多，就好像越觉得自己，真的是反而什么都不知道，反而觉得自己知道很多，这样子，所以就是，就好像，嗯，他那些矛盾的观点啊，他越让你有一些生气，越让你有一些冲击，你越想多了解他一些，对，但是你了解得越多，可能他的一些观点可能就能 convince 你，让你觉得，嗯，是有道理的，那一套逻辑啊，什么的。然后就觉得，可能每个东西都是有它的精华和糟粕啊，都没有一个理论可以适用整个社会，整个人类，所以我们以前坚持的那种普遍的适应性可能本身就是一个错误。就是什么东西可能都是相对的。就在不同的环境不同的文化下，有它的适应性啊，有它的局限性啊。(F7C)

(7) 我觉得有一些是 certain 的，比如说一些基本的原理，像 1+1=2 这些，它可能是无法证明，但是一个基本的出发点吧，但是有一些比如说我们所学得社会主义比让优越于资本主义啊，比若说想这些，或者说这个世界是唯物的，是无神的，这些本身它就是你无法证明，也无法证伪，其实无神论也是一种信念嘛，你相信无神和你相信有神都是信念，你不能说没有神就是一种 certain 的知识，其实我也不懂怎么说了，就是我相信有些伦理也好知识也好都是普遍的，都是绝对好的，或者说是绝对的，但是有些知识就是有它的相对性，有它的适用性。有它的适用范围。

(8) 过去我们有这种倾向就是写在教科书里的都是真理，来这学习就意识到所有的学到的理论都有它的适用范围。比如说，理论上在一个公司里面市场部是一个领头部门，如果你回到国内告诉人事部门‘你受我管’。我敢说你最先被踢出去。所以说，理论是理论，你没法说这个理论对还是不对。你要把它放到 context 里。(M1C)

(9) 你对书本知识就不那么轻信了呗，即使是老师给的知识，老师自己都直言不讳地说他也不确定。不能盲从，人云亦云。我们需要自己做研究找到答案。（F2C）

(10) 现在我才发现其实 Research 这个过程它不是从一开始你一定会有一个 topic,或一定有一个 finding, 因为这边人提的是一个 research question 或者是你的 hypothesis,就是说它是不确定的，它是可以变化的，直到你的 finding, 经过很长很长的 progress 才能做出来的。很可能你的结果不像你预期的，像我这次。我就不知道该怎么 handle。我跟我导师谈了，他说这是非常正常的，不同的人用的 samples 或者研究工具不一样就会有不同的结果。分析导致这些结果的因素就是在做 research。 (F1C)

(11) 你在吸收新知识的时候也在思考 generate your own ideas。创造和吸收可以同时发生。不是你飞得读完所有的书才能创造新的。[…]我现在养成了一个习惯，就是边读边记笔记，脑子里一有 ideas 就草草记下来，渐渐地，这些东西就成了一个章节。(F7B)

(12) 中国传统知识分子强调格物致知。首先，你要积累知识。个人的看法不重要除非你在某个领域已经炉火纯青了。我们在国内就是这样看的，学习就是学习知识，装在脑子里，按部就班，一步一步的。创新一定要在积累的基础上，否则，你就没资格。到了这你就

发现完全不是这么回事。即使你就是个小学生你也应该有自己对事物的观点。学习是非常 personal 的。你需要寻求你所需要的，加以自己的分析，得出自己的结论。这在任何阶段都可以。(F4B)

(13) 在这实践更重要，学习理论和实践紧密相连。老师在课上用的 case 都是真实案例。。据说，在考试的的时候我们也要分析真实的案例。而且，做金融需要知识面广，所以特别重视学科与学科之间的关系，学生可以真地或租或鹰。（M1C）

(14) 开始我不知道我来干什么。反正他们资助我，我不需要担心吃饭问题，我就来了。刚一来，交给我这个 project， 我真吓了一跳，因为不是我的领域。我告诉我导师我对此一无所知，我学的是空气动力学啊，可他说’没问题，你能赶上。没事的。我还不知道为什么。但是现在我开始明白了，其实我来之前我们已经有了必备的知识了，我只是没有看到这些知识之间的联系。我的知识基础还是挺扎实的，我成绩单上的分数也非常好，他们看重的是这些。但是在我来这之前，如果你问我我擅长什么，我只能说我最擅长的就是考试啦。真的，没开玩笑。

(15) 如果里面没有你自己的思想那就没什么意义，那没展示你学到了什么。这是老师想知道的。[模仿老师的语气]你干嘛只把别人的想法摆在这？这些东西我也知道，我不需要你来展示给我看。(F4A)

(16) 人家期望你用你学到的东西来解决问题。我认为这真得特别好。不过我开始真得不知所措，惶惶然。难道都要我自己来想明白这些吗？但是读了书，做了比较，你就发现没什么你不能做的。作为一个中国学生，你还是可以比较英国商法和国际商法。完了之后，我觉得信心大增，尽管不知道能得个什么分数。不管啦，反正我学到了东西，而且你永远忘不掉，因为是你自己做得比较，得出的结论。真的是挺开心的经历。(F4B)

(17) 他们看重个人的意见。他们也知道你的想法可能不太成熟，你毕竟还是个学生嘛，但他们就是鼓励自我表现。我们就不擅长这些，不自信。如果谁想标新立异，除非你的想法确实好，否则老师会认为你浮，不踏实，其他同学也说你“显摆”。风气就不利，所以个性和独创性都给压制了。(F7B)

(18) 在国内的话，你说一个自己的什么（见解），那边的老师一般说，“你再回去想想吧，不像你想问题这么简单的”，一般会这么讲。在这边，你如果能跟老师进行一些 discussing，做一些讨论，或者在课堂上做一些 face-to-face 的 conversation 之类的交流。那么，如果你说出一种比较好的观点的话，其实老师真的都会觉得，嗯，不错，good, 对不对，这边老师都会这样的。在这边是一个，appreciate 这么一个观点；在国内的话就是 depreciate 你的观点。那这边的话，他们 encourage；在国内的话，他会 discourage。那我觉得，这两个还是有，我到这边还是发现有很大区别。(M1B)

(19) 我们在课堂上争论，课下还是好朋友。开始我们会抱怨：“你干嘛非得课上 criticize?你可以过后，课下的时候后悄悄跟我说嘛”。不过大家渐渐就习惯了。(F7FN March 15-06)

(20) 有时候学生的问题非常尖锐，老师都语塞了。[问：你觉得尴尬?]有点吧。不过人家都没当回事。[…] 我觉得大学的课堂就应该是一个争鸣的地方，能够听到不同的声音，不光是一个声音。我是非常佩服那些敢于挑战的人，不但要有知识，还要有胆量。我可不行。即使我有不同意见，我可能只会跟老师课下交流交流。(F4B)

(21) 我们觉得他的的辩论和质疑损害和谐了，也没影响人与人之间的关系啊。即使他们彼此不能沟通，人家也愿意坐下来一起探讨。在中国你要是挑战权威的理论，他会认为你在挑战他的权威地位，不相信他。[…] 中国人习惯粉饰太平。我觉得心里不信服表面上呈现虚假和谐太平没什么意义。

(22) 当然，我们不习惯课堂气氛那么紧张；开始，让我在组里面对不同的观点当着大家的面表态觉得特别扭，我们不想得罪谁，我们还得投票表决。[…]我们中国人总认为争论不

好，会伤人。我们以为小组意见不统一肯定会影响大家的关系。但我发现只要你诚实表达你的意见，没人会耿耿于怀的。相反，他们还会在 coffee break 的时候找你聊聊。(F2B)

(23) 我想主要原因是我们把事和人混为一谈。我们想如果反对这个观点，就意味着我们也反对这个人，因为这个观点和提出观点的人是不可分的。但在这里，就是就事论事，当事人不觉得人家批评是冲着他来的。我想人们在这样的氛围里很容易讲真话。因为我自己在跟同学讨论的时候总是有这种顾虑，但是现在好多啦，我知道他们知道你不是对人。不过我看得出一些中国学生不喜欢这样，比如说我的室友…. （F4C）

(24) 批判是一种能力，不是本能，是需要培养，要不然你需要的时候你就没有，你就不会，积累的过程很重要，积累的过程就是训练批判能力的过程，象我方才说，批判是一种能力，你没有经过训练的话你就不会，积累得多有了本钱，批判起来容易得多啊。所以，我觉得我们华人，有一个..有一个..我不说是个坏毛病吧，就是怕问那种笨问题会被人家笑，可是西方人就不会，他们就问问题，再笨的问题也要问，其是通过问这个问题他在积累他的批判能力。我们就怕问这个问题会被别人笑，因为这个问题看起来好简单啊。(M6B)

(25) 现在我明白所有的理论都要接受质疑。每一次的理论突破都是暂时的。[…]好的理论一定是在不断演化，否则它们就成了死的理论。不断的质疑才会推动理论的发展。即使在科学领域也没后绝对的 correct answer。(M6B)

(26) 我能感觉到我开始对我读的东西采取一种批判的态度，不是读到什么我就信什么[…] 我的读到我信服为止。我甚至质疑我自己在写的东西，经常推倒重来。(F1C)

(27) 你当然要考虑听众。如果他们心胸狭隘听不进去不同声音，你就不会对牛弹琴。而且我觉得就是说，志同道合的人还是有不少的。因为我觉得和我志同道合的人，也都是那种喜欢思考的为人真诚的人，而且我们争论的时候肯定是对事不对人，我们可能会有很激烈的思想交锋，但我们依然是好朋友。我们很可能观点上针锋相对，像我现在和我的一些朋友观点上针锋相对，但我们仍然是好朋友，彼此欣赏，彼此信任，我觉得这样的话呢能够保持 critical thinking。但是和那种不太欣赏这种 critical thinking 的人，可能交往也不会很多。(F3C)

(28) 我们因果老师说在英国你学法律不一定意味着你成为一名律师，你的专业是地理也不意味着你找的工作就跟地理有关。[…] 很显然，学习能力是最重要的，有了它，你什么都能学。当然了，在某些领域，像物理，你也必须有专业知识，但是社会上很多行业不需要太专的专业知识。同样，当个好律师也不取决专业知识。(F4B)

(29) 在我们真个学习过程中，获取和增强学习能力是最重要的。方法论（？?）会在你未来学习和工作中发挥更大的作用。如果你只是乞求知识，你就偏离啦。(M2C)

(30) 想到学习能力，我第一反应就是考试能力，我是挺反感的。我觉得在中国学生认为学习能力和考试能力是等同的。谁的考试成绩好，谁的学习能力就强。对吧？但是现在我不这样认为了。我觉得学习能力应该就是认知能力。比如就是在上我们的 module 时大家那种 argue。大家分成两个组，必须在半小时内组出一个东西来 argue, 我觉得就是体现出一个认知能力。那它也是一种学习能力。(F1B)

(31) 我们以为学习就是获取知识知道如何应用于实践。现在看来这种对学习的理解太狭隘了，在这学习我想得最多的事就是学习本身。事实上，学习就是思考。我一直在想为什么我们的学与教的方法跟这儿会这么不同？我的结论是因为我们需要的是不同类型的接班人。(F3FN May 20, 2006)

(32) 我们总是被老师和家长逼着赶着甚至求着学。现在，他们都离得远远的，没人求你学，可是说真的，我现在真的是特别喜欢学习。有生以来第一次觉得学习使自己的事。(F1A)

(33) 老师和家长都不相信孩子喜欢学习，所以他们就像看贼一样看着孩子（学习）。我们怎

么能独立呢？我要是能选择我要学的东西我也早就自主学习。(M3FN May 14, 2006)

(34) 你的 supervisor 就像你的同事，你要主动去问他再自己来决定做什么怎么做你的 research。如果你很 active，你能学到很多。否则，你可能什么也学不到浪费时间。我喜欢这种方式。(M5A)

(35) 我认为课外知识可以让我对专业知识有更好的理解和认识，for instance, 举个例子，专业知识关于 English Educational system,我学的全都是字面的。所以课下我会跟当地人聊天，看他们对他们自己的教育怎么看。我跟别人去谈的时候，他们给我的并不是 professional 的，它是非常自己的过程，那我就会觉得跟我学的知识非常切合，或许是我已经有了这样的 background,我在学这方面的东西我就会觉得“啊，是这样子的!”与我学到的知识间有一个 link,我就会想到这个 link, 这是我的课外的东西，用中文来说就是课内的和课外的 link 就是在于，就是说我没有外界的这些课外的后专业知识的传递和接收的话,其实我会觉得学起来会非常非常大的困难, 因为全部学的都是 English Education system, 我上来之前根本没有任何概念，就是包括我看了看那些东西我还是不明白。有意识地提起这些问题，点点滴滴深入交谈都能帮我理解。我也创造机会跟其他国家的人谈他们的教育制度，来跟英国的制度相比较。(F1C)。

(36) 我们给了一组论文题目来选。无论我选哪一个我导师都说 OK, as long as you are comfortable with it。就给我弄懵了。你知道我们习惯让老师牵着告诉我们怎么做，可突然让你做决定，还只要我觉得舒服。[停顿]。现在我明白为什么了。他们让你来决定，因为只有你知道你对什么感兴趣。他们知道没有兴趣和好奇心是做不了研究的。(F3B)

(37) A:西方的民主建立在个体的资助。他们从小就能动自主能动。我们的文化 背景不一样，没有提供独立自主的土壤。

B:我没觉得自主学习跟文化有多大关系。作为一个学生，你就应该主动学习。再说，谁也不能在学校呆一辈子。离开大学，也没老师了，你必须要是一个独立学习者。A: 那到没错。我们上大学的时候也鼓励自主学习，不过还是不太一样。(FNApril22-06)

(38) 互动完了也没有什么新东西。算不上真正的互动。学生的问题都是要问明白自己的理解是不是对，老师的问题也是做做样子。如果提了一个问题老师也答不上来或一时想不起来的，老师就说，‘我们课下再说吧别占用课堂时间了。’所以课堂上其实没有什么真正互动。(F4B)

(39) 我学的是工程，来者以前从来没想过沟通能力有什么重要。我发现你不仅要有专业知识还要有良好的沟通能力。我们系里研究做得好的，presentation 也都做得好，介绍他们的研究发现。我导师总是提醒我，有意在这方面鼓励我，我可让他失望了。其实，我在上高中以前也挺能说的，可我爸和我的老师都说我不稳重，因为我太爱讲话了。所以渐渐地我就不擅言谈乐。[…] 我导师对我特别失望，他说‘你怎么这么沉默寡语的？这可不行’。[…] 我才意识到沟通技巧很重要，不过恐怕我是变不回去了。(M4C)

(40) 过去在课上只听老师，这里老师说的少同学总在说。他们将他们的经验和 treatment，因为他们本身就是老师。你可以知道其他人的看法和评论，总能让你思考那些要点，我永远也想不到的。所以，我认为听别人讲也是一个很好的学习方式。(F2B)

(41) 我觉得我可以从讨论中学到很多东西。你有一个想法，别人的想法可能你永远也想不到，那么你就学到了新的东西，开了眼界。我们在台湾没有 seminar，所以对于很多学生来说上课就是坐在教室里听老师讲课；讨论不重要。但是，事实上，讨论是训练你批判思考能力的一个过程。一些问题似乎很简单，但是当我们讨论他们的时候，我会发现‘噢，有这么多的 detail 我从来没有想过。(M6B)

(42) 但是问题是我们没有个案来谈哪。他们会谈他们的 treatment，特别专，考察的特别细致，我觉得就好像我亲身经历了一样，虽然是暂时的。光听就挺好的。(F1C)

(43) 我想在感觉 involved，不想开始时，我觉得 out of involvement.现在重要的不是参与不参与，最重要的是要学习，以你自己的方式来学。[…]我觉得我的想法都变了，updated。我现在喜欢按着他们的学习方式来读书，参与讨论，在讨论课上做一名听众。我不需要总在讲话，因为我通过听学到了很多。我喜欢换一换角色。我知道我应该讲话，这很重要，但是暂时，在讨论课上，当一个听众更重要。他们讲得对我来说都是全新的，而且通过读书，我学到很多，当我听他们讨论的时候，我就会有个顿悟。我没法成为一个 speaker，因为我还不具备那个东西。而且，他们都是老师，他们谈他们的学生，他们的学校，我什么都没有。(F1B)

(44) 我们上 bilingual module 的时候，我就愿意做一个 speaker，因为我有更多的精力。所以我感觉得到我在想法上和学习方法上都在改变，我有这个意识。现在我感觉非常好。不在郁闷了。我不会因为自己是个 listener 就郁闷，也不会因为自己能讲英文就骄傲。(F1B)

(45) 我认为他们强调口头表达很正当。它也需要训练。我在伦敦曾经参加过他们的议会辩论。谁都可以去的。我太欣赏他们政客的口才了，虽然我没怎么听懂。但是可以看得出一切都是即兴的，不是安排好的。不想我们的领导人，就会读稿子，都是秘书写的。太不一样了。(M2B)

(46) 这里的人表达能力都特强，让我很震惊。就聊打扫卫生的人都很自信，滔滔不绝的，因为人家从小就鼓励你把想法说出来。我们不重视口头表达，更别说鼓励孩子发表意见了，所以我们就不擅长连贯表达。我开始相信明确表述有助于逻辑思维。它逼着你想清楚。（F1C）

(47) 如果你可以把看的东西用自己的话说出来，说明你理解了。我发现经常是这样：就是你以为你明白了，可一让你说就说不出来。[…] 汉语里，我们常说‘只可意会，不可言传’。但我认为那说明你还没完全栋。(F6B)

(48) 过去我只是力图度动作者的主要观点，只要我知道他讲的是什么，我就认为我完成了。但是现在呢，你不仅接收（接受）他说的，你还要检验他的观点是不是站得住脚。它们的论证是不是合乎逻辑？它们的成果是建立在实证研究的基础上吗？(F1C)

(49) 我觉得在读书习惯上我改变了很多。当然，我在台湾的大学里也学了一些阅读技巧，如快速浏览，读主题句啦，经常是每一段的开始句，但是这些技巧只是加快你阅读速度，它们没有叫你们如何分析式地阅读。我发现我开始有这样的阅读意识，那就是只看观点是不够的。(M7C)

(50) 我开始想写中国的企业，希望能有点新意。我从网上找了一些标题相似的文章，但是根本用不上。你不知道他们的结论是怎么得出来的。没有参考文献，没有页码，也没有论据，很主观的。(M1FN May 10-06)。

(51) 譬如题目是比较 A 和 B。按台湾的方式，我们会先写 A 是什么 B 是什么，然后他们的差别是什么，如果你连 A 和 B 都不知道你怎么比较 A 和 B 的差别．而西方写 essay 的方式就是一下子进入主题（A 和 B 的差别）．他们不想看 A 和 B 是什么．我是觉得这样有点突兀啊．就是设定读者群的不同啊．我总是把他想成一般的人，可是它们是要给那些教授看的，你还在讲 A 和 B 是什么，人家会觉得很好笑的．因为觉得两边法系不同，所以总要先讲 A 和 B 都是什么，也是对它们的含义整理一下，当初的想法是这样．不过现在学乖了，不用花时间在那些上面了。(F5B)

(52) 我导师给我的意见都很中肯。她说我引用其他文献来支撑我的论点这很好，但是我引用他们并没有衡量他们证据的可靠性。我只是引用他们的结论没想着他们是怎么得出这个结论。事实上他们的研究设计上有很大的漏洞，所以，基于其上的结论就不够 strong。[…] 虽然告诉我呢要以批判的眼光来评价 evidence，我们不知道从哪些方面来入手。掌握这些技能还要花些时间。我想我在做我的 EdD thesis 的时候，我会注意这些方面的。

(an EdD Student)

(53) 我发现我在写文章的时候，不管是学术论文也好，我会习惯先讲发生了什么事情，然后写引起我的动机去做这样的研究，我会从这样的方式去写作，我的 style 就是这样，我会讲一些 story，再慢慢带出我想做什么主题，为什么这很重要，然后我再建立自己的 argument。但是我来这边后发现他们的思维方式是完全不一样的。我们以前可以说是一种 bottom-up, 先从下面开始聚集东西，然后慢慢去把我的主轴建立起来，再往上发展，他们这边主要是属于 top-down 的。OK.我现在已经有一个 clear mind,我现在做一个什么 topic， 我的论文的第一句话我就要把那句话讲出来, I want to argue …。可能在第一章 Introduction 就要写这东西了。这是我来这边之后的最大改变。我个人是蛮快就适应了，因为我以前在写这样的 argument 或者论说文章的时候，我知道我的毛病就是在这里。所以我知道人家在看我的东西的时候开始没办法抓到重点。这个东西其实跟写小说和写散文是完全不一样。但我的习惯就是那一套。因为我在台湾有受过 English language 教育，但那时候我还不是很明确在这方面。后来来到这边其实一开始我会很挣扎，说我到底该按什么方式去写，所以我自然而然照着我以前的方式写，我记得我在这边写第一篇 paper 第一篇 essay 的时候就是这样，我就很习惯讲一堆背景的东西，然后再把我要的提出这很重要，那可能已经是第一章第一个 chapter 的最后一段了，我才把最重要的讲出来。那时候我的 tutor 就跟我说，不是这样些，你一开始就要清楚明白，甚至每一个段落，每一个 paragraph，第一句话就要讲出来，最后一句是你的结论。你要很习惯这样的一个模式，才能把这样的东西让人家看得懂。后来我才学到 OK 我写这个东西的目的不是我自己而已，而是在这个学术里面有帮助，要让后面的人看得懂。我觉得这才是重要的东西。所以在写的时候整个的态度是不一样的。(M7B)

(54) 写论文实在是太痛苦了，但是我能感到自己在学东西。我认为我从写论文学到的最多。在国内。我们也写论文，但是非常不同。它们只是成果，不是一个学习过程。

(55) 我认为写论文最能检验你的真实能力，分析能力，综合能力，你是否对这个领域彻底明白了。(F4B)

(56) 来到一个新环境，你必须要多听、多看、多想、多问。既不能盲目效仿也不能固步自封。‘取其精华。去其糟粕’。(F3B)

(57) 就像一个朋友告诉你意大利餐馆好，你不去到那吃就不会觉得好。[…] 所以说别人告诉你的只是一个 clue, 还得靠自己去发现。(F1FN Feb 22-06)

(58) 你与老师和其他同学的互动空间和大啊，取决于每个个人能否利用时机来跟其他人互动。如果你积极参与跟人家互动，肯定就比那些不参与的人学得多些。[…] 有时我真为那些学生感到悲哀。他们就不该来者。他们最好待在家里。(F4B)

(59) 我们是这样抚养长大的，但并不意味着这样就是对的。[….] 我们的教育体制就是培养屈从，因为政府需要这样的人来巩固他们的政权，来推行他们的愚民政策。(F3B)

(60) 凡是经历过高考的肯定都具备刻苦坚韧的品质，对以后个人发展很重要。在这里也一样有用。(F6B)

(61) 我决定出国学习的想法很幼稚，我就想学到先进的政治理论来解决中国的实际问题，像上个世纪早期的热血青年到国外寻求真理。我真是这样想的。但是事实上，我在这里学到的最有用的东西不是什么立竿见影的理论或是什么主义，而是一套思维工具，有了这些思维工具你就知道如何来思考一件事，有自己的论据。不是对与错的问题，重要的是自己的立场。(F7C)

(62) 开始的时候我只想告诉他们你们错了，因为他们不了解中国的历史，后来，我发现他们说的也有一些道理，不是平白无故的。但是现在，尽管我也不知道也无法预测如何以一种理想的方式解决这些问题，不过至少我可以自信地从不同的角度来谈论这些问题，更

有理有据合情合理地为中国的立场辩护。(F7C)

(63) 我觉得这里的研究氛围还是比国内要好得多，相比较国内那种浮躁的状态，要好得多。国内这个研究浮躁真的是有很大的问题。就是要么有钱要么有名这样去看的，但这边的话，这种氛围要好的多。不一定要大部分的人是瞄准了钱啊什么之类的。一个老师如果不太像国内一样，一味的追求名和利。我发现这边无论是教授还是讲师或者 PhD 给我一种感觉就是他们这种做学问的态度跟国内不大一样。对我来说挺有一种新鲜感，想在这边尽量多呆，这边还有一些人就是觉得要这样的一个生活也很好的感觉。他们这些人给我就是，至少影响了我以后看待我的生活水平的一个观点。那像我以前的话，老是就觉得我以后要成为百万富翁，亿万富翁，那什么什么，很多学生也有这样的想法。现在改变了吧，觉得应该过一种比较平平淡淡的生活。那个，做自己想做的事情。可能会给你一个涉世未深的感觉，或者觉得这家伙还没到社会呢，就说这样的话。但是至少我现在是这么想的，至少我现在是这么想的。至少改变了我的一些观点，至少改变了很多。(M1C)

(64) 我觉得他们变化很大，变得比较 open 了，没以前那么世故了，他们也开始愿意跟我们交谈了。[…]。挺为他们悲哀的。(M1FN05-05-06)

(65) 我现在更了解自己了。我不适合在国内大银行工作，我不善于处理复杂的人际关系，但是我能够自信地做点像样的研究，使自己成为一个正直的学术工作者。(M1FN 13-07-06)

(66) 我告诉这边的老师说我以后可能想在幼儿园工作，观察孩子跟他们玩儿在一起。他们都觉得挺正常的，鼓励你，‘哦，这很好呀!’，可我一跟国内的老师讲，她们都不以为然。她们说‘你都是硕士啦，还在英国拿的学位，你怎么能像到幼儿园去工作呢？你父母也会失望的。[…] 这边的人对职业没有高低贵贱的偏见，所以其实在这边感觉还不错，觉得社会基本上还没有不认同我，但是如果我回到国内去幼儿园工作非得把我妈给逼疯了。(F2C)

(67) 自从来这生活我可以有机会作我想做的。也许回到国内我永远也没机会做。你知道我是特别容易受人影响的。(F2FN August-16-06).

(68) 我感觉最大的是心态上的改变，你真的可能不会完全的西方化，但你至少学会了从他们的观点来看待事物，知道该怎么来看了，就是你可以继续用你东方的观点来看，但是你也可以用西方的观点来看，看你的选择怎么样了。(F2B)

(69) 我们认为“欠债还钱，杀人偿命’是天经地义的事。这条信念从来没动摇过知道我出国面对另一套司法系统。我一直想饶恕那些十恶不赦的杀人犯太可笑了。判一百年两百年有什么意义呢？谁也活不了那么久吧。可你换位思考他们的历史和宗教因素，你就有了不同的理论基础。这两个体系在他们自己的社会里都是合理正当的，[…]我向他们讲我们的国情因素，为什么政府要采取极端措施在全国实行计划生育政策，我的欧洲同学开始对我们的处境表示同情，而不是指责我们违犯人权。(F4B)

(70) 我不太理解有些人说就是你是用中文思考还是用英文思考，我觉得你本质上的话呢你的思考和你的语言是没有关系的，只是说他可能价值观慢慢会有变化，比方说现在看一些事情，你从中国的角度看还是从英国的角度看，是不一样的。[W：嗯，具体的例子？] 比方说我们对待贫穷吧。那么，东方文化里面呢，贫穷归于个人原因，是没受教育，是懒惰造成的，或者是你运气不好，周围人对你都很冷漠， 这是不公正。但是在西方人们觉得贫穷是一种不公正，认为贫穷是对人权的最大侵犯。但在中国就没法理解这句话，是完全不同的观念。[…] 你深入到他们的社会里就自然会获得一个不同的视角来看这个事情。你会知道什么是真正的社会公正。(F3C)

(71) 她就承受不了压力，在压力下，她会崩溃了。她病了她特高兴，她可以申请论文延期啦。开始，她要延一篇，结果到最后三篇都延了，这个假期一篇也没完成。我们在五月有四门考试。我是挺担心她的。[…] 她一遇到苦难和压力她就想躲，没有恒心和韧性，就很

难成功，无论是在学业上还是在职场上。(F4B)

(72) 不管怎么说，你是在人家的地盘，所以你的言行都要小心。不想在家里，客随主便啦。(M3A)

(73) 在家时，身边总有人叮嘱你要做什么不要做什么，比如‘别玩电脑乐’。‘看电视别超过一小时’。这儿，你自己管理自己。你要问自己‘今天要读的东西都读了吗？如果没有，你就别去 party 了。我认为我已经把自己练得很自律了。(M3FNFeb-12-06)

(74) 离开国内的氛围，（进入）浸入新的文化，我觉得我的心态渐渐平和了。过去，我喜欢竞争，争取比别人强。出来见了大世界，你知道你的视野有多窄，你会在世界上重新给自己定位，你的心态就平和啦。(M1C FN August-16-06)

(75) 他们太计较个人得失啦，谁都埋怨，总是在抱怨。[…] 他们缺乏自我控制能力，不知道如何调整心态面对现实。他们的心态还是中国的。说真的，一些学生不太适合到国外留学。（M2B）

(76) 要走的时候我就问我下次什么时候再来。他说‘It’s up to you, whenever you are ready’。我说“下星期三吧？”，她就看他的本子说‘不行，I can’t make it’。那我说星期五下午呢？他说也不行。过了一会儿，他说‘我可以在星期五的 12 点一刻见你。你行不行？’我不知道他是不是真的还是怎么的。我就很不舒服。我觉得自己受了冷遇。如果你导师不喜欢你还怎么学下去啊？出了门我就一直想：也许他真的很忙，也许他觉得午饭时间工作没关系；也不是因为不喜欢我，只是午饭的时间段是他一周里唯一的空闲…不管怎样，我得弄清楚。我开始问其他同学他们的辅导时间，知道这里的老师午饭时间工作很正常。他们的午饭很简单，很随意，也许就是一个三明治。他们真的很忙。这的人不把吃饭当回事。我们中国人花太多时间做饭吃饭了。(F6B)

(77) 我想，首先素质是指你的知识广度，然后是你看问题的方式。有时我们可能太狭隘，所以我们要从狭隘走出来，来不断地吸收，那我们的事业就会越来越宽广，这样我们才可以辩证地、历史地看问题。另一方面，素质是你冷静处理困难处境的能力。(F7B)

(78) 你要是没有亲自来着你永远也不会知道。我们英语老师说英国教授非常正式，不像美国人。显然不对。但这也不是她的错，她也没出过国。所以我认为亲身经历非常重要。应该有理由相信‘读万卷书不如行万里路’。(M4C)

(79) 我们在这学的也还是表面的，你要想学深，真正搞懂，还要继续读继续学，很多人，包括校园里的中国学生他们只看表面，看现象，就得出结论，非常主观。他们没有往深层次走…[问：你指的深层次是什么呢？]就是现象背后的意识形态，要研究事物的规律和法则。(M2C)

(80) 我们在大学里学的都很肤浅。当然，我们在这学的也没深到哪去。但至少你开阔了视野看到你的局限。如果你正呆在你的小世界里，就是井底之蛙，夜郎自大，不知道世界上其它地方都在发生什么。你说你的国际化人才，别人也说你是国际化人才，到底意味着什么？[问：对你来说到底意味着什么？] 应该具有全球视野。要‘胸怀祖国，放眼世界’。(M2C)

(81) 我来这以前，我就想我得努力学，不能给中国人丢脸，因为我们小时候的小学课本里就教我们那些伟大的人物，什么竺可桢、周恩来，留学的时候不输给外国人，如何为祖国争光，现在看来有点傻，这跟民族大也没什么关系啊，何况周围都是中国学生，只是中国学生之间争来争去也没什么意思。就是为自己学吗。(M1C)

(82) 我认为一个成功的学习者既不取决于他的学业成绩，也不取决于他的专业知识，而是看他是否学到西方文化的核心价值，他有没有学会尊重人，平等待人，对人和对生命的那种关爱，有没有学会要追求社会公正。如果这些都没有学会，那他专业上可能成绩很好，我觉得他还是一个 failure，他可能以后再也没有机会来建立起一个正确的观念了。

(83) 专业知识可能很快就过时，但这种观念深入人心会对人的影响很深远，我觉得很多人，到西方来学习或者是考察，他学会了西方表面上那一套，比如说吃饭用刀叉，但是背后的东西没有学到，背后的那种对人的关怀，对生命非常深的那种同情，和平等的概念，你要懂得尊重人，学他们文化，社会观念公正，懂得人与人之间的协商，而这些观念也是社会主义国家缺乏的。我觉得有些人，有些“海归”，他就学他这一点，比如说刀叉吃饭，真正的东西呢没有学到，他学很肤浅的东西，拿到国内去歧视别人，来炫耀自己，而没有真正的那种同情和关怀。所以变化因该发生在内心。我强调内在的变化。很多人改变了中国的生活习惯，可内在根本没变。你不能说他学到了真正的东西。(F3B)

(84) 他们从小都是在这样的环境下长大，他们对长辈的关系比较 easy,同样那对晚辈的关系也（一样，不缺乏尊重）。我对尊重有了一些不同看法，比如我们所谓的尊敬跟西方人的方式上是不一样的，西方人的尊敬，有点像…, 我觉得他们所谓的尊重就是 confidence，behave with confidence。在亚洲东方国家，你要贬低自己，然后取悦对方，觉得是对对方的尊重。我们的尊敬是把自己压得越低，对对方就算越是尊重。而比如他们一般的人在电视上对首相讲话也不会鞠躬哈腰，他们表现得就非常自信，但举止非常得体，它们这是对对方的一种尊敬。Well-behaved. 我跟你讲话我不会觉得自己 inferior，这是他们的文化习惯，这是我对他们文化的一个重要认识。我觉得这是东方跟西方方式之间的差异。[问：哪种方式让你觉得更舒服呢？] 我觉得西方人的方式对我来讲比较 easy 啊，我可以 be myself。我还是可以表达我对你的尊敬，在自信当中有一种谦逊。(M6B)

(85) 中国报纸杂志上的文章都是一个声音，如果你的文章不是主流，就很难发表。他们不是 proper 研究，基于政策而不是基于证据。在这边，只要你有根有据你就可以大放厥词。但是在中国，一旦出现有争议的学派，政府就认为会损害国家，那些泰斗们就会出来辟谣，安抚民众不会发生那种事。这是不对的。我们必须搞改变这种做法，鼓励思想交锋，创造健康的学术氛围。随着全民素质的提高，就不可能是一个声音。(M2C)

(86) 我发现中国学生喜欢强调我们跟别人多么不同。他们特别热衷于兜售他们的文化，他们的食物，邀请别人去参观著名的地方，等等。我认为这显露出对我们文化缺乏信心。法国学生就不会不遗余力地宣扬他们的文化，催着别人去看卢浮宫…(M6B)

(87) 独立完成两三篇论文后，我感到自己信心大增。作为一个中国学生，你当然能比较和英国和欧洲的商法了，没有什么你不能做的；。[…] 你就感觉到你在成长。[…] 你获得的知识和能力让你有自信，感到自我价值。对自己做出的决定也更有信心。你知道你在做什么，而且你想为自己的行动负责。(F4FN June 20, 2006)

(88) 人都夸我英语提高了很多。真挺神奇的。因为我每天花至少一个小时读《圣经》，而且我开始用英文祷告，我讲话的时候就越来越流利。一定是神的帮助。菲比说我的英文是她见过的中国学生里最流利的。我真的很开心。(M4C)

(89) 他们知道你是外国人，不知者不怪。作为外国人你都可以问这些问题，他们本族人却不好问。

(90) 你应该考虑你说话的对象和其他人对不同意见的接受你能力。国情毕竟不同嘛。思想豁达的人是不怕思想交锋的。而那些思想狭隘的人也不值得交。(F3C)

Appendix III

Interview questions and statements used to elicit comments for the three rounds of interviews (English Version)

Interview Questions

Grand Tour Questions: (these non-epistemological questions are used to tap into the participants' underlying conceptions of learning and also epistemic assumptions and beliefs.

1. What does learning mean to you?
2. What makes a good teacher?
3. What makes a good student?
4. Where is our knowledge from? How knowledge is acquired?
5. Do you agree that the content of textbooks is in general correct and authoritative?
6. Do you believe the knowledge taught by the teacher? Why or why not?
7. What do you think of the importance of effort, ability, learning methods or strategies, etc., in one's learning?
8. What do you think of the roles and relations of the teacher and the student?
9. What would you like to say has stood out for you during studying here?
10. How do you like studying in the UK
11. What do you expect from the teacher here to help you to learn effectively?
12. How do you cope with the requirements?
13. How do you adjust yourself to the new learning environment?
14. What qualities are needed to make your learning successful here?
15. What advice do you give to the new students from China or Taiwan?
16. What the gains have you benefited from studying abroad?
17. What difference would it make if you had never studied abroad?
18. Any changes in your learning approaches and learning beliefs?
19. What does it mean to be an international talent or *haigui*?
20. Do you think you will have any re-entry problems?

Statements for inviting comments (March-April, 2006)

1. I know many Chinese students are struggling with your assignments now. How about you? What's your experience and effective ways to cope with it?
2. Some Chinese students believe that essays need one's own ideas, otherwise the essay would be worthless, no significance at all. What do you think of that?
3. It seems all of you know and accept the requirements that in your thesis you should present critical thinking and produce original contribution, but many of you still have difficulty in meeting these requirements.
4. Someone said that she learnt most through essay writing, not from classroom or even not from teacher. How do you feel about that?
5. Some student said that "we can learn everything by ourselves; teacher is not that important as we

thought'. Do you agree? What's your perception of teacher's role?

6. Some student says that it is the first time that she feels she is studying at a university? In your opinion, what university or classroom should be like? What a teacher a student should be like?
7. Many of you have mentioned that you come to here to learn something that can make their life different or in your own words 'to have a change'. What kinds of changes are you expecting or have taken place on you?
8. You know some Chinese students speak Chinese all the time, watch Chinese movies, listen to Chinese music and eat Chinese food, so some students don't understand them and say they haven't changed at all as if they were still living in China? What do you think of this opinion? Do you think they the signs of resisting to changes? What are the signs of change?
9. Many of you mentioned that you felt less confident when you came here and that affected your adaptation and learning. Why or how it (confidence) is important to you? Any other attributes you think are important to your learning?
10. Some student once said that she didn't like British classroom at first, and later after some pleasant communications with British students she began to pay attention to and appreciate their learning approaches. Do you have similar experiences as well? What makes you want to change?
11. I'm still interested in any interesting and important incidents happened to you during your learning process. Can you think of any now?

Statements for inviting comments (June-July, 2006)

These statements, i.e. the themes emerging from the observations in the field and interviews, are formulated to invite participants' further comments.

1. Studying abroad is not just for the degree or improving your English. The most valuable part of my overseas study is I begin to see the world in a different way.
2. The ultimate outcome of academic learning is not acquiring a body of subject knowledge but learning ability (autonomy), thinking capacity from dualistic to relativistic.
3. "There is no clear borderline between classroom and outside society to social science students. I learn even more from the outside of classroom."
4. Adjusting or harnessing emotional factors is very important when living and studying abroad. Academic learning involves emotional competence as well.
5. To keep an open mind to suspend your judgment is important in adapting to a new learning culture. （to develop empathy and tolerance of ambiguities）
6. . It is essential to be equipped with knowledge and skills to interpret and make discoveries about the new learning culture.
7. "Overseas study made me more aware of my cultural identity and myself".
8. You need consciously relativise your value systems to accommodate new things. However, you cannot be uprooted from your culture, but it is your choice how to view the matter, either from the West or from the East.
9. Intercultural competence is both the means and the end of our overseas learning process.
10. In my subject learning, I feel it is not so much language proficiency but thinking modes inhibiting my academic progress. At postgraduate level, analytical and critical thinking should be the most important intellectual achievement.
11. If a new student from China would join your program, what do you suggest he or she do or not do in terms of learning?

Appendix IV

Initial analysis of the participants' perceptions of the British learning culture

(1) Teacher's Role

Participants' Own Words	Key words	Semantic groupings	Categories
If we can self-teach, why we pay to be here?' 'They hope we can study for ourselves. So they are not active to teach you something, and you have to be very active…'(F5C) 'On the first day, the teacher told us, 'Don't count on the teachers. You should learn to learn by yourself' (Fiona, from Business school) 'We are used to being led by the teacher, so it is difficult for us to set a goal for ourselves'. 'Teachers here are very busy, and they have their own research to do. The main function of the university here is to conduct research; Teaching is in the second place. Learning all depends on the student himself/herself' (M1A). 'You need know what you want first, and with the supervisor's help you can realize it'. 'Your supervisor is like your colleague, you should take initiative to ask him for advice and make your own decision what and how to do research. If you are active, you can learn a lot; otherwise, you may be wasting time without learning anything. I like this way' (M5A)	'free', 'relaxing' 'private study' 'self-study' 'self-teach out of class' 'be active', 'on your own', 'depend on yourself' 'all by yourself', 'make your own decision' 'take initiative', 'set a goal for yourself' etc.	freedom (learning manner) independent learning (cognitive ability) self-reliance (mental disposition and capacities) 4. conscientious learning (with will, willingness, without being supervised or urged/pushed) 5.'self-directing learning' (freedom in learning, emphasis on agency, choice, priorities, personal agenda, has more social psychological sense:	Obstacles

Participants' Own Words	Key words	Semantic groupings	Category
'Teachers here are very nice, friendly. They would like to talk to us after class to see if we are all right, and sometimes we meet our tutor on Friday afternoon. He is very helpful and lends an understanding ear to listen to us. We talked about China, American education. That is quite nice' (F1, F2) 'All the relationship will come down to friendship, that of teacher and student is no exception. I'm quite lucky that my supervisor really cares about me. He oriented me, step by step, because of my background, I was quite muddleheaded. I think it is rather miserable if your supervisor doesn't care about you. A good teacher must be broadminded. He/she encourages the student and will be happy to see the student make progress' (F3C) 'My supervisor does very well. He makes me clear what I am going to do, and he gives me much freedom to make my own decision. I think this is training for independent research. If I simply follows my supervisor to do as told, perhaps I won't do my own thinking.' (M7A) 'Supervisor is a facilitator, not a leader. They are very experienced, so when you go astray they can bring you back on track.' 'Teachers are open resource. If you are 'digging', it will be of great value; if you don't, they are just tutors and lecturers' (Pilot) (My supervisor doesn't know much about China's situation, and what I told him really surprised him. He also learned something from me) (F6, F3, F7) The teachers here not only achieve high scholarly attainment, but also high moral standing, so if you really want to learn, you can benefit a lot (F3B) Teachers should pass the essence part of knowledge to the student, and cater to their needs as the company does to their customers (M2A).	'knowledgeable', 'experienced', 'resource' Mentor Coach Guide 'lighthouse' /'steersman' Facilitator 'encouraging' 'care about student' 'respect students' Friend/ 'friendly' 'happy to see students make progress' 'understanding', 'broad-minded' 'listener' 'integrity' 'ren pin' (moral standing) 'xue pin'(scholarly attainment)	Knowledgeable Cater to students' need Positive attitudes to students Understanding Teacher as model	Teacher's role

(2) Teacher-Student Roles/Relationship

Participants' own Words	Key Words		Semantic groupings	category
'For the first time in my life did I realize that learning is my own business' (F1, F2, F4, M1, M3) 'We have to work hard and do not let them (significant others) down' 'I don't know if efforts will definitely lead to success, but I do believe successful men must be hardworking.' (M5A) If you fail, that surely means that you haven't put efforts into it. If they can see that you have put your heart (both heart and mind) in it, even though your viewpoints may not be that (sound), they won't fail you. Attitudes to your studies are important. (F4B) I feel pity for those Chinese students who work really hard in the UK. They thought that they could have good marks if they work hard. But In the UK, working hard cannot guarantee high marks…because you must be deep in your research. Skills are very important. Effort and skills are not in positive proportion.(F1A) You are treated as postgraduate here. You should have finished the undergraduate courses and you are expected to learn independently (M3A).	1.'learning is personal' 'learning is duty (role fulfilment) 'active' 'initiative' 2.'independent' 'Learn for oneself' 3. 'hardworking' 'perseverant' 4.'disciplined' 'self-control' 'resilient' 'force yourself' 'bite the bullet' 5. 'respect teachers' 'modest' 'attentive' 'learn from others' 6. 'acquire learning ability' 'to develop competence' 'to have skills' 'care less about marks'	Outcome: Increase knowledge Applying to practice Cognitive competence Thinking ability Analysing Comparing Generating new ideas Have your own idea Be creative Be broad-minded See things from different perspectives Develop critical thinking 'All-round developments: intellectually and ethically (morally)'	active learner 2. independent 3. hardworking (effort) self-control/ disciplined modest/ respectful ability/ competent	Student's role

(3) Classroom schemata/scripts

Participants' Own Words	Key words	Semantic groupings	Category
'The first class I had here was really heart-stirring. Someone is eating noisily in class. We are used to the quietness of the classroom, so I was quite distracted by the noises.'(F4A) 'The students kept talking and talking. One was not finished, and another started talking again. I was like sitting on a mattress of needles'(F2A) 'The first couple of classes were torment to me'. We are not used to interrupting or interruptions in class. I feel that Eastern people think it is rude to do that (F5A). You don't need raise your hand to speak up. If you want to go to toilet, just go. You needn't ask for permission or apologize. 'They speak so fast. They don't treat us as foreigners'. (Law student) Chinese students would like to sit in the front rows: hear clearly, concentrated, project a favourable impression (eager to learn). A British girl went off in a huff during the class when the teacher stopped her from chattering. I was amazed that everybody was so talkative. (F1A)	1. 'not quiet' 'lively' 'less controlled' 'relaxing atmosphere' 'less formal' 'jokes/ humour' 2. 'more interactions' 'interruptions 'talking a lot' 3.'confrontations' 'argue' 'challenge' 'respect/disrespect' 4. 'not treating us as foreigners' 5. 'seating is not fixed' 'not quite know each other' 'no contact out of classroom'	less formal (less efficient) more verbal participation less smooth less accommodating less contact	Classroom schemata/ scripts

(Verbal) Participation in Seminar/Discussion

Participants' Own Words	Key Words		Semantic groupings	Category
Chinese students just try to understand what the teacher teaches. As long as I understand the teacher correctly, then I can feel that I have learnt very well. ….To European students, participation means that you should argue if you have different opinions. (F4A) •In class, you can talk anything. No matter how wild your ideas are, the teacher would say 'good', 'excellent', to make you feel confident.(M1B) •Not like Chinese, they never laugh at you; they listen to you. Arrogant people are few. People here never show (contemptuous) attitudes or expression, so I dare speak more, and the more you speak, the more influent your English gets. (F4B) •No matter how you speak English British people can know what you are talking about, as long as they would like to communicate with you. So I understand that when people like to listen to you, like to communicate with you, then you can talk. At seminars, I feel more comfortable to be a listener, and I can do nothing about my minority status. (F1A) The environment here is unexpectedly relaxing and tolerant, so I just prattle, talking at will. The British are very civilized. They respect you. There is mutual respect. They know you are foreigner, so you can talk out of ignorance. The advantage of being a foreigner lies in you can ask about anything and they won't think you are going too far (F3A)	When 1.'contribute new ideas' 'make arguments' 'have different opinions' 2.'be listened to' 'be tolerant' 'be respected' 3.'end up with non-finite answer' 'of not the same level' (not effective) 4.'to train thinking' 'heuristic' 'enlightening' 'inspiring' 'interesting'	Why 1.Participate for show (LX) 2.Participate to impress (M1) 3.Participate to fulfil the role of the student (M2) 4.Participate to claim identity (F1) 5. Participate to learn	1. contribution 2.cooperative 3.benign environment 4. negative side: less effective 5. Positive side: heuristic	Verbal particip-ation

My class is not big, so if I have questions I will ask. Of course, if I am not very clear, I won't ask (M3A) 'If you understand 90%, you can ask; if you only understand 10%, how and what are you going to ask?'(Law student) 'British teachers are very happy if students ask questions. If you have studied that part and something you are interested in and know about, you will have interest to have some interactions with the teacher; if you haven't studied that before, you'd better go back to the book (M3A) 'It is not easy to find a worthy question' I think the questions I want to ask are all good questions. But I'm concerned about my English expressions, so I don't dare to ask.(F5B) European students just like asking questions. They would ask if they have one. Some questions asked indicated they didn't read textbooks. If they had done, they wouldn't have asked those questions. Seemingly, they are active in class, but they are not necessarily good students and get good marks. Of course, you can know from their questions that some students have read the book. They are really remarkable. I admire them. They are industrious students. (F5B p.5-6) We are not used to interrupting or interruptions. I feel that Eastern people think it is rude to do that. Secondly, if you ask questions, then the pace of the whole class will be affected. You can e-mail teacher your questions and get answers without wasting others' time. I'm for this way.	1. 'clear' 'knowingly' 'worthy' 'interested' 'studied' 2. 'thoughtful' 'good' 'lazy' 'face' 'shy' 3.'wait' 'Effective and efficient' 'time' 'classroom rhythm' 'in written form'	Ask knowingly Right timing Ask Thoughtful question Delay asking (to think by oneself, rely on oneself, to digest, understanding takes time) Ask through e-mailing	Asking questions

(4) Academic writing (Referencing and bibliography, plagiarism, critical thinking, originality)

Participants Own Words	Key Words	Semantic groupings	Category
•As far as plagiarism is concerned, it is explicitly pointed out in our Handbook. In the book, it is even illustrated with the examples like " I have some ideas and then I find the words by the author of the book are just what I want to express and I cannot find other suitable words to express them. What shall I do?" And the ways to deal with that are all listed in the Handbook. If you really want to use it, you are told to use quotation marks to cite them. Or you can paraphrase it in your own words and you still need to give credits to the person concerned for the viewpoint. The guideline is very clear, and if you follow it, you are not likely to commit the error of plagiarism. It is shameless to copy others, and, moreover, it'll end up in disaster. (Pilot p.7) The biggest difference is the teacher in China never asked us to find the reference paper for the origin of a theory, but the teachers here give great emphasis on the reference, those academic papers, and you need to mention them whenever you use it. … I think that is because they are rigorous in doing research and also respect an individual's labour and achievements. (M1C p.12) They also emphasized bibliography, and in the beginning I didn't understand why, probably because I didn't read much. Later, I had to write an essay every three or four weeks and had too many materials to consult, and I suddenly found the merits of good bibliography. They are meticulous in this aspect, because, as a researcher, we should not only be responsible for ourselves but also for the reader. That is another thing I learned here. (M7B p.4-5)	1. 'explicit' 'clear guidelines' 2. 'rigorous' 'meticulous' 'precise' 'responsible' 3. 'evidence' 'idea' 'argument' 4.'try to meet requirements' 5.'not clear about the degree' 'have no template' 'painful' 6.'learn a lot' 'learning process' 7.'rush through' 'dash off an essay' 'meet deadlines'	Explicit rules Rigorous format Emphasized points (structure, one's own idea, argument) Conform to the rules Uncertainty Learning process Time constraints	Academic Writing

(5) Critical Thinking

Participants' Own Words	Key Words	Semantic groupings	Category
Different people have different interpretations of the text. We can't just wait there complaining there is no right answer, you should analyse the situation to find your own answer. Your answer couldn't be absolutely right, but you find it through your own thinking and reasoning. Critical thinking is quite encouraged here. But you shouldn't go too far to be off the point when you are being "critical". You should focus on the theme, and then you put forward you own opinion, but don't go too far. Just move within the circle. I feel this circle is drawn with a list of readings, which are suggested by the lecturer as kind of backup, and if you choose certain topic, your tutor will encourage you to read those literature to follow (his /her thinking line), and you are expected to incorporate them, to cover those points in your essay. I can feel that is what the tutor wants, though he/she never said that explicitly [authority]. If your essay can touch upon those points, then you know you have done right.(Pilot p.4-5) I don't think the British scholar promote the critical thinking. No, I don't think so. Because you have to quote so many refer (references), now I just think about how can I quote as many if I can. If I don' agree with some professors' opinion, you know, if I criticize him, criticize their opinion, I have to find somebody else's opinion to criticize him. I can't find. I can't criticize (him) myself….Because you have to quote so many references, so what you can do is just organize the references, organize all the opinion words, and that is all you can do. You can not have your own opinion. You can only do that way. Because, I don't want to criticise, because, I mean this is the part I don't like. Why can't I just have our own opinion, because they maybe new, you create it, nobody knows, nobody thinks about it. (F5C p.10)	1.'encouraged' 'emphasized' 2.'not used to' 'lack training' 3.'quote/cite references' 4.'to criticise' 'point out shortcomings' 5.'to evaluate' 'to compare' 'to contrast' 'to have your own opinion' 'to make judgments' 'to make choice' 6.'useful'	Academic practice Academic ability Cognitive ability Social-cultural practice (F3, M6) Partial understanding Ambivalent attitude Uncertain about the degree of 'being critical' in the essay	Critical Learning

(6) Originality and Creativity

Participants' Own Words	Key Words	Semantic groupings	Category
I think in the process of learning, they encourage you to be creative, but not at the exams. At exams you can only show what you are taught. But in class, you can talk anything. No matter how wild your ideas are, the teacher would say 'good', 'excellent', to make you feel confident; but when you are doing exams, it is the same as in China. The products are the same, and I'm sure you won't be awarded any extra credits for your fancy ideas ' (M1B p.14) I think you cannot criticize others unless you have a solid foundation of knowledge. I don't think here they emphasize originality. They only like criticizing and couldn't put forward a new solution. When they write essays, they pay much attention to the bibliography. So and so have said that, but they can't give a solution to the problem. Personally, I don't think they emphasize originality. Being original, you need to come up with a new solution. Up to now, all the articles I read are mainly critiquing other scholarships, pointing out shortcomings of each practice. What is wrong with this idea, and what is wrong with that idea. In the end, none is good. And they have no solution either. Then people will get more panic, won't they? (F5B p.5) Creativity is premised on accumulation of knowledge (F3, M2) We thought that creation can only come at later stage of learning. That is not true. Even primary school children could be creative. It has nothing to be stages (F4B).	'encourage' 'wild ideas' 'fancy idea' 'unique' 'never done before' 'new solution' 'new answer' 'knowledge contribution' 'foundation and creativity' 'creativity and accumulation' 'creative thinking'	Being original is risky Quote others will compromise originality and creativity Accumulation is necessary. change in conception Creativity is not necessarily premised on foundation.	Mimicry Tacit knowledge Risk avoidance Personal epistemological shift

(7) Discourse and rhetoric issues

Participants Own Words	Key Words	Semantic groupings	Category
Writing papers are not a big problem to me. Physicists of all over the world use the same language (English) to write their articles and publish in the same academic journals. No much difference, as long as you have something to write about (M5A) When I studied in Taiwan, we would take exams. If the question is 'compare the differences between A and B'. In Taiwanese way, we will begin with what is A and what is B, then what differences are between the two. If you don't know A and B, how could you compare them? But Western way of writing essays is to jump to the point directly. They don't want to read what is A and what is B. I feel that way is too abrupt. We have different audience in mind. I think the audience are average people, but they are writing for professors. It is ridiculous to talk about A or B to professors. I think I should clarify the meanings of the concept first, since the law systems of the two parts are different. But now I know better and do not waste time on it any more.' (F5B p.10) I am used to starting with telling stories and much background stuff, slowly drawing to my purpose. Their way is totally different. If we say ours is bottom-up, theirs is top-down. In the first chapter of introduction they have made clear what they are going to argue. It didn't took me long to adopt their style, because I was aware of my problems. I struggled a lot in the beginning. .My tutor told me that I had to be used to this (their) style to make myself understood. The first sentence of the each paragraph is the main idea of the whole paragraph, and the last sentence is the conclusion. After a while, I came to realize that what I write is not for myself, but should be of help to the other academics, so the writing attitudes are changed. (M7A)	'no much difference in science paper'. 1.'jump to the point' 'abrupt' 2. 'top-down' 3.'audience' 'verbose' 'repetitive' 4.'rigid structure' 'prescribed' 5. 'explicit' 'arguments' 'bottom-up' 'implicit' 'concise' 'subtle' 'obscure source' 'ideas' 'flexible'	Direct Deductive argumentative Not flexible [Attitude] Reluctant to change but resigned Actively to accommodate with appreciation	Differentiation Change/ unlearning (in writing attitude: writer /reader responsibility)

(8) Negotiating Learning Approaches

Participants Own Words	Key Words	Semantic groupings	Category
To me, language is the biggest problem. Even if I were here for ten years, I doubt I could communicate clearly as the local students with my supervisor, so I would make a list of topics and questions which I want to talk about with him, and e-mailed him what I think about those issues two days in advance. The written form is structured and clear and complete, and I can know what problems have been solved and what are not. Therefore, our meetings are very effective and efficient….Sometimes I prepare some questions to ask during our informal chatting.(M7A) Their coffee break is the time for my English class (M5A) What I learnt from textbooks is just factual knowledge about British educational system. Education should be concerned with people. So after class, I would talk with the local people and learned how they felt about their own education. What they provided was not professional knowledge, only their personal experience, but it would give me a link to what I have learnt from the class. Without this link, it would be very difficult for me to have a good understanding of their system. What we learnt from the textbook was very limited, and I tried to broaden it from outside of the classroom. When we were having casual talk, I would consciously brought up those issues, not without a purpose, and those bits and bobs from deep chatting could make me have better understanding what they were talking about when I was back to the class. I feel much better. I would create opportunities to talk with people from other countries about their educational systems and compare with the British system (F1C) For applied social science, there is no boundary between classroom and society. I learn much more from	1. observe Listen Speak/discuss Read Write 2. Think/reflect 3.Monitor/evaluate 'written feedback' 'effective' 'efficient' 4. 'informal occasions' 'deep chatting' 'after class' 'to broaden' 'to create opportunities' 'to compare' 'communicate after class' 5. 'make use of resources'('library',etc.)	modelling Make the best use of the informal learning opportunities optimal utilization of resources 'orchestrate study skills'	Savoir-apprendre/faire Negotiating learning space Create learning opportunity Deep learning

(9) Conceptions in learning (Time One)

Participants' Own Words	Key Words	Semantic groupings	Sub-categories
Learning is to gain knowledge and knowledge is power. (F2, F3, F4, M1, M4, M7) 'I feel that the output of Eastern and Western education is different: they (Western educators) teach children how to think, how to critique. When reading something, you need to think why, what holes can you find in it; but our education does not emphasize on this. We emphasize knowledge transmission and do not teach children to criticize what they have learnt, and this attitude will make a big difference after university level. Western students will far surpass Eastern students' (M6A). 'I told my classmate that I was very forgetful. I couldn't remember what I have learnt, and returned them to the teacher. And that Korean student told me that it was also important that we forget, for we have to empty our heads to learn something new. Since you have acquired the learning ability, like you pick a watermelon and have to put it down to pick up anything else. You can't store everything in your head and think someday you will get them out and apply' (F4B). 'I think memorization is important. They (Western students) cannot memorize the multiplicity table, and they use the calculator all the time, so we are much faster than they are in mental calculation. They say that the head is used to do more important thinking, not to be occupied by hard facts, but I say since you don't know how large is your brain's capacity is, why don't you try to store something? (Finance PhD student).	'seek knowledge' 'to store knowledge in your head' 'increase knowledge' 'enlarge the size of your knowledge' 'gain new information' 'remember' 'memorize/ learn by heart' 'accumulate and practice' 'master a new skill' 'know a new methodology' 'use it when needed' 'to find a new way to solve the problem' 'understand' 'chewing' 'digesting' 'internalizing' 'reflecting' 'how to think' 'how to learn' 'to analyse and solve problems' 'to explain the phenomena'	a. Accumulate knowledge b. Master skills and methods c. Understand and elaborate d. Apply to solve problems e. Develop competences f. Improve oneself as a person	A. Quantitative conception B. Cognitive conception C. Utilitarian conception D. Moral/Ethical conception

‘I memorize less and less now when I am here, because we have google. But memorization is essential. I never heard anyone who learned things without memorizing them?’ (M5A) ‘If you really understand something, you won’t forget. But looking back, I don’t remember much what we learnt in the university, all is returned back to the teacher’ (F2A). As far as learning is concerned, you shouldn’t expect to learn everything, which would be applied to your work, from school. You should be equipped with the ability to learn. I feel what I benefit most from learning here is I have acquired this ability, which helps me most. (F1, F4, M6) Some people would ask us that since you study law you must have learnt a lot by heart. But that’s wrong perception. The corpus law is there, and you can store it on one disk; when you need them just have a look, so what’s the point of bearing them all in heart/head? Understanding its system is the most important. You should know what it is about and when you have a case in hand you know how to solve it. (F4B) The process of accumulation is the process to train your critical thinking. The more you accumulate the easier for you to do critical thinking. (M6A).	‘to elaborate’ ‘to infer’ ‘to differentiate’ ‘resolve your won doubts’ ‘know better yourself’ ‘satiate one’s curiosity’ ‘to increase/ improve your competence/ ability’ ‘to acquire learning ability’ ‘to be creative’ ‘bounden duty’ ‘bright future’ ‘realize aspiration’ ‘utilitarian’ ‘access to benefits’ ‘vocation’ ‘social mobility’ ‘to improve yourself’ ‘self-development’ ‘free one’s mind’ ‘to make a Person’ (*zuo ren*)		

(10) Changes in conceptions of learning (Time Two)

Participants' Own Words	Key words	Semantic groupings	Sub-categories
Our British teacher said that in Britain that you major in law does not mean that you'll become a lawyer and that your major is geography does not mean that you have to find the job related to geography……It makes clear that learning ability is the most important, through which we can learn everything. Of course, working in those areas, like physics, you must have subject knowledge as well, but many occupations in society do not require much subject knowledge. Similarly, to be lawyer does not depend on the subject knowledge. (F4B) I think that no matter what degree you have got and no matter how much knowledge you have stored in your head, it would be useless if you have not acquired the cognitive ability (F1B). As I study engineering, it never occurred to me that communicative competence was any important until I came here. I found that you should possess not only subject expertise but also very good communicative competence. Those who had done very good research in our department also gave very good presentations to communicate their research findings. My supervisor kept reminding me of that and deliberately encouraged me in this aspect, but I let him down. Actually, I was very talkative before I went to senior high school, but both my father and my teacher gave me scolding for not being steady, because I talked too much. So gradually I became uncommunicative. My supervisor was very disappointed with me. He said 'how could you be so taciturn? That won't do'. I come to realize that it is important to develop communicative skills, but I don't think I can change back (M4C)	'not simply store knowledge' 'dead knowledge' 'hard facts' 'subject knowledge will be out of date' 'relating' 'problem solving' 'analytical thinking' 'comparing' 'contrasting' 'differentiating' 'independent thinking' 'acquire learning ability' 'acquire cognitive ability' 'develop communicative competence' 'generate one's own ideas' 'develop thinking ability' 'questioning' 'be creative' 'be critical' 'be original' 'good at logical thinking'	Slight subject knowledge Emphasize learning ability thinking and cognitive abilities	Qualitative conception

In China, the traditional intellectuals emphasize deep study of the nature of phenomena (Gewu zhizhi). And firstly, you need accumulate knowledge, that is what we understand at home, to learn is to learn knowledge, to put it in your head, to collect step by step. Personal points of view must be based on the accumulation of certain knowledge, otherwise you are not qualified to do that. When you come here, you'll find that is not the case. Even if you are a pupil in a primary school, you should have your own opinion about the matter. Learning is all by yourself. You need seek what you need and analyze by yourself and come to your own conclusion. That could be done on any stage (F4B) Reading cannot make a good social scientist …… Subject knowledge will perhaps be out of date soon, but the notions and values you learn here will be deep rooted in your heart, such as learn to respect people, understand their civilization and social justice, learn negotiations between people. Our socialist country falls short of these notions and values. …. So the change should not be at the superficial level. Some people only learn from the West those superficial things, like eating with knife and fork. I think learning should take place in your inner heart. I emphasize the inner change. Many people have changed their Chinese living habits, but their inner heart/mind is not changed at all. You can't say they have learnt the real/ authentic things' (F3B) Learning at home and learning abroad won't make much difference in your subject knowledge. Jumping out of the home circle will make a difference in the perspective where how you see things. I didn't think of this gain before I came here, but know I think that is the most valuable part of my overseas learning. As long as you want to learn, you will gain a lot in this aspect. Think of the financial burden we put on the family, this gain is worth the money we spent here (F3B).	'to have your own opinion' 'learn to argue' 'deep in research' 'independent researcher' 'a growth process' 'seek what you need' 'to know what you want to learn' 'be selective in absorbing' 'know yourself' 'superficial change' 'change in the deep level' 'notions change' 'values change' 'authentic change' 'change at inner heart' 'be tolerant' 'broaden your mind' 'nothing is really alien' 'see things from different perspectives' 'new angle to view' 'jump out of' 'open a new window' 'push open a door'	Growth process (academic) Self-knowledge Deep change in heart/mind Accommodate new values Gain new perspective Personal growth (ethical)	

Table: Categories in a Hierarchical Fashion

Reasons of Studying abroad	Perceptions of British learning culture	Learning conceptions (Time 1)	Learning approaches (Time 1)	Learning approaches (Time 2)	Learning conceptions (Time 2)
•Academic: - to get the degree – to increase subject matter knowledge – to improve English Instrumental: - to get the degree and find the ideal job •Personal: - to temper oneself; - to see the world; - to experience a new way of life	Teacher-Student Roles Independent Learning freedom independent learning self-reliance self-directed learning Participation contribution/ cooperation asking questions to clarify questioning/ challenging Norms of Academic writing manner of writing Referencing Plagiarism Originality Critical thinking	a. Accumulate knowledge b. Master skills and methods c. Understand and elaborate d. Apply to practice to solve problems e. Develop abilities/ competences f. Access to bright future/ career development g. Improve oneself as a person h. Form correct outlook on life and world Contribute to society j. 'Burden duty'	Cognitive: – Mimicking /Modelling – Practicing/ Training – Resourcing – Reflecting Metacognitive •planning •self-monitoring •self-evaluating •setting goals Affective: - Savoir-être:: open - Adjusting the state of heart/mind – Self-praising/ confidence boosting - Motivation maintaining, etc Social: - Interpersonal networking (Bible studies group) - Help-seeking	Selective learning • prioritize personal agenda Relating to reality Comparing/contrasting Questioning oneself Creating learning opportunities (communication) Optimal utilization of resources Seeking effective supervision Orchestrate study skills Learning in L2 inefficient disadvantaged Time constraints deadline one-year programme	Shift in personal epistemology -subject knowledge -certainty Emphasize higher order cognitive skills Acquire ability to learn (metalearning) Take (learning) as an academic socialization process Personal growth Change as a person - Deep change in heart/mind - Accommodate new values/ notions Gain new perspectives (See things differently) Self-knowledge