Confucius Institute Chinese Teachers

in the UK: language, culture and identity

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Declaration

I confirm that this is my own work, and that the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

Signed:

Date:

Acknowledgments

I must acknowledge the China Scholarship Council for the opportunity to pursue a doctoral study in the UK and its generous financial support.

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Abstract

This study focuses on identity and interculturality in the context of globalization. It explores the work and living experiences of Confucius Institute Chinese teachers (CICTs) in the UK through their accounts and reflection. Because of their betwixt and between situation, the CICTs' stories differ from those of immigrants, international students and pre-service student teachers, who have been the main focus in L2 identity research.

This Ph.D. research project was undertaken from August 2013 to July 2014 with a cohort of CICTs working in Britain. The focus is on exploring the way CICTs interpret and make sense of their sojourning experience, and how this context and the wider globalised social environment have impacted on their understandings and their personal growth. Underpinned by Bourdieu's notions of habitus, field and capital, Byram's notion of "intercultural mediator" and Kramsch's "symbolic competence", this study employs an explorative approach, and draws on interviews with four CI directors, two focus group discussions with eight CICTs and three longitudinal case studies of CICTs' weblogs, to understand the emergence, formation and growth of CICTs' identity.

The findings indicate that the teaching abroad experience improved symbolic competence and had a positive impact on CICTs. Being uprooted to an Anglophone context and positioned as foreigners, with limited understanding of English language and culture, CICTs strived for successful professional adjustment. By actively exercising agency and resilience, they eventually stepped out of ethnocentrism to become educators with world perspectives.

This study draws attention to some weaknesses of the CI program and offers suggestions for CI stakeholders as well as those responsible for future international

exchange programmes. It highlights the complexity of identity and agency, shedding

light on ways of improving cross-cultural communication competence in the classroom

and beyond in the era of globalization.

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Chapter 1 **Introduction**

1.1 **Rationale for the present study**

From 2008 to 2009, I participated in the (Chinese) Hanban-(American) College Board Chinese Teacher programme. I had been assigned to a high school in a Midwestern state, undertaking IB&AP (International Baccalaureate & Advanced Placement) Chinese courses teaching, known from 2010 as "Confucius classroom". This one year abroad experience was an important milestone in my personal and career path. Away from the comfort zone of mother tongue and social circumstances, encountering cultural shock and various adversities, I felt hesitant and puzzled. As D.H. Lawrence describes, I was taken "out of the glass bottle of [my] ego and … escape[d] like the squirrels in the cage of personality and into the forest"; I also "shiver[ed] with cold and fright", but was not overwhelmed; I caught a glimpse of the unknown part of myself and let the "unlying life rush in" (Lawrence, 1928, cited in D. Jones, 2007).

In 2010, I went to the UK to further my study. Once again living as a foreigner in an Anglophone country, daily life immersed me in the relationships between language and power, and the inevitable invisible, but nevertheless real, attendant tensions. In the meantime, I was intuitively aware of the changes to self-concept that were affecting my peers and me, as a function of the efforts we were making to adjust to British academia and society. Having been an international student in the UK and a Chinese teacher in the USA, I have gained a renewed sense of compassion and empathy for L2 sojourners which posed a number of questions. How could my personal experiences and study help

other sojourners in similar circumstances? Could my research findings be generalized to other sojourners working abroad?

In short, the interplay between research and practice has led me to a pragmatic course of action which recognises that, for many researchers, the choice of what to study is based on what is important within their personal value system (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 90). Thus for me, who was and will continue to be a language educator, a doctoral research project penetrating the long term sojourning experience of international professional, germinated as a journey of self-discovery to satisfy my curiosity, while also advancing my career.

1.2 Establishing a focus

The opportunity to teach Chinese was made possible by the burgeoning Confucius Institute (CI) programme. To date, the nascent research on CIs has mainly focused on foreign policy (Hartig, 2012a, 2015; Hoare-Vance, 2009; Paradise, 2009), dissemination strategy (Flew & Hartig, 2014; P. A. Smith, Hsi, Mirmirani, & Ilacqua, 2009; 安然 & 魏先鹏, 2015), program management (Stambach, 2014; L. H. Xu, 2008; 周志刚 & 乔章凤, 2008) and teaching practice (L. Wang, 2015; 刘程, 安然, & 崔淑慧, 2010), but rarely have researchers paid attention to Confucius Institute Chinese teachers (or CICTs) as the embodiment of academic mobility. The existing literature, (reviewed in chapter 2) makes visible the challenging scenery of teaching abroad and the contextualized and the conflicting nature of L2 identity. However, the individual experiences of government assigned professionals, particularly cohorts from developing to developed countries, call for inquiry.

The main purpose of this research is to explore the CICTs' working and living experience in Britain, to examine the drive behind their acculturation, the factors that influence it, and the forms it takes from arrival until repatriation in order to improve the outcomes of the CI program. Therefore, the overarching question for my research is: What are the factors that facilitate and obstruct the CICTs' acculturation?

The admission requirements (Hanban, 2011) and foreign language teacher's critical role cover personal dispositions such as age, language competence, history, social status, motives, time spend abroad and expectations, all of which are more complex than the factors discussed in previous research on sojourners which focuses on either immigrants, who may be expected to be fully-fledged members of society, or short term sojourners who may only experience "temporary liminality" (Jackson, 2008b). The acculturation and self-concept of the longer stay CICTs could well be different in much the same way that the expectations of the host culture are different. They are "cultural ambassadors" (H. Wang, 2014) in some aspects of media reporting but the "red invasion" in others. They are "experts" in the classroom but "novices" outside. Being positioned in relation to disparate roles, how will the overseas work experience influence CICTs' self-conception and personal growth? Will the CICTs' identity trajectories differ from those of other sojourners? What individual differences will shed light on the frequency and complexity of interaction that occurs in everyday life?

Hence this research endeavours to answer the following questions:

1: What promotes and constrains CICTs' acculturation in Britain?

2: How does overseas work experience influence CICTs' identity and agency?

3. What is the impact of this overseas experience on intercultural development and personal growth?

4. How can this knowledge be used for the benefit of the programme?

The first question aims to elicit the social processes relevant to the CICTs' particular sojourning contexts; the second and third questions probes the social-psychological process of self-conception (Kathleen Charmaz, 2006, p. 20). The last question attempts to bridge theory and practice, by providing suggestions for supervisors in charge of future international exchange programmes, while shedding light on intercultural communication competence in classroom teaching.

1.3 Structure of thesis

This study is organised in eight chapters. Chapter one has set out my reasons and purpose for undertaking this research and the process which allowed me to formulate my research questions.

Chapter two provides a history and a contemporary picture of the CI program and Chinese teaching in Britain, including the changing contexts within which the civilization shifted from the western takeover of the east to the rejuvenation of Chinese studies and, more recently, the spread of eastern culture to the west.

Chapter three sets out the theoretical underpinnings for the study and reviews the literature on residence abroad which informs the potential outcomes. Bourdieu's (Bourdieu, 1986, 1989; Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) conceptualization of habitus, capital and field will be discussed in terms of their profound implications for an understanding of L2 identity negotiation and acculturation.

The research methodology is presented in chapter four, including the research paradigm, the methods, participants and sampling, data collection and process procedures, ethics and trustworthiness issues.

Chapters five to eight report the findings of the study. Chapter five offers a platform for the voices of four CI directors and eight CICTs. Their background will be introduced; motivation and expectations of teaching abroad will be probed. Differences in language, culture, habitus and teaching practices, participants' adjustment, socializing and personal change will be discussed, based on both the data and the relevant literature. Chapters six, seven and eight respectively elaborate on the sojourning trajectories of three case study participants, Su, Qiao and Shan, which illustrate participants' unique experiences. Chapter six tells the story of Su, her efforts in adjusting to the foreign environment, her identity shifts, resistance and reflection on daily encounters. Chapter seven depicts Qiao, who made further progress down the road to global mindedness, his participation in the host communities and his travel adventures. Chapter eight reveals how a highly-skilled academic, Shan, struggles to gain legitimacy in the local community.

Chapters five to eight serve as the foundation of the cross-case discussion in Chapter nine. The findings are summarised in order to answer the four research questions set out above. The limitations of the study will be discussed and possible directions for further research suggested. This thesis concludes with thoughts on improving the CI program, and international academic mobility.

Chapter 2 **Confucius Institutes and the Teaching of Chinese**

In this chapter, I introduce the CI program and the domestic background for this study

I begin with an overview of the development, management and operation of the CI

program, followed by a brief overview of Chinese teaching in Britain, the current

situation, the challenges and the differences between Chinese and English education.

Finally, I contextualize my study by discussing the status of English in China, the

associated identity dilemma and the reassertion of traditional Chinese values.

2.1 **Confucius institutes**

Academic mobility, which refers to students and staff for learning and teaching in

another country, is not a new phenomenon. The notion of globalization has brought

unprecedented political, economic, and cultural changes (Hirst, Thompson, & Bromley,

2015), raising challenges for education, culture and identity (Heller, 2003; Kennedy &

Danks, 2001; Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004). In diplomacy, globalization has

also brought to light the importance of education as a bridge for promoting

communication, peace, global security, and sustainable solutions to complex human

problems. The Confucius Institute is one such example.

2.1.1 **The development of Confucius Institutes**

As the fastest growing economy in the world, China has finally moved from the

periphery of world politics to the centre, attracting global interest in its culture and

language (Zhao & Huang, 2010). Since the Jiang Zemin era of the1990s, China's leaders have sought to resurrect Confucianism as a powerful ideological tool, a means of promoting domestic peace and order as well as external harmony, securing sustainable national development and reducing international concerns about the "China threat" (Cho & Jeong, 2008; Lo & Pan, 2014; Roy, 1996).

The "Peaceful rise" theory, was first coined in 2003 by Zheng Bijian, a party theorist, to advocate the promotion of Chinese culture overseas as a means of overcoming hostility towards communism and Chinese people (Lo & Pan, 2014; 郑必坚, 2004). The theory, later known as "peaceful development", harnessed the notion of soft power to further soften the national profile (Jia, 2005), and to establish a favourable environment for China's sustainable development (Hoare-Vance, 2009).

Inspired by European counties' cultural diplomacy, the Confucius Institute (CI) project was launched in 2004 by Hanban[1], a non-profit agency affiliated to the Education Ministry of the People's Republic of China, for the purpose of "developing Chinese language and culture teaching resources and making its services available worldwide, meeting the demands of overseas Chinese learners to the utmost degree, and contributing to global cultural diversity and harmony"(Hanban, 2013; Ministry of Education, 2012).

Confucius Institutes (CIs) are named after Confucius (551-479 B.C), the ancient Chinese educator and philosopher, thus reinforcing historical roots and assuring the continuity as well as the legitimacy of traditional Chinese culture (H. Zhu & Li, 2014). The first CI was established in Seoul in 2004 with the mission to enhance socio-cultural

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[1] Hanban is the colloquial abbreviation of the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language. It is the headquarters of Confucius Institutes.

understanding, globalise Chinese culture and promote collaboration with foreign

countries (Hanban, 2013). In the same year, the General Secretary, Hu Jintao, launched

the '11th Five-year Plan (2006-2011) for Chinese Language to go abroad' (Bellabona &

Spigarelli, 2007; China Daily, 2006). CIs, then, "got off to a roaring start" (Economist,

2006).

Between 2004 and 2015, China set up 500 CIs (mostly in tertiary institutions) and 1000

Confucius Classrooms (CCs, the local hubs in primary and secondary schools), and

recruited 44,000 teachers in 134 countries and regions (People's Daily Online, 2015).

Numbers are set to increase to 1,000 CIs and CCs by 2020, with branches in nearly 500

large cities across the world (Xinhua News, 2013).

Seen as instruments of "soft power"[2] (Cho & Jeong, 2008; Gil, 2009; Hubbert, 2014), a

"Trojan horse with Chinese character" (McDowell, 2010; Mosher, 2012; Paradise,

2009), a tool for red "propaganda"(Dotson, 2011), Chinese cultural diplomacy (Barr,

2014; Hartig, 2012b; Wheeler, 2014) or "eduplomacy" (Stambach, 2014), the large

amount of investment on the part of Hanban upset some western countries. The

burgeoning CIs have indeed been the subject of much controversy.

Some critics see this as an ideological attempt to extend Chinese political control to the

Western world; others view CIs as an attempt to establish a benign international image

and to alleviate concerns about a "China threat" in the context of the country's

increasing economy and military power (Starr, 2009). Scholars actually involved in the

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[2] Soft power is the ability to achieve what you want by attraction, influence, persuasion and thus transformation, rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, policies and economic strength(Nye, 2004). Cultural events, exchange programs, broadcasting or teaching are tools of soft power.

CI programme tend to have more practical concerns about academic viability (Schmidt, 2010).

Fears began to emerge in the academic community that CIs might undermine academic freedom and human rights (Weston & Jensen, 2012). In 2010, for instance, 174 faculty members of an American university signed a letter turning down the establishment of a CI (Redden, 2012). The letter oppugned the institute as "an academically and politically ambiguous initiative" which would risk the university's academic integrity and reputation. Critics have questioned why colleges would provide their imprimatur to institutes that have been described by Li Changchun, a member of the CCP Politburo Standing, as "an important part of China's overseas propaganda setup" (Economist, 2009). A similar controversy flared up in Canada, where a university closed down the programme on the grounds of human rights; two other universities also declined to be hosts (Bradshaw & Freeze, 2013).

Scholars have had doubts, too, about the quality of teaching offered through the CIs. Weston and Jensen (2012) argue that the cultural diversity of China has been reduced by Hanban to a "uniform, quaint commodity," characterized by Chinese opera and dance performances: "The term most appropriate for CI programming is 'culturetainment' "(p. 295). Hence the Chinese-language education provided by CI likely falls short of standard proficiency (Redden, 2012).

Researchers such as (Barr, 2011, 2012; Hartig, 2012a) attribute the tension around the operation of CIs to the coercive utilitarian resources provided by the Chinese authorities. Not all academics, however, view CIs in such a critical light. As Hayes

(2008) points out, CIs undertake "similar activities as to what the British Council [for example] does".

In spite of the reservations already noted, the funding, material and human resources associated with CIs have proved attractive to overseas partners, particularly when foreign governments are reducing their education budgets. For instance, at a time when UK Universities and schools are reporting a major decline of the number of students taking modern foreign languages, the CI and CC projects offer a valuable source of funding for setting up new courses. Similar cases have been reported by Wheeler (2014), Hartig (2012b), Stambach (2015) and Starr (2009) in a range of other settings. By the same token, CIs offer valuable opportunities for graduate placement and teacher professional development for Chinese partner universities.

As opinions towards CI program vary, what actually happens in CI classroom? What factors affect CICTs' willingness to leave their homeland for teaching in a foreign setting? How do they interact with the host environment? How do the intercultural encounters affect their perceptions of the home and host society? This doctoral research project aims to lift the veil of CI program by telling the real life stories of the CICTs in the UK.

2.1.2 Project management and operation

In general, Confucius Institutes/classrooms adopt flexible teaching patterns adapted to suit local conditions. Provision includes various courses for learners and teachers of Chinese at all levels and for all purposes (academic, business and tourism, etc.); resources (including film and multimedia products); testing of language proficiency;

and curriculum design and development. Teaching mainly focuses on basic language skills and aspects of culture such as landmarks, music, dance, folklore, festivals, and food. Discussion of politics is carefully avoided.

Different CIs, however, have different foci. For instance, the Confucius Institute for Business London (CIBL) aims at promoting Chinese for business, serving as a hub for British and Chinese business communities. The IOE Confucius Institute for Schools at University College, London (UCL), serves as the national centre for advice on and support for Chinese language teaching and learning in primary and secondary schools. The CI at Moi University in Kenya features textile technology and fashion design. The CI at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology specialises in traditional Chinese medicine programs.

In contrast with European counterparts such as the British Council, the Goethe-Institute, the Instituto Cervantes, and the Alliance Française, there are three different models of CIs: those wholly operated by China; joint ventures with twinning arrangements between host and Chinese universities; and locally run offices licensed by the CI headquarters in Beijing.

Most CIs are operated as joint ventures with local partners taking care of physical and operational matters, thus minimising set up costs and maintenance (Lo & Pan, 2014; Starr, 2009). CI directors are usually appointed by both sides (Hartig, 2012b); CIs work out their own rules and regulations to strengthen the management of their teaching and financial affairs.

Hanban usually provides a start-up fund of US$100,000, followed by a 50:50 share of the annual budget for each institute (US$100,000 to US$250,000 (Hartig, 2012a)) , with

additional funds earmarked for specific activities; overseas partners also contribute to the funding and provide facilities and local staff (Hanban, 2013). After the initial period of agreement, which varies from three to five years, CIs are expected to become self-supporting by charging course fees (Barr, 2011; Hanban, 2013)

In addition to financial backing, the central organisation supplies teaching materials and authorises individual institutes to use its online courses. It also trains and finances teachers and volunteers from China (R. Yang, 2010).

The CI and CC teacher programmes usually last one to two years, but depending on local needs, some CICTs choose to extend their contract while some return because of ill-health, homesickness, or other reasons.

In the early years, Hanban prioritised expansion in North America and Europe, where educational bonds were well-established and language programmes were strong on both sides. However, the next stage of expansion was more problematic by dint of the scarcity of teaching resources for less commonly spoken language. Instead of sending Chinese teachers to these areas, the local teachers are sent to Beijing for six months' rudimentary training in Mandarin before returning to launch Confucius Institutes at universities in their own counties (China Daily, 2013). As Xu Lin, the Chief Executive and Director of the Confucius Institutes worldwide since 2004, comments, Confucius Institutes need "to feel less like a 7-11 and more like a superstore"(Peters, 2013).

2.1.3 Ongoing challenges

Ongoing operational challenges include teacher recruitment, the shortage of teaching resources and sustainability. As Starr (2009) reports, it is difficult to recruit qualified local teachers to teach on CI /CC programs. On the Chinese side, few experienced

university teachers are interested in leaving their comfort zone to work abroad for one or more years, especially when the pay is not particularly attractive (about US$1500 per month, according to Barr (2011) and Ren (2012)). Moreover, many Chinese appointees have been found to be lacking in the much-needed institutional and cultural knowledge required for successful teaching overseas, and are thus not well placed to tailor teaching (Siow, 2011; R. Yang, 2010; 刘骏, 2010).

The teaching materials supplied by Hanban are also a matter of concern. For example, materials in Russia were found to be unhelpful, as they had sometimes been translated poorly and inaccurately from English. In the UK, teaching materials have been described as 'awkward and inapplicable', while there has been a shortage of textbooks in Spanish-speaking countries (Siow, 2011, p. 2). Hartig (2012b) reports that the textbooks barely meet Australian standards for readability: difficulty levels are too high; and learners dislike the emphasis on rote memorisation. In her study of language ideology and hegemony in an American CI classroom, Stambach (2015) found Hanban textbooks created a stereotypical picture of the new international speakers of Chinese as technologically literate and geographically mobile business men to the exclusion of other learner groups. H. Zhu and Li (2014) draw attention to translation issues in textbooks, noting that Hanban textbooks ignore the learning needs of overseas Chinese-heritage students.

More recently, Hanban has acknowledged the inappropriateness of textual resources for local needs. While beginning to encourage initiatives in this area, it is clearly difficult to establish a benchmark across institutes or to cater to the needs of a wide variety of local contexts/cultures while maintaining quality control (Lo & Pan, 2014).

Sustainability in the face of organisational and political pressures is also a concern. The complex management structure and the diverse backgrounds of the teaching staff pose challenges at all levels (H. Zhu & Li, 2014). For instance, it is not uncommon for Chinese teachers to arrive well after the start of the school term due to visa issues (R. Yang, 2010). On May 2012, a number of Confucius Institute Chinese teachers were removed from America due to alleged visa violations. The State Department announced the J-1 Visas currently held by CICTs, for people participating in work- and study-based exchange programmes, were inappropriate for CICTs engagement in teaching in the US (Cheng, Luo, & Tan, 2012). Dissenting voices in the mass media also suggest that the CI project has not been plain sailing in other western countries.

2.2 The Chinese in Britain

The Chinese community is one of the biggest ethnic groups in the UK today (Chan, Cole, & Bowpitt, 2007; Parker, 1999). Compared with other ethnic minorities, the Chinese are "socioeconomically more widespread and decentralised, have a record of high academic achievement, and have one of the highest household incomes among demographic groups in the UK" (British Chinese). Since most British Chinese traditionally originated from three areas (Hong Kong, Fujian and Guangdong), which use Min dialects and Cantonese (Ross, Ma, He, & Chen, 2014), Cantonese was the variety taught in most complementary and community schools before the introduction of Mandarin into mainstream schools . Recently, the increased number of mainlanders, including Chinese international students, has fuelled the ongoing growth of the British Chinese community (W. Li & Zhu, 2011).

In Britain, Mandarin Chinese teaching and learning are supported by three main organizations: the British Council, Hanban and the Confucius Institutes. Before 2001, the British Council worked together with the Department for Education in England, the Scottish Parliament in Scotland and the National Assemblies in Wales and Northern Ireland to develop links between schools in the UK and China (P. Wang, 2009). Since 2000, the HSBC Education Trust have also been working with the British Council to help to spread Mandarin Chinese and culture through projects such as: Chinese Language Assistants (CLAs) teaching in UK schools; the annual residential Summer Schools for 100 key stage 2 UK children; and the annual Mandarin Speaking competition for secondary school students (Institute of Education, 2013). As already mentioned, Hanban takes responsibility for recruiting teachers and volunteers from China to teach Mandarin in CIs and CCs.

The British are reputed to be poorly motivated to learn foreign languages, due to the status of English as an international lingua franca. EU languages such as French and to a lesser extent, German and Spanish remain the top choices for students of modern foreign languages, although there is also provision for non-EU languages, including Arabic, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin or Cantonese Chinese, Modern Hebrew, Panjabi, Russian, Turkish, Urdu (Worton, 2009).

China's stable and continuing economic growth is changing other countries' attitudes towards Mandarin (Gil, 2009) with the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron urging UK schools to teach the language after his visit to China in December, 2013 (Stacey & Warrell, 2013). The British Council and Hanban have agreed to double the number of Chinese language assistants by 2016, and to fund 60 head teachers for study visits to China in 2014, with the goal of doubling the number of Mandarin learners to 400,000

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(Stacey & Warrell, 2013). The UK Parliament at Westminster has also agreed to increase the funding for schools to teach the language. According to Elizabeth Truss, the Education Minister, China's growing economy brings huge business opportunities for Britain and it is vital that British young people are able to speak Mandarin if they are to take advantage of China's booming economy over coming years (Paton, 2014). A significant increase was seen in the provision for Chinese teaching in English schools: from 7-8% of state secondary schools to 17%, alongside 45% of independent schools (Board & Tinsley, 2014).

2.2.1 CIs and CCs in Britain

In Britain, there are currently 25 CI and 92 CCs, covering England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Classes are open to both university students and members of local communities. Some classes take place in the evening or weekends so as to accommodate the needs of professionals (Ye, 2014; H. Zhu & Li, 2014).

The CCs are based in schools. They were initially coordinated through the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT), and then transferred to the IoE Confucius Institute for Schools, UCL which reports that over 6,000 students are registered for the Confucius Classroom curriculum (Institute of Education, 2013).

According to a survey (Ye, 2014) of 178 Chinese teachers which I conducted on behalf of the Education Section of the Chinese Embassy in 2013 , the majority of CICTs are female, and nearly three out of four (73.14%) are below 40 years old . All of them have a strong educational background: 10.5% have doctorates and more than half (54.1%) have Masters Degrees. The majority of these teachers have specialized in language-related subjects, including Teaching Chinese as Foreign Language (TCFL), Chinese

literature and English. Almost all (94.4%) have prior teaching experience, and most (88.4%) have undergone Chinese teaching training.

2.2.2 Challenges in Britain

CICTs report that multi-level teaching, heavy workload and stress are commonplace in the workplace (Ye, 2014). Approximately a third of CICTs listed social and professional acculturation as the main challenge, followed by the stress related to visa and work permits, English language proficiency, and low pay. Some teachers added that the lack of understanding and support from their home institutions put them at a disadvantage in terms of promotion upon return. Working aboard and leaving family behind also caused concern.

From the perspective of project operation and management, teachers deemed the lack of opportunities for training and development, teaching materials, peer support and teaching facilities to be the mostly encountered problems. As mentioned earlier, textbooks are often considered unsuitable, which means that teachers need to design their own teaching materials. However the lack of continuity when most teachers stay for only one to two years is a further challenge, since it is usually not until the second year, not long before their return to China, that teachers are sufficiently familiar with the teaching context to address this issue. In this regard, Xie (2013) emphasises the importance of having stable, skilled and qualified Chinese teachers in UK schools.

2.3 Differences between Chinese and English education

When I was about to write this section, the BBC had just released the documentary "Our Kids Tough Enough? Chinese School", an experiment employing Chinese

teachers and Chinese traditional teaching methods for a month in a English secondary school which aroused hot discussion. Despite the fact that the program makers arguably exploited national stereotypes on both sides, exaggerating differences for dramatic effect and in order to increase viewing figures, this programme succeeded in highlighting the education divergences, which were affected by a wide range of cultural, social, psychological and contextual factors (Q. Gu & Schweisfurth, 2006; Nisbett, 2003).

These differences tend to be explained in terms of the knowledge-transmission Confucian model prevalent in countries such as China and the student-centred communicative western classroom (Cortazzi & Jin, 2001; L. Jin & Cortazzi, 2002a; Nuckles, 2000; Sandholtz, 1997). Hu (2003), for instance, characterises Chinese classrooms as dominated by the deductive transmission of knowledge with a notable absence of interactive activities, and "one curriculum fits all" teaching (H. Zhang & Zhong, 2003). This is obviously at odds with British classroom, where the emphasis is on personalised, differentiated learning which allows for differences within a teaching group, including those of students who have special educational needs (SEN) (Mittler, 2012); British teachers are expected to adapt materials and to maximize learning outcomes for individual pupils (D. Brown et al., 2002; Lindsay, 2007).

In terms of learning style, rote-learning and memorisation are deemed diligent endeavours that eventually lead to success in China while reasoning, imagination and group work are encouraged in the UK (Dias & Harris, 1990) and learning as an enjoyable experience is highly valued (Packer, 2006).

Confucianism reinforces the hierarchical structures in society, which are particularly evident in the relationships between students and teachers (V. Edwards & Li, 2011;

Ellis, 1996). Teachers are perceived to be the source of authority and knowledge. Students owe respect and are not supposed to challenge teachers (Hu, 2002; L. Yu, 2001). The British, in contrsat, tend to value equality in personal relations (Nisbett, 2003): teachers are viewed as helpers and facilitators, the relationship between teachers and students is more egalitarian .

Chinese teachers, on the other hand, form research groups which can be seen as strong 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991), creating opportunities for innovation and stimulation among colleagues. They are grouped by either subject or the year group they are working with. Teacher research groups usually do marking and lesson planning together in a shared workspace (D. Li & Edwards, 2013). Collegial observation of lessons is a common activity for evaluation and peer learning.

The situation in China is not, of course, static. Recent curriculum reform under the banner of "quality education" (素质教育）marks a shift towards student-centred and communicative and task-based teaching (Dello-Iacovo, 2009; Huang, 2004).However, most of the CICTs were either at what researchers in the management of change refer to as knowledge or persuasion stages at the start of their overseas service (Fullan, 2002). For such groups of border-crossers, adjusting to British education, is indeed a process of "reculturing".

2.4 The domestic background for the study

Having described the historical background, the emergence, development and the status of CIs worldwide, I will move next to a discussion of two social trends in China, which drive the CICTs' decision to teach abroad: the status of English in China; and the Guoxue revival.

2.4.1 The Status of English in China

Kachru (2005) compares the presence of English in many Asian countries with the two faces of Janus, describing this as an example of linguistic 'schizophrenia'. In the particular case of China, there is polarisation, on the one hand, between those (headed by the Chinese government) in favour of the widespread use of English and, on the other hand, those against the institutionalization of English who view it as a "killer language" (p. 165) that could potentially replace Chinese and/or contaminate Chinese culture. In fact, China has the largest English learning population in the world; more than 300 million people have learned or are learning English (Bolton, 2006; Crystal, 2008; Hu, 2005)

2.4.1.1 English as a resource of modernization

The history of English learning in China can be traced back to the 1600s, when the British established a trading port in Guangzhou. The Qing government at that time relied on non-Han people or social outcasts for interpreting and translation services (Adamson, 2002; Gil, Adamson, & Feng, 2011). Before the nineteenth century, English was considered a barbarian language spoken only (in pidgin form) by the despised compradors or native manager of European business houses in East and South East Asia (Adamson, 2004, p. 22). In 1840, the opium war was to be a wakeup call for the "the middle kingdom" (the literal meaning of "Zhong guo", or China), which for a long time had believed it was indeed the centre of the world. In order to save the feudal monarchy, the central government subsequently launched the "self-reliance" and "seeking the rich" oriented Self-Strengthening Movement (洋务运动) between the 1860s and 1890s. Students were sent abroad to study language, science, technology and

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diplomacy on the principle of " learning the merits from the foreign to conquer the foreign"(师夷长技以制夷) (Meng, 2009).The Historical Notes of the Qing Dynasty describe this initiative in the following terms:

> Facing the threat of solid ships and powerful canons of foreign powers, there is an urgent need for training specialists in translation, ship building, and the preparation of ground and naval forces. The first thing to do now is to establish schools for such purposes …." (Cheng, 2008, cited in Bianco, Orton, and Yihong,(2009, p. 61).

The history of Chinese foreign language education has been connected with utilitarianism since this time; Chinese government policy has been to endorse the instrumental value of foreign languages and to avoid foreign cultural values to the greatest extent possible (Bianco et al., 2009, p. 63).

From the 1980s, many Chinese citizen were not content to learn English in China, preferring to go abroad (出国热) to seek their western dreams. By the end of the twentieth century, English teaching and learning were identified with Chinese modernization (Hu, 2005; L. Jin & Cortazzi, 2002b). As the Ministry of Education official, Cen Jianjun, points out:

> Foreign language teaching …bears direct influence on the development of China's science, technology, and economy, and the improvement of the quality of reform…. If a nation's foreign language proficiency is raised, it will be able to obtain information of science and technology from abroad and translate it into the native language. Ultimately this will be turned into production force. (Cen, 1998, cited in (Y. Gao, 2009, p. 64)

Endeavouring to present a unified and revitalized modern face to the world, China has made determined efforts to accommodate globalization and turn the cultural capital of English knowledge and skills into economic capital (Kirkpatrick, 2002, p. 155). In 2001, the Ministry of Education stipulated that the threshold for compulsory English education be lowered to grade three in primary school, four years earlier than required in the 1980s. In the same year, "Guidelines for Improving Teaching for University Undergraduate Students （关于加强高等学校本科教学工作提高教学质量的若干意见）" (教育部, 2001) advocated the use of English as an additional medium of instruction at tertiary level (Bianco et al., 2009). Since 2010, all state employees under the age of 40 have been required to master at least 1,000 English word and phrases, and all schools have begun teaching English in kindergarten. At the same time, the Chinese government has also funded extensive English teacher training programs at home and abroad to develop English teaching. This "socially stratifying language-in-education policy" (Lin & Martin, 2005) is creating a situation where power and status accrue to those who obtain a high level of English proficiency (Jackson, 2010). Notably, the public perception of English learning is undergoing change: the previous motivation is shifting to recognition of the economic, cultural and social "capital" associated with English (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991).

2.4.1.2 Instrument for economic success or a creator of new inequalities?

English is the key to success; this understanding is universally acknowledged in contemporary China, equivalent to the assumption in the time of Jane Austin that every single man in possession of a good fortune needed a good wife. Even this researcher's illiterate 75 years old grandma is aware of this reality. Despite hopeful smiles on faces

or hints of resentment in eyes when discussing the subject, the Chinese lavish time and money on English language learning. In contemporary China, English language education itself has developed into a semi-autonomous field in the context of globalization (D. Chen, 2006; H. M. Zhu, 2003) Advertisements for private lessons are everywhere; English marketing emphasises "promotion", "salary raise" and "glamour". "American accents" and "speaking fluent English in 30 days" are hawked as shortcuts appealing to those who seek upward mobility. Chinese students who learn English believe that they will eventually reap increased economic benefits as a direct outcome of EFL study (Y. Gao, Zhao, Cheng, & Zhou, 2007; M. Liu, 2007).

Nor is this a groundless rumour. Take the case of two leading figures in private English teaching: Yu Minhong, the "god father of studying abroad", the principal of Xindongfang School (known also as the New Oriental) and Li Yang, the celebrity teacher of "Crazy English". In the early 1990s, when Yu Minhong, who came from a peasant background, failed in his application to go abroad, he resigned his teaching post in Peking University and started his business in TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) training. From 1993 to 2011, his schools expanded from a 30 student class to 487 sub-branches nationwide with 2,090,000 students; net profits reached 110.8 million US dollars by the time this enterprise became the first Chinese education company listed on New York Stock Exchange. Yu has been recognised as one of the 'Top 10 People Who Have Influenced Chinese Society in the 21st Century" (Zhou, 2003).

Li Yang's teaching method has been characterized as "fairly simple sessions of elementary English" (Busse, 2011) coupled with hand signals, and large-class-teaching for thousands of people is stadia across the country yelling slogans such as "I want to be

crazy", "Conquer English to make China stronger", "What do we need now? We need heroes" and "What else do we need? English" (Bolton, 2006).

Yu Minhong and Li Yang's life stories are examples of the rags to riches narratives in which learning English is promoted as the means to accumulate social and economic capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). Other examples of the widespread perceptions of English include a news report on hammer athlete. Zhang Xiuwen, whose stripping of the gold medal in the 2012 London Olympics was attributed to insufficiency of English. It is interesting to juxtapose this incident with another article counting good English as a reason for China's gold medal in the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010. In the article "Better English, More Confidence and the Best Performance Ever", chef-de-mission Xiao Tian was reported to claim "more and more Chinese athletes in winter sports have become integrated into the world's sports family as they speak good English…it is one of the main reasons why they did such a good job in Vancouver" (Lei, 2010). Fluent English, then, does not simply guarantee a well-paid, decent job. As described by Zhang (A. L. Zhang, 1997, p. 39): "More as a symbol of success, the power of English make individual learner's enterprising dream tangible".

From central government to the grass roots class, the advocacy of English as part of the modernization process has, however, been no smooth operation, giving rise to conflicts of ideology and identity, particularly on the grounds of national patriotism and "purity" (Busse, 2011).

2.4.2 The identity dilemma in China

The high importance attached to English raises interesting questions about identity. Scholars are starting to call into question the "homogenizing tendencies"(L. T. McCabe, 2001), the "cultural collective unconscious" and the "loss of national identity" (Bianco et al., 2009; M. Gu, 2010) associated with learning English.

One such example is the call for the rejection of Christmas celebrations made by 10 young PhD candidates from top Chinese universities in December 2006 Their article entitled "Transcend Cultural Collective Unconscious, and Promote the Agency of Chinese Culture – Our view of Christmas celebrations" was widely disseminated and aroused national discussion. The authors argued:

> In China, the status of Western culture has changed from a drizzle to a
> tempest, and its most prominent manifestation is the gradual
> popularization of Christmas celebrations … This phenomenon reveals
> the Chinese have fallen into a cultural collective unconscious … and its
> fundamental reason is Chinese culture's loss of subjectivity and
> degradation of agency.(translation cited in Bianco et al. (2009, p. 82)
> 西洋文化在中国已由微风细雨演变成狂风骤雨，最为直接和集中的
> 体现，莫过于圣诞节在中国的悄然兴起与日趋流行……国人在文化
> 上陷入集体无意识"的表现，其根本原因是"中国文化的主位性缺失
> 和主体性沉沦" (王, 2006)。

Christmas celebrations have become increasingly popular in China with Santa becoming a familiar sight on streets and on TV, even though Christmas is not recognized either as a legal holiday or religious festival. In a survey of "Western

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festival celebrations " posted on the Huanqiu portal (world.huanqiu.com 环球网), 78% of 12,000 respondents, expressed worries about the perceived western cultural invasion, including: " I am afraid that Chinese will not even remember their traditional festivals; it is every (Chinese)'s duty to protect our culture (我害怕以后的中国人都不记得自己国家的传统节日了,好好的保护中国的文化是每一个中国人的职责) "; "We need to be innovated on our traditions, instead of blindly follow the Western culture（所以我们要努力在中国人自己的节日上创新。而不是一味的追求西方的节日)" and "Chinese tradition virtues are fading, the Western culture invasion removes our culture root (中华传统佳节在慢慢淡化，西方文化的进入使中华民族找不到根)" However, 2,629 respondents argued that Western celebrations simply offer stressed people an excuse to relax; of these, some thought it was an indication of globalization, nothing to worry about (环球网, 2010).

Another example concerns the animal rights debate, triggered by an incident in which "animal rights activists rescued a truckload of dogs along the Beijing-Harbin Highway" which generated much attention in the Chinese media and the internet (Wan, 2011). This debate had been labelled by the Washington Post as "the latest sign of China's rapidly changing mores and culture" (Wan, 2011), although "many (Chinese) still cannot quite understand why it is immoral to eat dog meat if we can happily devour beef or pork" (Daily, 2011). In a similar vein, an article entitled "Every dog has its day for dinner" (R. Yu, 2013), which drew attention to the growing amounts of money being spent of pet-related products, also created a stir. Critics objected that things like spending on dog food, taking dogs to the vet and for walks is not part of Chinese culture, but rather an imitation of the Western life style and flaunting wealth. Some

netizens have pointed to the symbolic nature of the debate, and the widening gap

between the western life style of the rich and the traditional Chinese habitus of the poor.

Robert Phillipson comments that, 'English serves the interests of some much better than

others. It includes some and excludes others'(Phillipson, 1992, p. 89); in the same vein,

it can be argued that English and its culture in China is functioned more of bilingual

prioritization (S. Cole, 2007).

2.4.3 Guoxue revival

One of the reactions to globalization and the popularity of English and many aspects of

western culture has been the reassertion of traditional values. A recent article in the *The*

Economist, " Confucius says, Xi does" (Economist, 2015), reports President Xi

Jinping's trip to Qufu, Confucius' hometown, on 2013, his attendance at international

Confucius commemoration on 2014, and his efforts to promote Confucianism as a

powerful ideological tool for those "unsettled by China's blistering pace of change" (p.

49). It also referred to the President Xi's emphasis in the "collective study" session of

the ruling Politburo in 2014 on the legacy of Confucius and the notion that traditional

culture should act as a "wellspring" nourishing the party's values. Xi has in fact

endorsed his respect for Confucius on multiple occasions (Lampton, 2014; F. Zhang,

2015). Nor is he the first Chinese leader to turn to the ancient philosophy for support.

The interest in this Chinese legacy has in fact been a recurring feature of mass culture

for centuries. It was evident, for instance, in the last decade of Qing dynasty (1644 to

1912), promoted as a means to "enhance patriotic fervour and stir racial sensibilities"

(J. Chen, 2011, p. 24).

It was revisited in the early twentieth century in response to the pressures caused by

"the influx of Western learning that had begun to unsettle and displace forms of classical learning" (Tong, 2011, p. 32). The most recent revival of Confucianism is sometimes referred to as the "Guoxue craze" (国学热). Dirlik (2011, p. 10) describes this phenomenon in the following way:

> Guoxue attempt(s) to solve the contradiction in modern China through the "sinicisation" (中国化) of the ancient past. It may be construed 'as one response among others to the contradictions created by nationalism under the hegemonic circumstances of Euromodernity.

The country's first ever annual Guoxue Cultural Festival was launched in Guozijian in 2010 in Beijing, China's highest academic institution during the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties. This Guoxue Festival includes Confucius worship ceremonies, Guoxue forums, the music of Confucian Temples and exhibitions detailing Confucius' theory of ethics. The most eye-catching part was the prelude to the festival, which combined poetry reading, etiquette and court music, aiming to promote the Chinese cultural legacy to people worldwide through artistic means, while refreshing interest in Chinese traditional philosophy (China Daily, 2010).

Similarly, the *Global Times* released a series of pictures of a traditional Lantern Festival celebration in Xi'an on the evening of 5th Febuary, 2012 (Gong, 2012). A number of youths wearing traditional Han costumes (汉服), gathered to take part in a series of activities in observance of Chinese traditions, such as Nuo Wu (傩舞，evil warding dance), Cu Ju (蹴鞠，an ancient form of football), and the drinking of realgar wine (雄黄酒 xionghuang jiu,).

Web sites devoted to classical culture, the return of Hanfu and Qipao (旗袍) (traditional

costumes) (Chew, 2007), the traditional arts (ancient musical instruments, traditional opera, calligraphy and the like), together with Qing palace drama, and a TV travel series focusing on ancient dynasties have been attracting large followings, a counter to the mini-shorts, skate boards, hip-hop, and Hollywood blockbusters which are currently also enjoying great popularity in China.

The rejuvenation of Chinese studies has also been welcomed by educational institutions. Many universities have re-introduced classical Chinese and added traditional content to textbooks. Several top universities[3] have established "National Studies Institutes", providing programs on traditional Chinese philosophy, literature, religion, arts and etiquette; attracting government administrators, state-company managers, entrepreneurs, intellectuals and other middle class participants (L. S. Zhu, 2012). Some universities have launched undergraduate and graduate programmes in National Studies, leading in turn to a renewed interest in Chinese classical literature. Yi Zhongtian's (易中天) "Commentary on the Three Kingdoms" and YuDan's (于丹) "About The Analects," aired on CCTV's "Lecture Room"(百家讲坛) program have further popularised interest in this area, contributing to the mushrooming of classical literature, national studies courses and Sishu (私塾，ancient private schools) (L. S. Zhu, 2012). In short, the Guoxue revival has gained legitimacy among policy makers, intellectuals and the broader population, not only in terms of heritage, but also as the embodiment of Chinese national culture (Tong, 2011).

A serious weakness in discussions of the Guoxue revival, however, is that Confucianism has been referred to in polarised terms. Chinese and Western cultures

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[3] (Renmin (人民) University, Tsinghua (清华) University, Xiamen (厦门) University, Wuhan （武汉） University) and other tertiary institutions

have been presented as a "water and oil" dichotomy: the more "Chinese", the less modernity; the more modernity, the less "Chinese" (J. Chen, 2011; Dirlik, 2011). The question therefore arises: "The French are modern but still French; the Italians are modern but still Italian. Why can the Chinese not also be modern and still Chinese?" Does modernization necessarily mean westernization? Zhang Zhidong (1837–1909), an eminent politician who advocated controlled reform, proposed: "Chinese learning for essence (体); Western learning for utility (用). In a similar vein, Maoists proposed: "Western things to serve China" (洋为中用). Ji Xianlin (季羡林), however, moves the debate in an interesting new direction by redefining the principle of "taking and sending" (拿来主义和送去主义) and arguing that China has learned a lot from western world, and is now well placed to make its own contribution to the global quest for modernization. He proposes that the eastern "unity of nature and humanity" has the potential to complement the western concern with " man conquering nature", in the process solving many current problems facing the world (季, 2007).

The Confucius Institute program is arguably a good illustration of this "going out" of Chinese culture.It is important to note that cultures are no longer 'tied' to the geography or ethnicity (Tomlinson, 2007), global processes mould local actions while local actions in turn shape global flows (Swyngedouw, 1997, p. 137). While English has made the transition from colonial language to an international lingual franca, China has moved from a "homogenous" society (L. Pan, 2015) to one characterized by "multipositionality" and "hybridity" (K. Liu, 2004, p. 14). On the one hand, the promotion of Chinese culture, domestic rejuvenation and overseas dissemination can be seen as examples of "reverse colonization" (Giddens, 2000, pp. 34-35); on the other hand, the nationwide interest in learning English learning can be understood as a means

to close the gap between China and the developed countries; Chinese studies, home and abroad, thus allow China to actively participate in the process of globalization.

2.5 Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the history and current situation of the CI program and Chinese studies at home and abroad, making visible the power asymmetries which threaten and transform traditional values and practices while, at the same time, leading to the reassertion of national identity. The teaching abroad journeys of the CICTs thus offer both opportunities and challenges which will be explored in greater detail in the following chapters. I turn next to the research on sojourning which explores the potential outcomes for those involved in teaching abroad, and define what is meant by intercultural competence and global mindedness.

Chapter 3 **Intercultural Competence: the Experience of Sojourning**

As Giddens remarks, " the day-to-day activities of an individual today are globally consequential" (1994, pp. 57-58). Globalization means we have unprecedented chances to travel to different countries, practicing foreign languages, tasting exotic cuisines, meeting other cultures. We also face unparalleled challenges, as we reflect on ideas from other countries, other cultures, and re-examine our own thoughts.

This chapter discusses how the sojourning experience can have an impact on the development of intercultural competence and self-expansion in individuals in general, and, in particular, in teachers. The concept of sojourner, in this thesis, refers to "temporary between-society culture travellers" (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001, p. 6). In this chapter, the theoretical conceptions that offer a lens to examine the sojourner experience and underpin this research, as well as relevant studies framed by these theories will be reviewed. Of particular importance to this discussion are the social turn in second language research, the Bourdieuian concepts of: habitus, field and capital.

3.1 Social turn in second language research

Traditionally, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research has been underpinned by a psycholinguistic approach which views individual learners as "stable, internally homogeneous, fixed entities" (Hall, 2002, p. 31), with the goal of achieving native-like proficiency in an additional language (Firth & Wagner, 1997). In addition, individuals are seen as independent from context and individual actions are believed to be driven by internal motivations.

The individual differences of second language (L2) learners have been the subject of many competing theories (Pavlenko, 2002; Skehan, 1991). The focus on learner attributes (age, aptitude, personality, learning disabilities,), learner conceptualizations (motivation, attitude, cognitive style, beliefs) and learner actions (learning strategies) reflect the predominance of experimental research (Larsen-Freeman, 2007, 2014; Pica, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 1995).

From the mid-1990s, however, the "social turn" in second language acquisition (Block, 2003) has focused attention on the need for more socially informed research which links learners' perceptions of additional language learning to contextual factors and the interactions between individuals and the world (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Hall, 1997). Qualitative approaches, such as ethnography (P. Holmes & O'Neill, 2012; Morita, 2004), narrative inquiry (Nunan & Choi, 2010) and diary studies (DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Jackson, 2006a; Norton, 1995), have been used to probe second language (SL) learners' experiences in natural environments, for example, young ESL learners in school (Berwick & Walley, 2000; Day, 2002; Koga, 2009; Miller, 2000, 2003), university ESL students on study abroad programs (Byram, 1993; Byram & Feng, 2006; Kinginger, 2004; Patron, 2007), adult immigrants (Norton, 1995, 2000; Pavlenko, Blackledge, Piller, & Teutsch-Dwyer, 2001), EFL teachers (Duff & Bell, 2002; Tsui, 2007) and transnational professionals (Hannigan, 2001; Leong & Ward, 2000; Lysgaand, 1955; Sussman, 2000).

3.2 Theoretical underpinning: Bourdieu

I begin with the Bourdieuian concepts central to the study of sojourning: habitus, field and capital (Bourdieu, 1984, 2011). Other theoretical influences relevant to this study emerge from the review of literature on studying abroad which follows

3.2.1 Habitus

Bourdieu (1977) defines **habitus** as a set of durable, transposable, socially acquired dispositions, which predispose the individuals to act, think and behave in particular ways. This includes the "way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and using implements, always associated with a tone of voice, a style of speech and … a certain subjective experience" (1977, pp. 85-87). Although individualized, the habitus in fact reflects a shared cultural context (Adams, 2006). Habitus, then, is an unconscious, unthinking, habitual formation. It is the embedded cultural commonalities of a social class, imprinted upon its members and reproduced by individual deportment (Bourdieu, 1977). The habitus is a product of history which is both of product of, and produces, individual and collective practices (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). Habitus thus implies a "sense of one's place" but also a "sense of the place of others" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 19). It explains why individuals tend to align or sympathize with one group but feel distant from the other, something which is often observed in the case of sojourning. Bordieu's construct of habitus has been criticised for being deterministic (Halle, 1996; King, 2000; Widick, 2003). Bourdieu and others (Harker, 1984; Navarro, 2006), however, argue that the habitus is neither fixed nor permanent, and can change over time and across circumstances. In a similar vein, the particular context into which the

individual enters can reshape the practices. Hence there is a mutual constitution of both habitus and context. In this respect, Wacquant (2008) argues that the people who experience transnational migration or undergo great social mobility often manifest segmented or conflictive dispositional sets (p. 267). He reinforces both "the social continuity and discontinuity" of habitus: on the one hand, its dispositions are developed through time and space; and, on the other hand, they might change, disappear ,or be added when faced with a different "field" where primary values collide (p. 268). In empirical studies of sojourning, this collision may take the form of **culture shock**, accompanied by **identity expansion or shift**, themes that I will discuss below.

3.2.2 Capital

In Bourdieuian terms, the habitus can be translated into power, eventually becoming forms of resource (economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital) to exchange for goods (Bourdieu, 1986). These forms of capital may be equally important, and can be accumulated and transferred from one arena to another (Navarro, 2006, p. 17). Bourdieu's definition of capital is very wide and covers both "material and immaterial resources" (Ihlen, 2009, p. 66). As Harker, Bourdieu, Mahar, and Wilkes (1990, p. 1) comment:

> The definition of capital includes material things (which can have
> symbolic value), as well as 'untouchable' but culturally significant
> attributes such as prestige, status and authority (referred to as symbolic
> capital), along with cultural capital (defined as culturally-valued taste
> and consumption patterns) [...] For Bourdieu, capital acts as a social
> relation within a system of exchange, and the term is extended to all the

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goods, material and symbolic, without distinction, that present

themselves as rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular social

formation.

For the purposes of the present study I will focus on cultural and social capital, which

according to Bourdieu (1979, p. 4) are acquired through transmission, time, and

investment on the part of the individual.

3.2.2.1 Cultural capital

Cultural capital refers to non-financial social assets that promote social mobility beyond

economic means. It is associated with culturally authorized taste, consumption patterns,

attributes, skills and awards (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002). Examples include

academic degrees, language proficiency, intellect, and style of speech, dress, etc.

One manifestation of cultural capital is "linguistic capital", the mastery of a language

used by a privileged category of people and transformed into their habitus (Bourdieu &

Passeron, 1990). Language is theorized as a site of identity construction, as it allows

individuals to link to the social, and to trace the processes of appreciation or

devaluation of linguistic varieties and practice (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 284). Its significance

in SLA research is that it encompasses not only technical proficiency but also social

competency (Dargent-Wallace, 2013). Indeed, speakers who lack linguistic capital find

themselves silenced or excluded from social spaces where it is required (Bourdieu &

Thompson, 1991). The notion of linguistic capital is important to this study since

participants' proficiency in both their native language (Chinese) and foreign language

(English) varies depending on the *field* (see 3.2.3 below) in which they interact (e.g.

in/outside classrooms).

3.2.2.2 Social capital

Bourdieu refers to social capital as " the sum of the resources, actual or virtual", "a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). In other words, social capital reflects social connections and group memberships. It is not about *what* you know; it is about *who* you know. Networks of contacts enable individuals to access particular institutions, social relations and cultures which they do not belong to. For instance, international students can become involved in local communities through host families (Jackson, 2008a). Moreover, membership depends on the possession of other capitals, for instance, economic and cultural capital. It is important to know that social capital is not naturally given but acquired through interaction (Bourdieu, 1986). As Webb (2002, p. 23) points out, the amount of power a person has relies on their position within the field and the types of capital possessed.

3.2.3 Field

Field is one of the key terms in Bourdieu's terminology. It refers to the various social and institutional arenas in which people express and reproduce their dispositions, and where they determine what constitutes capital and compete for the distribution of different kinds of capital (Gaventa, 2003, p. 6).

Within this dynamic social space, individuals struggle to obtain "capital" and power to improve their position. People often experience power differently depending on which field they are in at a given moment (Gaventa, 2003), giving rise to tensions and contradictions (Moncrieffe, 2006, p. 37). SLA research emphasises the role of field/discourse in the construction of reality. L2 learning is seen as a process of

recognizing, negotiating, socialising, embracing or challenging discursive practice in the linguistic community learner encounter. The notion of field/discourse is often used to explain how border crossers resist power and domination in some contexts and express complicity in others.

3.2.4 Summary

Context and environment, then, are key influences on habitus: fields engender and require certain responses, restraining what we can do. For Bourdieu, the capacity of individuals to act in the world is influenced by the quantities of different kinds of capital or "forms of power" (Bourdieu & Clough, 1998). A further form of capital, symbolic capital, or 'recognized power', enables the take-up of other forms of capital and is only available to those with 'legitimate identity' or recognised authority (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). Bourdieu's approach is often invoked in relation to the theorization of social change, emphasizing the continuity of established social differences as the basis for identities (Adams, 2006).

While the main theoretical framework for this study is provided by Bourdieu, the review of research on living abroad which follows points to other important influences relevant to the present study to which I will return.

3.3 Studies on living abroad

Much research has focused on the linguistic or pragmatic gains of sojourners (DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Freed, 1995, 1998; Isabelli-García, 2006). In line with the trend of the Social turn in second language research (see 3.1), a growing number of scholars have focussed on socio-cultural aspects of the experience abroad. Language gain is no longer

considered as the only goal; individual variations such as broadened motivations and attitudes, personal growth and identity shifts, have also been recognized as positive outcomes of living abroad (Alred & Byram, 2002; DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Magnan & Lafford, 2012).

I start with the studies that explore the concept of **culture shock**, and follow with a discussion of the factors influencing the success of living abroad as explored in studies that look at **identity issues** and **personal growth**. Finally I will discuss studies that specifically examine teaching overseas.

3.3.1 Culture shock

Zeppa (2000, p. 101) explains the difference between arrival and entrance:

> Arrival is physical and happens all at once. The train pulls in, the plan touches down, and you get out of the taxi with all your luggage. You can arrive a place and never really enter it ...you think you know where you are, but, in fact, you have never left home. Entering takes longer. You cross over, slowly, in bits and pieces. […] It is like awakening slowly, over a period of weeks. And then one morning, you open your eyes and you are finally here, really and truly here. You are just beginning to know where you are.

Zeppa is trying to capture here the processes of culture shock and acculturation, the most frequently stated problems among sojourners and researchers. As Oberg (2006) points out, culture shock is an "occupational disease" among people who have been transplanted to a foreign place; it is "precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" (p. 142). Oberg describes the

common symptoms of culture shock, such as the feeling of helpless; fits of anger over minor frustration; delay or refusal to learn the host language; excessive fear of being injured or hurt; and desperate longing for home. According to Oberg, learning the host language is the best way to recover from culture shock, thus echoing Norton's notion of language investment (1995; Norton & Gao, 2008), which will be discussed in detail later.

The conception of "transitional experience" brought up by Adler (1975), provides as an alternative to culture shock. For this writer, sojourning involves a transition from dependence to independence, a change from a mono-cultural perspective to an intercultural outlook, a "journey into the self" (p. 22). This opinion is in tune with Mezirow's (1991, 1997) transformative learning theory, a topic which I will revisit in the discussion of teaching abroad outcome (see 3.4.5.4).

Various theories have been proposed to explain what happens. Lysgaand (1955) , for instance, proposes four stages of culture shock widely accepted by researchers, especially in the 1960s (Davis, 1963; Morris, 1960; Sewell & Davidsen, 1961). In the "Honeymoon" phase everything is exciting. This is followed by the Hostility phase where sojourners experiencing difficulties in the process of adjustment tend to find refuge with co-nationals and stereotype the host country. In the third phase sojourners hold a "this is my cross and I have to bear it" attitude (Oberg, 2006, p. 143) and start to socialize. Instead of criticizing, they make fun of the surroundings and self-mock the difficulties they meet. The final phrase is acceptance of another way of living. However, complete adjustment is achieved only when sojourners really enjoy the local food and customs and miss these practices after return to their home countries.

Although it is intuitively appealing, in the past fifty years, various writers (Church,

1982; David, 1973; Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998) have criticised this approach for its overgeneralization. Lysgaand (1955), for instance, assumes that the timing of the four phrases is fixed and that this pattern is universal across all sojourners.

3.3.2 Identity issues

Identity is of increasing interest because the transition to a cross-cultural context is inseparable from inequitable power relations and linguistic hegemony, which create various challenges for self-identification (Angulo, 2008; Castells, 2011; Day, 2002; Kinginger, 2004, 2013; Leong & Ward, 2000; Norton, 1997; J.-E. Park, 2007; Patron, 2007) Previous findings imply the complex nature of sojourners' identity. As Norton and Toohey (2011) conclude, central to the discussion are mainly five concerns: **identity and investment**; **identity and imagined community**; identity categories and educational changes; **identity resistance;** and identity and literacy. Before turning to a discussion of those relevant concerns, I need to explain two key terms central to the understanding of this study.

3.3.2.1 Identity and agency

Language, meaning and subjectivity are interlocked (Weedon, 1996). Meaning is socially produced and constituted within language; language constructs "subjectivity", that is identity, "our sense of ourselves" (p. 19). Drawing on Weedon's (1987) notion of subjectivity, Norton defines identity as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2013, p. 45)

Identity is " frequently socially constructed in inequitable relations of power" (Norton, 2000, p. 5), "precarious, contradictory, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak" (Weedon, 1996, p. 32). Hence it is neither predetermined nor rigid, but emergent, relative, negotiable and fluid (Bucholtz & Hall, 2010; Meadows, 2009).

Within SLA research the term agency is usually juxtaposed with identity. **Agency** refers to the capacity of individuals to understand and control the action, to make their own free choices regardless of the circumstances (Webb et al., 2002). Weedon (1996) notes that individuals can create discourse to challenge and transform positioning, provides a more positive perspective on human agency. In a similar vein, Emirbayer & Mische (1998, p. 971) offer a more "situated" definition in which agency is seen as "the capacity of actors to critically shape their own responsiveness to problematic situations". This notion is especially important to sociocultural linguistics, for the very use of language is itself an act of agency (Duranti, 2004). Pavlenko (2002) reinforces the social nature of agency and maintains that it is constrained or facilitated by social context; individual agency will be limited if the community rejects or marginalizes newcomers. The question of agency plays a central role in my research, as I am not simply interested in CICTs' experience of working abroad but aim also to understand how individual dynamics unfold in working aboard discourse, and how agency yields different outcomes for sojourners.

3.3.2.2 Identity categories

Given that identity is a complex and multi-layered construct, researchers tend to exam it from particular angle. The most common categories are ethnic identity, racial identity,

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national identity, gender identity, social class identity and language identity (Block, 2009). I now briefly review national identity and social class identity, the notions most relevant to my discussion in subsequent chapters.

3.3.2.2.1 Nationalism and national identity

A considerable body of literature attempts to define "nationalism" and, in particular, "banal nationalism", a term which Billig (1995) coined to differentiate endemic nationalism, – the everyday shared sense of national belonging amongst people – from extremist variants.

National identity is a kind of Bourdieuian habitus, an " acquired system of generative schemas objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 95). In contemporary political philosophy, two concepts of national identity – one narrow, the other broad – are prevalent (Dahbour, 2002): the narrow version, asserted by Connor (1994); (M. Weber, 1978), A. D. Smith (1999) and other scholars, regards nationality as based on shared history, beliefs, practices, traditions and language associated with a nation state; the broad version, supported by Poole (1999), Gilbert (1998), Guibernau (2004) and others, views nationality as a flexible term without fixed properties; it is the sentiment of belonging to the nation. Given the internal diversity of 21th century China and my focus on individual identity in a global context, I subscribe in this study to the broad definition, which involves "being situated physically, legally, socially, as well as emotionally" within "a homeland", "within the world of nations" (Billig, 1995, p. 8).

In a discussion of Confucius Institutes and China's national identity, G. Liu (2012) stresses the dynamic dimension of national identity. He argues that changing economic status and international standing may lead to reconstruction of national identity and

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views the launching of the CI program as a step in this process. In a similar vein, Rusciano (2003) survey on 23 nations suggests that national identity involves negotiation between how citizens of a country see themselves and how this country and its people are seen by others (Rusciano 2003).

In relation to my study, the question remains as to whether the shared "heritage", "beliefs" and practice" of a collectivist society will impact on my participants' perception of national identity, or whether the overseas experience will simply reproduce their understanding?

3.3.2.2.2 Social class

Social class, in relation to social capital, can be understood as the distribution and redistribution of material resources (Block, 2015). Based on the classic work of Karl Marx (1976), Max Weber (1978), E.P. Thompson (Thompson, 2016), Pierre Bourdieu and other scholars, Block (2015, p. 3) defines social class as a composite construct of property, wealth, occupation, education, place of residence, social networking, consumption patterns, spatial relations, symbolic behaviour, and life chances. Block's definition is helpful as it incorporates both elements of Weber's (1978) notions of "style", "stylization" and "status" ,which are clearly relevant to the present study, and "class consciousness" (Wright, 2005, p. 22), a notion which allows space for "agency" by acknowledging that people may aspire to advance their current social class. Labov (1966) was the first writer to use "social class" as an analytical category in sociolinguistics, arguing that speech patterns could be used to identify people's social class. Subsequently, growing numbers of researchers have acknowledged the significance of social class as a key construct in second language education and in

identity making (Block, 2009, 2013; Gray & Block, 2014; Pennycook, 2006; Skeggs, 1997, 2004; Vandrick, 2014).

A number of studies of sojourning (see, for instance, Norton (1995), McMichael and Manderson (2004)) cite cases of a failure to recognize the previous social status of immigrants in the new environment. In a similar vein, forty-one instructors from developed countries teaching in Beijing that their teaching at Chinese universities did not offer them the same level of prestige or respect as teaching at universities in western countries (E. C. Kim, 2015). It can be argued, however, that this "social downgrade" is meaningful only when comparing the participants' "imagined" high social status in their homeland with the social status and, indeed, the financial gains they had achieved in China. As Kim explains, most of her participants were jobless in their home country before they moved to China; some had been in "blue collar" jobs for a period as these were the only openings available. In contrast, teaching in Chinese universities had provided them with posts matching their education and career expectations. Moreover, Chinese university teaching posts have high social prestige (X. Gao & Trent, 2009; Su, Hawkins, Huang, & Zhao, 2001), and foreign teachers often report receiving a "celebrity-like" welcome and acclimation (J. Jin, 2005; Ling & Braine, 2007). Kim's study would thus have been more convincing if she had attempted to differentiate between "ideal" and "real" prestige. What can therefore be assumed is the "social downgrade" of moving from developed to developing countries may be very different from what happens in reverse, highlighting the need for research on Chinese teachers working in developed contexts. As already discussed in chapter one, some CICTs who were tertiary lecturers in China were working as teaching assistants in secondary schools in Britain. This raises the question of how they mitigate and make sense of

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perceived downward social mobility. And what kind of identity do they craft to manage this downgrade? My research will thus attempt to fill a gap in literature by answering these questions.

3.3.2.3 Identity negotiation and reconstruction

Central to the field of sojourning research is the concept of identity negotiation. The evidence suggests that when people move across geographical and linguistic borders, immersing themselves in new socio-cultural and ideological environments, they find their previous sense of self is challenged and crumbling, and they enter a period of struggle to reach a balance (Block, 2007; Kathy Charmaz, 1983).

A number of researchers have examined individual experiences of identity resistance and negotiation, for example, by helping a newcomer (Day, 2002), sharing cultural expertise (Duff & Uchida, 1997); enhancing academic socialization (Dennen, 2009; Ivanic, 1998; Kinginger, 2004); utilizing cultural capital (Pherali, 2012); and keeping silent or other non-confrontational approaches (Meadows, 2009; Morita, 2004; Rauf & Iqbal, 2008). Such studies have focused on both newly arrived and fully adapted participants, in monolingual and multilingual contexts (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004a), as well as socialization in a virtual world (Dennen, 2009; Lam, 2006; Walker, 2009). The research on identity negotiation thus far supports the Pennycook (2001) notion that identity is a constantly negotiated dialectic. Once we start to see identities not so much as fixed social or cultural categories then we have to acknowledge that, although this process of negotiation is also unpredictable and unstable, it is observable through a moment-by-moment analysis of the unfolding talk (J.-E. Park, 2007, p. 341).

3.3.2.3.1 Positioning theory and identity negotiation

Davies and Harré (1990) propose the notion of "subject position" as both a "conceptual repertoire" and a "location" of linguistic rights for people who use that repertoire (p.46). When individuals take a subject position, they begin to see the world from that subject position, conceptualizing images, metaphors, meaning and story lines in ways which make sense to them.

Using conversation analysis J.-E. Park (2007) compares two sets of videotaped English conversations between native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) in naturally occurring English conversations. He notices that expert/novice identities shift when participants change topics. NNSs, for instance, become experts when talking about mother tongue and culture. However, the participants are able to invoke NS/NNS identities by incidentally undertaking requestor–requestee identities as they search for a word and further sustain them by assuming assessor–assessed identities within the situated activity of evaluating the language proficiency of self or others. Significantly, Park does not stop the analysis at the interactional level but probes deeper into NNS self-identities, concluding that second language learners should develop a NNS identity in the course of socialization, which would teach them how to function as competent members of a community despite their language deficiency.

Park's proposal is supported by Whitworth (2006) research on four American study abroad students' experience in France. Her hybrid study combines interviews and journals entries with language test results to examine how the students positioned themselves and were positioned by others. She analyses the effects that positioning had on the participants' access to social networks, language learning opportunities, and their overall public identity in France. The participants in Whitworth's study were found

exercising their agency in various ways: Benjamin decided to position himself as a learner of French. By observing the social practices of his host family he eventually took part in French practices, which helped him with linguistic and social networking gains. Bill chose to consistently take risks in order to meet and befriend new people, positioning himself as a learner of French; his experience was enriched by networking with colleagues and friends. Deirdre characterized her encounters with the French as rude, therefore leaving her feeling scared and angry, with a negative impact on her life in France.

These studies raise questions as to what happens when sojourners are positioned as "outsiders". For instance, if the Chinese teachers in Britain are positioned as "non-British", "foreigners", "passing travellers" in the community in which they work and live, they may begin to see the community through this subject position. The host community may become a place they never feel attached to, because the community does not allow this. The possible consequences are that these overseas professionals may not understand what is going on. There is an obvious risk that they understand the host society in relation to their prior reference framework, and ossify their thinking in many ways.

A case study conducted by Meadows (2009) on an intercultural group discussion in an American university suggests that the articulation of cultural capital can contribute to ESL identity practice. Meadows videotaped group work involving one Chinese and two American learners of Japanese, which was conducted in English but focused on designing a Japanese culture presentation booth. Meadows found, that despite her English insufficiency, the Chinese learner articulated her institutional identity as an instructor in East Asian studies to dominate most of the group discussions as an

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"expert". However, when her "authority" was challenged by her American interlocutors, she withdrew from discussion and maintained silence as resistance. According to Davies and Harré (1990), the positioning of the interlocutors affects what is said, and influences future positions. The different positions (experts/novices, native speakers/non-native speakers, hosts/visiting scholars, host families/ international students) mediate sojourners' access to resources in the second language community, thus contributing to their overall socialization and acculturation. As this Chinese learner found, some identity positions enhance the possibilities for social interaction and agency while others constrain the opportunities for learning.

3.3.2.3.2 Virtual identity construction

The way in which "real life factors" and the internet allow language learners to construct preferred identities has also been a question of great interest in recent decades. Lam (2006), for example, spent eight months studying the "multilingual, multi-competent" identity that an "incompetent" transnational immigrant youth endeavoured to construct in electronic social spaces. Through networking in English and other languages with young people around the globe, Lam's participants created broader language learning opportunities for themselves than were available to them in American schools.

In a nutshell, most of the studies that investigate information technology and identity acknowledge that "networked electronic communications have given rise to new social spaces, linguistic and semiotic practices, and ways of fashioning the self" (Lam, 2006, p. 171) . However, a prerequisite for this approach is that users need to have a good understanding of both the home and host cultural framework in order to avoid problems (Kramsch & Thome, 2002). Did my participants share the same struggle？ Did they

adopt the same identity negotiation patterns? These are the questions I needed to bear in mind while combing through my research data.

3.3.3 Acculturation

Acculturation refers to the dual process of cultural and psychological change resulting from the contact between two or more cultures. It involves changes in individual's behaviour and eventually leads to mutual accommodation and adaptation. In my research, I define the successful "acculturation" as the competence to be fully functioned as a legitimate member of the host society. Acculturation cannot be accomplished without effective linguistic skills and the affirmation from self and others. In the discussion which follows, I consider two areas of research of fundamental importance for an understanding of acculturation: language investment and imagined communities.

3.3.3.1 Language investment

Drawing upon Bourdieu's (1977; 1991) concepts of cultural, social, symbolic and linguistic capital, Norton (1995) conducted a longitudinal study on the immigrant women in Canada. She concludes that individuals can exercise their agency through discourse to challenge or reject the positioning projected by dominant discourses. Based on data collected from diaries, questionnaires, interviews and home visits, Norton illustrates the conditions and the means that enable the immigrant women to create, respond to, and resist opportunities to speak English. She develops the concept of "investment", as an option to the instrumental view of "motivation" (Gardner, 1988), to capture the complex relationship of language learners to the target language and their "sometimes ambivalent desire to speak it" (Norton, 1995, p. 9). The notion of

investment conceives of language learners as having a complex social history and multiple, or even conflicting desires. Significantly, she distinguishes the notion of "investment" from "motivation": investment in a second language provides access to resources unattainable through instrumental motivation. Furthermore, it is also an investment in learners' own social identity. Learners are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world (p. 18). Isabelli-García's (2006) findings offer support for Norton: she reports that learners who invest in learning the L2 tend to have more extended networks and better gains in linguistic accuracy. I view Norton's notion of "investment" as a means of exercising agency, and aim to use it to exam the connection between English language learning and the CICTs' achievements in working overseas.

3.3.3.2 Imagined community

Another important contribution of Norton's work is the notion of the "imagined community" (Norton, 2001). Anderson (1991), who first created the term, holds that people's assumptions of nations are actually imagined communities: each member would never have a chance to know most of their fellow-members and thus "lives the image of their communion" (p. 6). The notion is further developed in Norton (2001), Kanno and Norton (2003) and Pavlenko and Norton (2007) who define it as an intangible group of people, with whom we do not have immediate access but connect through the power of imagination (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 241). In the domain of SLA study, for instance, a young international student studying medicine in London, may envision himself as a highly successful doctor in an English speaking medical community, where English is seen as an important means of gaining future prestige. They argue that, for SL learners, the imagined target language community offers

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possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options and sources of capital in the future. The desired membership of that community affects their motivation, agency, resistance and learning trajectory. Together, these studies indicate that imagined identities and imagined communities of learners are central to the struggle for legitimacy; they outline the critical role of "imagined community" in boosting learners' language investment. Such claims are supported by researchers in many different settings, for example, Citrin and Sides (2008), Norton and Gao (2008), Ryan (2006),Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide (2008), Moore (2008).

Conversely, a note of caution is sounded by Leung, Harris, and Rampton (1997) in their study of bilingual learners in England. They question the "homogenous", or in other words, "stereotyped" imagined community assumed by ESL learners, warning that white, native English speakers do not always affiliate themselves with Standard English. Even within the majority ethnic community in England, then, linguistic diversity is a feature. I highlight this work because it helps me to understand the significance of "peripheral participation" and "the community of practice" during sojourning. I will further explain these two theories by linking them with empirical evidence in chapters six, seven and eight.

3.3.4 Personal growth

Sojourning, for any period of time, has been shown to be a high rewarding experience (Martin, 1987; Savicki, 2008; Tarrant, Rubin, & Stoner, 2014). The discussion which follows will focus on the benefits of personal growth in relation to changes in both perspective and intercultural communication competence.

3.3.4.1 Changes in outlook

To date, a number of studies have demonstrated that living abroad provides sojourners with an opportunity to reflect on the values and way of life of the home country, their positions in the home country and in the world (L. T. McCabe, 2001; Nadine, 2004; Reisinger & Dimanche, 2010) .

Nadine (2004) reports the experiences of twenty-six American undergraduates during a semester's study in Australia. She argues the "encounter with an American self" is the most significant achievement for this group of students and describes how students' national identities shifted from a passive to active identification. At the beginning, most of the students had a vague and unreflective understanding of what it was to be an "American," grounded in a strong patriotic attachment to US policies. In contrast, in interviews undertaken on their return, many students shifted from the dominant American perspective and began to embrace a nascent form of cosmopolitanism. Barbara, for instance, a participant in Nadine's research, started to realize that the United States "cannot—and should not—dictate what is 'right' and 'wrong'," not even in the seemingly trivial issues of accents and the position of driving seats (p. 169). However, a note of caution should be sounded as the findings of this study may not be applicable to other border crossers, for instance, those who come from cultures that emphasise collectivism rather than individualism (Hofstede, 1986; Neuliep, 2014; Ting-Toomey, 2012). The US and Australia are both English speaking countries and share many communalities. As one of the students mentioned, "I felt very much like I had transferred schools [within the US] and not that I was studying abroad. I still had to remind myself that I was in another country" (Nadine, 2004, p. 165).

It is noteworthy, however, the process of acculturation is likely to be enacted in different ways in the developed and developing worlds (Reisinger & Dimanche, 2010). My participants grew up within a Confucian-heritage society but were now working in Britain. Will they appreciate the distinctive features they have been exposed to in Britain or they will maintain continuity with their Chinese habitus? Will they become more adventurous in their career path or will they follow their own traditions? Will they embrace the relative equality associated with the British work place or respect the hierarchies which characterise their situation in China? These are the questions I hope to unpack in the current research.

3.3.4.2 Intercultural communication competence and third place

I turn now to a discussion of another key aspect of personal growth: competence in intercultural communication.

For most researchers, the terms "intercultural" and "cross-cultural" are interchangeable. However, as Asante and Gudykunst (as cited in Emert, 2008) note, cross-cultural research includes comparative culture study, whereas intercultural research emphasizes the interaction of people from differing cultures. I use "intercultural" in this study as it more accurately reflects the how the CI teachers engaged in their work abroad experience.

Intercultural competence refers to the abilities required for "effectively and appropriately interacting with people that are linguistically and culturally different from oneself " (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006). It offers an important means to resolve conflicts, as it can free people from their native logic and cultural framework to engage and understand other ideas, particularly those unrecognized or undervalued in a given socio-political context (Bennett, 2015; Unesco, Leeds-Hurwitz, & Stenou, 2013). Identity is

fundamental to an understanding of intercultural competence. For instance, Y. Kim (2009) suggests that inclusive identity formation and a sense of identity security are two key factors in adaptability, flexibility and cultural empathy and which eventually led to successful intercultural engagement.

A considerable amount of research has been conducted on intercultural communication. Inspired by Dargent-Wallace's (2013) work on American language assistants' experience in France, I will focus on issues of particular relevance for the present study: Byram's (1997, 2000) and Alred and Byram's (2002) notion of the "intercultural mediator" and Kramsch's concept of "third place"(Kramsch, 2009a, 2009b; Kramsch & Thome, 2002), also known as "symbolic competence"(2006, 2011).

As defined by Byram (2000), intercultural mediators understand that each perspective is culturally stamped. They can critically reflect on their native culture as well as other foreign cultures; "interpret" each culture in relation to the others; bridge the gap between cultures and "mediate" for themselves or for other people. The notion of intercultural mediator, then, highlights the potential for individual social action (Alred & Byram, 2002).

One of the limitations with Byram's intercultural competence is that, as Kramsch(1999) argues, the boundaries between the native and foreign cultures, self and otherness are too "rigid"; cultures are seen as too "equal/symmetrical" and "homogenous" due to failure to acknowledge "legitimation" and "power" relationships (p. 43). Following a poststructuralist approach, Kramsch proposes the concept of " third place… in the interstices between the cultures the learner grew up with and the new cultures he or she is being introduced to" (p. 236).

The concepts of "ambivalence", "hybridity" and "Third space" were first proposed by Bhabha (1994) to capture the contradictions and new meanings emerging in the construction of a postcolonial identity. Bhabha's followers developed these concepts further as the cultural effects of globalization (Amoamo, 2011; Kraidy, 2005; Papastergiadis, 2005, 2013).Ambivalence is the uncertainty of feeling attached and feeling distanced. It involves conflicting feelings of love and hatred (Block, 2009). Hybridity is the basic sense of mixture, entailing traces of native and other cultures. The Third place acts as the ambiguous area that develops when two or more cultures interact. However, as Block (2007, p. 170) sums up:

> At this stage, it is easy to conceive of identity as contested in nature because the new and varied input provided to the individual serves to upset taken-for-granted points of reference. In such cases, the ensuing and ongoing struggle is not, however, a question of adding the new to the old. Nor is it a half-and-half proposition whereby the individual becomes half of what he or she was and half of what he or she has been exposed to. Rather, the result is what has come to be known as a third place (Bhabha, 1994; Hall, 1996), where there is what Papastergiadis (2000) called a negotiation of difference during which the past and the present "encounter and transform each other" in the "the presence of fissures, gaps and contradictions".

By the same token, for Kramsch, conflicting cultural views occur within a third place, outside the target culture and the native culture, allowing the individual to construct a new understanding of the world and his position in the world. She refines the third place notion as "symbolic competence" (Kramsch, 2009b, 2011), reinforcing the idea that

"third place" is not a stable culture or a place per se, but rather a dynamic and flexible process which allows continuous meaning-making and critical reflection. According to Kramsch, symbolic competence comprises the ability to understand different symbolic systems as well as the value and cultural assumptions attached to it; the ability to draw from other reference frameworks, create alternative realities, and find an appropriate subject position; and the ability to "look both at and through language and to understand the challenges to the autonomy and integrity of the subject" (2011, p. 201). Symbolic competence is essential "[f]or the growth of a multilingual's sense of symbolic self, the development of his or her ability to take symbolic action and to exercise symbolic power"(2009a); it "can create different symbolic realities in different languages and, by changing others' perception of social reality, [hence] change that reality" (p. 188). While Byram's notion of Intercultural Mediator focuses on the interpretation of each culture in terms of the other, Kramsch's symbolic competence accentuates the dynamic, contingent process and the new meanings yielded during the interaction of cultures. I will draw on the merits of both notions to explore my participants' trajectory of growth while interacting with English language and culture.

Emert (2008) underlines the link between intercultural competence and teaching abroad in mixed method research on twelve Fulbright teachers. She applies an Intercultural Development Inventory and Strategies Inventory for Learning Culture as instruments, and then compares the pre-test and post-test results. Combined with data collected from monthly questionnaires and repatriation interviews, Emert finds the one year Fulbright exchange program increased teachers' awareness of themselves and otherness, having a positive impact on their professional and personal lives. The teachers gained better

understanding of the host educational systems and learned to interact more appropriately and effectively within a culturally diverse environment.

The literature reviewed thus far has demonstrated that living abroad has an important impact on sojourners' perspectives, self-identification and intercultural communication competence. However, the daily choices the sojourners make in living in the host society may yield different results. What are the possible factors that lead to the success or the failure of the sojourn? Did all of my participants enjoy and benefit from their teaching abroad experience?

3.3.5 Teaching abroad

So far this chapter has reviewed the related literatures on living abroad; the target population includes SL immigrants, study abroad students and expatriate professionals. What follows is an outline of the studies on a subgroup of border crossers, namely, pre-service teachers, language assistants, and the teachers assigned by government or on exchange program, such as Fulbright teachers and CI teachers.

Before examining the teaching abroad literature, it is important to distinguish the types of border crossers because individual dispositions such as age, education, previous experiences, motivation, goals, as well as context, may produce different responses, which in turn have implications for the development of interculturality, adjustment and achievement.

3.3.5.1 Self-initiated vs. assigned sojourners

Sojourners fall into three main groups: immigrants, self-initiated sojourners and assigned sojourners (Andresen, Bergdolt, & Margenfeld, 2012; Baruch, Dickmann, Altman, & Bournois, 2013; Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008). To date, rather more

attention has been focused on self-initiated sojourners and immigrants (Al Ariss, 2010;

Hamermesh & Trejo, 2013; Hovey & King, 1996; Korne, Byram, & Fleming, 2007;

McMichael & Manderson, 2004), pre-service teachers (Doppen, An, & Diki, 2015; Erik

Malewski & Phillion, 2009; Trilokekar & Kukar, 2011; Willard-Holt, 2001) and

language assistants (Byram & Feng, 2006; Clement & Outlaw, 2002; Coleman, 1997).

There is a dearth of literature on government assigned and exchange program teachers.

Further, Baruch et al. (2013) distinguish the following dimensions of international

experience: the length of stay, intensity and breadth of intercultural interaction, legal

context (whether sojourners have the right to stay or work in a specific country), the

instigator of the international work (whether self-initiated or organized or supported by

organizations), the extent of cultural gap between home and host countries, and the

cultural-related requirements of the specific role incumbent is expected to fulfil. Some

of these conditions have greater relevance for my study than others. It seemed unlikely,

for instance, that length of stay would prove to be a useful variable in interpreting

participants' experience since this varied only between one and two years. However,

assigned sojourners tend to have more support from and more contacts with host

organizations (Gleeson & Tait, 2012; Eric Malewski, Sharma, & Phillion, 2012; Paik et

al., 2015), while self-initiated sojourners, who might permanently move to the host

country, may attach more importance to assimilation (Carliner, 2000; Hamermesh &

Trejo, 2013; Rumbaut, 2015) and integration (Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao, & Lynch,

2007; McManus, Mitchell, & Tracy-Ventura, 2014; Mikal, Yang, & Lewis, 2015).

Participants in my study are not simply living in the fissures of two cultures and two

value systems. To a certain extent, the pressure from the home country is even stronger

in this group: they have been entrusted with a mission by the Chinese government and

eventually have to return to where they belong to. So how did the situation of my participants impact on their perspectives on the host and home society? To what extent did individual variation distinguish their journeys from other border crossers?

3.3.5.2 Pre-service teachers, language assistants, government assigned and exchange teachers

Another noteworthy aspect of teachers abroad is their pre-expatriation and repatriation career paths. Generally speaking, pre-service teachers are studying, or have studied education and are expected to take up a teaching career in the future. Teaching abroad may be a part of their curriculum requirements or affect their chances of placement (Chong, Low, & Goh, 2011; Trent, Gao, & Gu, 2014; Winterbottom & Mazzocco, 2015). Language assistants, in contrast, usually have no prior teaching experience, and possibly will not follow the teacher path in the future; they become language teaching assistants in host countries mostly because of their interests in and knowledge about host languages and cultures (Allen, 2014; Dargent-Wallace, 2013). Government assigned teachers and exchange program teachers represent yet another case: they usually have prior teaching experiences and are experts in their fields. The situation of this last group, however, has received very little attention. The discussion which follows thus necessarily focuses on the experiences of pre-service teachers and language assistants abroad.

3.3.5.3 Professional culture shock

Professionally, teachers abroad can be thought of as subject to both culture and " education shock" (Koshinsky, 1999, cited in Dargent-Wallace, 2013, p. 56) when confronting different educational philosophies in host institutes.

Roskell (2013) examines the cross-cultural transition experiences of twelve British teachers in a privately owned British international school in South East Asia. Drawing on observation and in depth interviews, this author explores the teachers' culture shock. Beside the local food, weather and transport, the teachers were disgruntled and complained about the management of the school, including the lack of collegial support and opportunities for professional development. Like the language assistants reported in Ehrenreich (2006) and Byram (1993), these British teachers were also confused by the roles and the expectations of the leaders. Feeling de-professionalized, that they "were not doing a good job" and did not "feel like real teachers", seven out of the twelve teachers abruptly terminated their contracts and two left in disgust. In a similar vein, Tunney (2002) reflects on her own teaching experience as a social work educator in Lithuania where the work abroad teachers were struggling among three cultures: home, host and professional cultures. Making adjustments to the host culture does not necessarily lead to successful professional acculturation.

Clement and Outlaw (2002) summarise the main challenges American student teachers face in overseas teaching: large numbers of students in a classroom, lack of resources, differences in teaching pedagogy and classroom-management concerns. It can be argued that classroom management is the window to different education beliefs. For instance, to deal with students who are out of their seats and whispering constantly while teachers are speaking, western teachers tend to use rewards, stickers, and positive reinforcement in classrooms, while in some Asian countries, it is not unusual for misbehaving students to be punished by standing in the corner of classroom. Did my study participants experience the same dual shock? How did this affect their attitude and motivation toward teaching?

3.3.5.4 Positive outcome of teaching abroad

Existing research recognizes the benefits of overseas teaching on teachers. The intercultural immersion enables teachers to stretch beyond their comfort zone while away from the supportive networks of family, friends, and colleagues. Teaching abroad actually increases belief in the value of multicultural education, and prepares teachers for culturally diverse classrooms. Opportunities for self-examination, empowerment and transformation are possible (Garson, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1999).

Transformative learning is fundamental to teacher development, particularly in an era of globalization which demands international knowledge and experience. Transformative learning refers to people critically examine their views then change the way they interpret their experiences and their interactions with the world (Cranton, 2002). Mezirow (1991) believes it usually results from a "disorienting dilemma" which is triggered by a life crisis or major life transition .It may also result from an accumulation of transformations in meaning schemes over a period of time.

 Little, Hodel, Kohonen, Meijer, and Perclová (2007) sums up the following features of transformation learning:

> 1 Realizing the significance of professional interaction for growth; 2 Developing an open, critical stance to professional work, and seeing oneself as a continuous learner; 3 Developing a reflective attitude as a basic habit of mind, involving reflection on educational practices and their philosophical underpinnings; 4 Developing new self-understandings in concrete situations; 5 Reflecting on critical events or incidents in life and work history, and learning from the personal insights; 6 Conscious risk-taking: acting in new ways in classes and in

the work community; 7 Ambiguity tolerance: learning to live with

uncertainty concerning the decisions to be made. (p. 27).

Cushner and Mahon (2002) suggest teaching abroad is a significant preparation for

global minded educators. They examine fifty international students' teaching

experience in various overseas sites and its impact on the professional and personal

development of new teachers. Participants responded to open-ended questions to

explore how the experience served or hindered them personally and professionally, both

in the host country and upon their return to America. The findings are consistent with

the study abroad literature: overseas experience enhanced student teachers' learning

styles, working habits, interests in international affairs as well as their cultural

awareness, beliefs and self-efficacy. All of these qualities "interact to demonstrate a

new understanding of one's own role" and the capability to teach in diverse cultural

settings" (p. 49).

Driscoll, Rowe, and Thomae (2014) report a retrospective study of the long-term

transformative impact of teaching abroad. Questionnaires were sent to 100 qualified

teachers who had undertaken four week long teaching placements abroad eight years

previously. Drawing upon Byram's intercultural communication competence and

Mezirow's transformative learning theory, and the data generated from questionnaires,

interviews and personal documents, the authors report that the placement in a foreign

country had a long-term impact on teachers' professional confidence and critical

thinking. Most of the teachers believed that they were empowered and became more

proactive and innovative in their work. Many also attributed their leadership and the

open-mindedness towards new pedagogies to the teaching abroad experiences. The

findings indicate that a short comparative professional experience in a foreign country

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can lead to a perspective transformation which has a profound and sustainable influence on teachers' professional paths.

As Taylor (1994) notes, "When an individual has an experience that cannot be assimilated into his or her meaning perspective, either the experience is rejected or the perspective changes to accommodate the new experience" (p. 159). Central to transformation theory are changes in meaning perspectives. As a participant in Driscoll et al. (2014, p. 55) comments: "Because my mind has been opened to other worlds, I think differently than those who have not experienced other worlds. It is something that has changed my life, and I will never be the same".

3.4 Conceptual framework for the study

The preceding review of the literature on sojourning – particularly those in relation to acculturation, identity and agency and intercultural competence – is underpinned by a number of theories in addition to those of Bourdieu which have been the main influence on the structure and interpretation of my study. These theoretical underpinnings and their interrelationships are summarized in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1 Conceptual framework
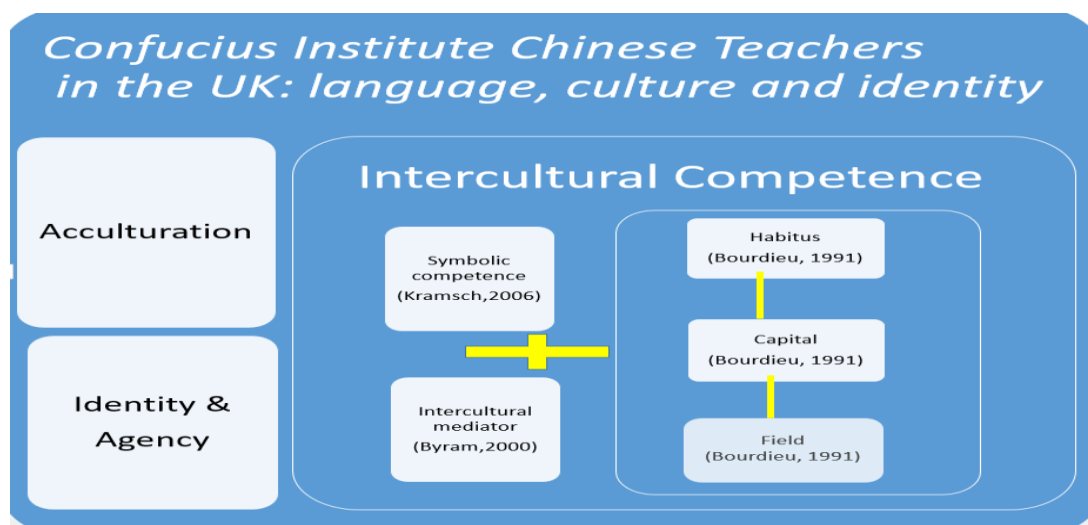
3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the sojourner literature and the theoretical conceptions underpinning my study. In short, this discussion has demonstrated that there is a need for more research in the areas of government assigned teachers and global citizenship education. In response, my study will answer the call from other scholars for: a) more longitudinal studies that incorporate pre-sojourn, on-sojourn and post-sojourn data (Gil (2015), Block (2003); P. H. Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, and Hubbard (2006)); b) in depth case study of individual acculturation experiences (Coleman, 2006; Stambach, 2014); c) more focus on the dynamic interaction between motivation and the social context (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009); and d) an angle from the professionals who expatriate from developing to developed countryis (Westwood & Leung, 1994).

Chapter 4 **Methodology**

This chapter addresses the methodology used to answer the research questions set out in chapter one. A discussion of the philosophical underpinnings for the study will be followed by the justification for the exploratory research design adopted in the study and a discussion of the research methods and the analytical procedures used. Finally ethical considerations and issues of rigour in research will be considered.

4.1 Connecting research questions with philosophical perspectives

All research is guided by philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality and knowledge (Johnson, 1992). Consistent with the research questions for this study, which focus on the experience and process of how CICTs make sense of their sojourn in Britain, constructivism and interpretivism form its philosophical underpinnings.

4.1.1 Ontology

Constructivism assumes a relativist view of reality as mentally and socially constructed. This reality is not fixed but fluid and multiple: different people experience reality in different ways. Knowledge is a joint product, created by external conditions and the interaction between the researcher and the researched. It is also subjective, constructed and based on shared signs and symbols recognised by members of a culture (Grbich, 2012, p. 7). In line with constructivism, I believe social interaction generates multiple truths. CICTs compose their experiences and respond to the world around them in different ways.

4.1.2 Epistemology

Interpretivists acknowledge that knowledge can be obtained through an understanding of lived experiences (Carr & Kemmis, 2003). Because facts and values are inseparable, that understanding is inevitably prejudiced (Cousin, 2005; Elliott & Lukes, 2008). All participants involved, including the researcher, bring their own unique interpretations of the world, or construction of the situation, to the research (Hammersley & Gomm, 1997; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). By taking an interpretive stance, in this study, I am trying to understand the lived experience and self-conception of CICTs through the meanings that CICTs ascribe to them (Kramp, 2003).

4.2 Methodology

I deemed that an explorative qualitative approach combining focus groups discussions, interviews and blog case studies, which allow as many as possible variables to be captured, best suited my research purpose (Schensul, 1999). I considered that data generated in this way were most likely to reveal the meanings given to real-life events by the people who live them.

4.2.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research approach focuses on the experience and process of how people make sense of the world around them (Merriam, 1998). A key aspect of qualitative research is to understand an "emic", insider's point of view. Researchers, as the primary instruments in this kind of inquiry, often have to go to the "site" to investigate how

meaning has been created at a particular moment and in a particular setting. Findings, thereby preclude generalization (Pring, 2004, p. 48).

Merriam (1998) concludes that qualitative studies are often undertaken because of lack of theory, or because existing theory cannot fully explain a phenomenon; it is necessary to clarify that the current research project, an explorative qualitative study of CICTs' experience and identity, does not seek to establish theory, or to generalize from the findings. However, neither is this research "atheoretical" (Deters, 2011, p. 56). In chapter three I discussed relevant theories and the reasoning for the current research, in order to justify the assumption that "CICTs' identity is subject to change during the course of sojourning". Hence the notion of multiple identities, including the social, professional, personal, national and linguistic, were taken into account. Bourdieu's (1991) notions of "capital", "habitus", "field" and "power" (see chapter 3) were employed in this research as overarching concepts, in order to investigate the "dialogic relationships" (Bakhtin, 1984) between language and social context, self and other.

4.2.2 Case study

An **exploratory design** is used to **research** issues when there are few or no earlier **studies** to refer to. Case study offers a useful research strategy in this situation. It is concerned with a particular case or set of cases, describing or explaining the events which constitute the case(s) (Yin, 2011, p. 310). Its distinctive features of "immediate intelligibility" and "deep insight" have made it popular with L2 researchers. (Berwick & Whalley, 2000; Jackson, 2011b; Moon, 2010).

> Case studies can penetrate situations in ways that are not always
>
> susceptible to numerical analysis, provid[ing] unique examples of real

people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more
clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or
principles (Cohen, Morrison, & Manion, 2007).

Yin (2011, p. 310) suggests two types of case study in terms of their purposes: instrumental case studies, conducted in a particular situation but where the findings are potentially applicable to other similar situations; and intrinsic case studies, also conducted in a particular situation but without regard to their applicability to other situations. The motives for undertaking an intrinsic case study include the uniqueness, inherent interest, importance, or likely insights offered by the case. Because the purpose of the current research is to discover the individual identity trajectory of CICTs in working abroad context, an intrinsic multiple case study is appropriate for its ability to "catch the close up reality and thick description" (Geertz 1973, cited in Cohen et al., 2007, p. 254).

Earlier studies of sojourning view identity as a fluid, shifting, relative and negotiable phenomenon which emerges from social interaction; however, most do not deal explicitly with long-term work abroad. In contrast, I view identity expansion as a cumulative process; hence a longitudinal case study is required to maximize the opportunity for identity change. Dörnyei (2007) points out that longitudinal research must be "longitudinal" in terms of both data and research design. A study involving multiple data collection points but which cannot show a change is not a real longitudinal study. On the contrary, in life story research, one interview providing data regarding change over time *could* be considered as longitudinal research. In relation to my own research, the fact that the CICTs do not arrive and depart as a single cohort and, significantly, because their length of stay varies, a so-called "trace down" study in

which investigations extend through the whole sojourn journey was not feasible.

Therefore, a longitudinal case study including retrospective accounts was employed.

Dörnyei draws attention to the risk of inaccuracy in retrospective narratives. However,

this risk is not likely to hinder the validity of my research because the retrospective

narratives only focus on a relatively short period of time before the data collection

point. After all, the purpose of my research is not to seek the "truth" in a positivist sense

but to explore how CICTs reflect on their sojourning in relation to their identity.

As for the boundary between single and multi-case study, there is no clarity in the

literature. Some hold that multiple-case studies should be distinguished from single-

case studies (Yin, 2009). Others argue that the only difference relates to the number of

the respondents (Denscombe, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). I support the second

argument and define my research as a multi-case study with multiple research

participants. Further details about the criteria for selecting cases will be discussed

below.

This research thus incorporates an emic perspective, with the voice and subjectivities of

both the researched and the researcher present in the writing (Miller, 2003, p. 16). Its

interpretative stance requires instruments which allow for ongoing flexibility in the data

collection and analysis, drawing on pragmatic means likely to prove productive for the

project (Nelson, Treichler, & Grossberg, 1992). Focus group, interview and blog study

tend to fulfil such requirements and are well suited to the purpose of L2 identity study.

4.3 Methods

4.3.1 Rationale for interviews

"Conversation is the an ancient form of obtaining knowledge" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 8). Interviewing, with its "natural and socially acceptable" features, can be used in various circumstances to focus on diverse topics and to yield in-depth data (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 134). Interviews can be conducted with individual participants or with focus groups, in structured, semi-structured or open form. Structured interviews can reach a large sample but are likely to constrain alternative answers. Open interviews maximize the width and depth of topics but are difficult to analyze (H. J. Rubin & Rubin, 2011). In-depth semi-structured interviews are guided by an interview schedule but provide flexibility in the manner and sequence of the questions, allowing both the researchers and the participants to probe in depth (Dörnyei, 2007)

Since the literature review and my personal experiences provided me with sufficient knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation to develop questions in advance, semi-structured interviews were employed in the current study.

4.3.1.1 Focus Group Interviews

4.3.1.1.1 What is focus group?

Focus group discussions are a form of group interview involving people known to have had a common experience. They involve several participants (in addition to the moderator/facilitator) and emphasis is given to particular topics. Discussions illustrate the processes through which meaning is jointly constructed by the interaction within the group (Bryman, 2012, pp. 502-504).

4.3.1.1.2 Why focus groups?

In this study, I am seeking to build a panoramic picture of the CICTs' experiences in the UK within a limited period of data collection. Focus groups allow me to elicit a wider variety of views in a shorter period of time; participants influence and are influenced by others in the group, bringing issues deemed to be important and significant to the fore. They thus offer an opportunity to understand the values and standards of CICTs, without imposing my own views on them and, at the same time, to discover the ways in which they make sense of identity and construct meanings around it.

However, there are also disadvantages. First of all, it is difficult to organize focus group interviews in terms of people, time and venues. The researcher may have less control over the proceedings than with individual interviews. Some informants may be reticent while the others dominate the talk. Difficulties in differentiating speakers and the large amount of data may mean that analysis is time-consuming. By the same token, discussions may cause discomfort: concern about being judged and assessed by others members may hinder people from saying what they really think. Participants may be more inclined to go with the group, expressing culturally expected views (Bryman, 2012, p. 516).

4.3.1.1.3 The size of focus group

Morgan (1996) suggests that the typical group size is six to ten members and that smaller groups are preferable when topics are controversial or complex. Given the comparably small pool of CICTs in the UK, two focus groups with four participants in each were arranged. Such an arrangement ensured that each group was small enough to

allow everyone a chance to share their story yet large enough for a diversity of perspectives. Calder (1977) proposes that when the moderator reaches the point that he or she is able to anticipate fairly accurately what the next group is going to say, there seems little point in continuing, and so it would be appropriate to bring data collection to a halt (Bryman, 2012, p. 421). Especially given the use of multiple data resources (focus group, interview and blogs) in the current research, saturation was achieved with two focus groups.

Krueger and Casey (2009) argue that "the accepted rule of thumb" is to group participants from similar backgrounds to create a comfortable environment. However, this strategy would have been difficult to achieve in the present study where CICTs are sent to different areas of the UK; for practical reasons, location and ease of access needed to take precedence over other factors (see 4.6.1).

4.3.1.2 One-to-one interviews

CI directors were invited to participate in order to gain a sense of the issues for CI programme management. One-to-one interviews were decided on, as I felt that focus group discussions might inhibit the disclosure of potentially sensitive information. They offered me the chance to delve deeply into policy related topics and allowing me to gain perspectives on professional acculturation and intercultural management in addition to those which emerged from the focus group discussions.

In addition, follow up interviews with blog participants were conducted to explore in detail topics of national identity, adversity, effort, emotion and reflection (see 4.6.2). My main data collection tool, however, was the personal blog, which I present below.

4.3.2 Blogs

4.3.2.1 What is a Blog?

The use of blogs (or weblogs), as a form of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), has grown rapidly in the last two decades. Users post entries, and commentaries, using multimedia and hyperlinks. With their "ease of use, conversational, informal format, and collaborative nature", blogs provide governments, companies, institutes and individuals new opportunities for the spread of information, and the construction of knowledge and identities in digitally mediated settings (Armstrong & Retterer, 2008; Warschauer & Grimes, 2007, p. 2).

Recent L2 researchers have also found blogging a useful means of engaging students in subject matter (Dennen, 2009; Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Miceli, Murray, & Kennedy, 2010; Weiley, Sommers, & Bryce, 2008). Miceli et al (2010), for instance, report that a class blog used as an out-of-class forum for language practice and discussion on an advanced Italian course promoted learner interaction and fostered a sense of class community. In a study abroad context, blogging offers "individuals the possibility for language development in the transcultural spaces of non-institutional online environments and associated cultures-of-use" (Thorne & Black, 2007, p. 149). In their study of international students' adjustments and socialization, Weiley et al (2008) note that blogging and other technological communications can decrease social isolation and loneliness for international students. Similar findings are reported by Elola and Oskoz's (2008) comparison of a cohort of American students who spent a semester abroad in Spain and their peers who remained at the home university. They used blogging as a mediating tool to facilitate communication between the two cohorts of students, and conclude that this offered a new environment for intercultural learning and critical

discoveries about themselves and the target cultures.

4.3.2.2 Why Blogs?

Existing literature suggests that blogs can highlight many of the critical touch-points in an individual's experience (Armstrong & Retterer, 2008; Lohnes, 2003; Walker, 2009); by the same token, blogging provides those whose voices tend to be unheard or who have been positioned as disprivileged (including migrants and sojourners) unprecedented access to authentic, self-selected and meaningful communication and self-construction (Walker, 2009, p. 35). Many of the CICTs I contacted for the embassy survey project (Ye, 2014) kept their own diary-like blogs. The widespread nature of this practice inspired me to choose them as an important method of data collection. Reviewing previous studies which employed diaries (or e-journals), my main concern was that participants might fail to provide enough entries. This was a very real possibility in a situation, where the researcher has little control and depends on the goodwill of participants. My concerns were in fact ill founded. The blogs of the three participants who agreed to take part generated rich data (see appendix A): the multimodality of blogs, the posts, the comments, the profiles, the music, the photos, the emoji, and the layout, all helped to the build up a picture of the participants' identity (Norris, 2007; Walker, 2009).

4.3.3 Summary of research methods

This triad of data collection methods (focus groups, interviews and blogs) served as the basis for the evidence-based recommendations reported in chapter nine on ways forward for those in charge of Confucius Institutes and other international exchange programs. Focus groups and interviews data offered insights on organizational concerns

and issues. The discussions of work situations revealed CICTs' incentives, engagement and barriers to productivity, as well as the attitudes of the host institutes and communities to people of diversity, allowing program organizers to identify and adjust program planning, improve working conditions and promote efficiency. CICTs' reflections on their expectations and day-to-day encounters could be used for "needs analysis", or "program evaluation", thus providing ideas for future pre-sojourn training and policy making.

A map of the data collection methods for this study is provided in table 4.1 below

Table 4.1: Data collection methods

	First Phrase	**Second Phrase**	**Third Phrase**
Focus group	4 CICTs x 2 groups		
Interview	4 CI directors	Follow up interviews With blog participants	3 expatriation interviews with blog participants
Blog		3 CICTs	3 CICTs

4.4 Accessing the participants

An essential consideration for any study is defining the population on which it is based (Deters, 2011). I define CICTs as individuals sponsored by Chinese government and currently teaching Chinese language and culture in the UK, namely, Confucius Institute Chinese language teachers (孔院教师) and culture teachers (志愿者教师). Many CICTs, particularly the language teachers, were trained as teachers and had teaching experience in related subjects before working in the UK (see chapter 2). However, some culture teachers had degrees in fine arts but were not necessarily trained or had experience as teachers. As noted by previous researchers, the willingness of the participant to share the information is the key issue in ethnographic research. My

research employed opportunistic sampling, and mainly depended on participants' voluntary involvement. The ideal plan was to conduct a "track down" investigation with the new CICTs for 2013 throughout their whole sojourn journey. As already indicated, however, there were two main obstacles to this course of action: it was not possible to undertake two years of data collection for a doctorate research project; and the fact that the CICTs' starting dates vary made it difficult to initiate simultaneous case study. Therefore, in order to recruit sufficient numbers of participants, I decided to include both "stayers", (whose term of service started before September, 2013) and newcomers in my research. Previous researchers have found that cross-cultural adjustment follows a U shaped curve; the most difficult time of adjustment usually occurs during the fourth to the sixth month of residence abroad, rather than before or after (Lysgaand, 1955; Ward et al., 1998). Most of the participants I recruited had started their service after November 2012 (see tables 4.3 and 4.4).

The biggest challenge in recruiting CICTs was the need to gain their trust, and motivate them to participate, something which required social skills, patience, determination, and significantly, an innovative field work design. In the first instance in July 2013, I gained access through my supervisors' social networks to a CICT, who later served as the basis for a pilot study. They also introduced me to the Education Section of the Chinese Embassy in the UK which led to an opportunity to participate in one of their survey projects, "the Current Situation and Future Development of Chinese Teaching in Britain" (see chapter 2) and provided me with a golden opportunity to access CICTs in the UK. At this stage, two CICTs, who regularly kept their own diary-like blogs, kindly volunteered to join my research and later became my blog participants.

With the help of the Education Section, I introduced my research to some CI directors in August 2013 and asked for their assistance. Invitation letters were sent out via CI directors in which I explained the data would be used to provide suggestions for improving CICTs' intercultural competence and would contribute to other work abroad projects. Eight focus group participants were successfully recruited in this way.

4.5 The Participants

The four CI directors I interviewed, two females and two males, all have wide experience of education administration and a good knowledge of English. Three were English professors in leading Chinese universities and have experience of overseas study. The fourth worked in a key secondary school in China and has been responsible for international exchange and cooperation program for many years. Their stays in Britain ranged in length from six to twenty-eight months（see table 4.2）.

The focus group participants, five females and three males, are mostly in their late twenties and have completed master degrees. As can be seen in tables 4.3 and 4.4, they have diverse professional backgrounds. Five out of eight were CI teachers with prior teaching experiences either in secondary schools or in universities; one was a Psychology graduate, the other four were English graduates. In Britain they were responsible for Chinese language teaching in primary and secondary schools. The other three were graduates in Music, Traditional Medicine and Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language respectively; they were responsible for cultural promotion. Three out of eight had undertaken short visits overseas before working in Britain. By invitation, one focus group participant also joined my blog study.

Table 4.2 CI directors

Name	F/M	Age	Arrival time	Role (UK)	Role (China)
An	F	50-60	Jul. 2011	CI Director	English Professor, Dean of Department
Jing	M	50-60	Jan. 2012	CI Director	English Professor PhD Supervisor
Lian	F	40-50	Oct. 2012	CI Director	Director of International Affairs Office
Ni	M	50-60	Feb. 2013	CI Director	English professor, Director of International Affairs Office

Table 4.3 Focus group 1 participants

Name	F/M	Age	Arrival time	Role (UK)	Role (China)
Yan	F	20-29	Oct. 2013	CI culture teacher	TCFL postgraduate
Mai	F	20-29	Oct. 2012	CI language teacher	English teacher in secondary school
Zuo	F	30-39	Oct. 2013	CI language teacher	English teacher in secondary school
Nan	F	20-29	Oct. 2013	CI language teacher	History teacher in second school

Table 4.4 Focus group 2 participants

Name	F/M	Age	Arrival time	Role (UK)	Role (China)
Qiao	M	30-39	Oct. 2010	CI language teacher	English teacher in university
Ke	M	20-29	Oct. 2011	CI culture teacher	Graduate, specialist in music
Zhen	F	20-29	Oct. 2012	CI language teacher	English teacher in university
Bian	M	20-29	Oct. 2012	CI culture teacher	Postgraduate, specialist in martial arts and traditional medicine

As mentioned earlier, two blog participants were recruited through the embassy surrey (Ye, 2014) and one recruited through a focus group discussion. Table 4.5 displays the demographic information on the blog participants, as well as their professional

background and length of sojourn in Britain; more information will be provided in the relevant chapters.

Table 4.5 Case study participants

Name	F/ M	Age	Arrival time	Return time	Role (UK)	Role (China)
Su	F	40-49	Sep.2013	Jul.2014	CI language teacher	Secondary school teacher
Qiao	M	30-39	Oct.2010	Aug.2014	CI language teacher	University lecturer
Shan	F	40-49	Dec.2012	Jun. 2014	CI language teacher	University professor

4.6 Research process

While many previous studies focus only on the sojourn period, the present study collected data at three stages: arrival, so as to explore the pre-sojourn expectations which could influence identity (Grotevant, 1987; Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2007); during the sojourn itself; and at the repatriation stage which defines and accentuates identity expansion (Jackson, 2011a)

I arranged what was intended to be a pilot interview with CI director Ni through a friend three months before I started the first phrase data collection. I aimed to build a picture of CI teachers' lives in Britain, given their "expertise in the area under study" (Dodson & Schmalzbauer, 2005, p. 954). The interview with Ni produced important data on professional acculturation; it also helped me to refine my focus and fine tune the questions raised later in interviews with the other CI directors and focus groups. Hence it seemed appropriate to include this interview in the first phase data collection. For each interview, I followed a standard protocol, using the same questions across all settings (see Appendices C and D).

4.6.1 First phase of study

In the first phrase, then, I interviewed four CI directors, two based in England and two in Scotland, in their own offices. Each interview last about 60 minutes. Interviews with CI directors made it possible to build a clear picture of CI polices and settings, while at the same time, allowing me to seek access and support for the upcoming research. Two focus groups interviews with CICTs were arranged and organized by the two CI directors. At my request, location, age, gender, career, education, and experience abroad – socio-demographic factors that affect disposition, habitus, agency and capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) – were taken into account in organizing the discussions, so as to ensure representativeness and diversity. Venues were scheduled at the convenience of the teachers.

The focus group discussion conducted in Scotland lasted 75 minutes, and drew on four female teachers; the other discussion, conducted in England, lasted 90 minutes, and included one female and three male teachers (see table 4.3 and 4.4). Special attention was paid to CICTs' motivation, self-awareness, feelings and acculturation.

Zeller (1993) recommends that focus group moderators should lead in the discussion with a disclosure from their own experiences, in order to alleviate embarrassment and create a relaxed environment for group discussion. I briefly introduced my experiences as a Hanban Chinese teacher in the USA and as an international student in the UK. I mentioned I had experienced both ups and downs but did not elaborate; in this way I embarked on my moderator role as both an insider and an outsider.

A list of possible topics was shared with participants beforehand in order to sharpen the focus for discussion. However, I did not strictly stick to the schedule but rather used it as a check list. Participants spontaneously took turns to talk. I intervened only when the topic moved beyond the agenda, or when some participants hogged the discussion. The aim of the focus group interview at this stage was "to establish if there is any systematic variation in the ways in which different groups discuss a matter" (Bryman, 2012, p. 510). Systematic variation such as motivation, attitude and adjustment to the host society were given particular attention.

Table 4.6 First phase data collection

	Participant	Length of time	Interview date	Location
Interview with CI director	Ann	60 minutes	17 Dec. 2013	CI office, England
	Jing	60 minutes	28 Nov. 2013	CI office, Scotland
	Lian	60 minutes	29 Nov. 2013	CI office, Scotland
	Ni	60 minutes	6 Aug. 2013	CI office, England
Focus group discussion 1	Yan Mai Zuo Nan	75 minutes	29 Nov. 2013	CI office, England
Focus group discussion 2	Qiao Ke Zhen Bian	90 minutes	17 Dec. 2013	CI office, Scotland

4.6.2 Second phase of study

As Norris (2007) notes, "identity is constantly interactively constructed on a micro level, where an individual's identity is claimed, contested and re-constructed in interaction and in relation to the other participants" (p. 657). Therefore, at this stage, I

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examined the ongoing process of identity negotiation on a daily basis; how the CICTs recognized themselves and are recognized by others (Andreouli, 2010).

In advance of data collection, a consent form was presented to case study participants who were encouraged to keep detailed diary-like blogs (including photos), to record their experiences and reflections on the interactions in their daily activities, including their work, life, intercultural encounters, excursions, research and socialization (Berwick & Walley, 2000; Jackson, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2008b). They were encouraged to describe confusing or disturbing intercultural experiences as well as those that were particularly rewarding or memorable. They were asked to describe and reflect on their language investment, adjustments, values and any steps they took to enhance their personal development and growth. I kept close track of their updates and, when necessary, conducted supplementary interviews via telephone/skype/QQ (an instant internet communication tool) on the questions raised in their accounts. As mentioned in 4.2.2, this study included some retrospective data. Although the blog study was conducted after December, 2013, the data collection period shown in the table below refers to the earliest blog entries I could trace upon my participants' arrival. Given the fact that participants used different social networking applications, and my follow up interviews were in the form of phone calls, voice messages, text messages or blog entry comments, depending on the preferences of participants; it is not possible to produce measures such as word counts of blogs or lengths of follow-up interviews, Instead, I present the number of the posts and frequency of follow up interviews in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7 Second phase data collection

Blog participant	Data collection time	Number of blog post	frequency of follow up interview	Form of follow up interviews
Su	Oct.2013-Jun.2014	34	3 times	text chats, personal visit
Qiao	Nov.2013-Aug.2014	398	3 times	20 minutes voice message talk, 2 post comments
Shan	Dec.2012-Jun.2014	87	1 time	2 hours phone call

4.6.3 Third phase of study

The repatriation interviews for the CICTs were organized before their return. I designed a schedule which included the questions raised at the arrival stage, so as to facilitate a comparison of CICTs' attitudes, perceptions, and concerns over time. Building on Jackson's (2008b) survey design, the guide questions covered topics such as their goals for the sojourn, their reactions to their new environment, their contact with locals, perceived host receptivity, culture shock, coping strategies, awareness of cultural differences, their evolving sense of self, their relationship with their associates, new behaviours they had adopted or rejected, perceived language gains, their attitude towards the English language, Britain and British people, their emotions about returning home, their attitude towards their Chinese teaching job, the Chinese language, Chinese culture and China, and their perceptions of their intercultural communication skills. Finally, CICTs were invited to comment about their overall impressions of the sojourn and its impact on them.

Table 4.8 Third phase data collection

	Participant	Date of interview	Place	Length of interview
Repatriation interview	Su	23 Jun. 2014	online chat	3.5 hours
	Qiao	22 July 2014	A Café	2 hours
	Shan	10 Jun. 2014	Phone call	2 hours

At that point, the three phases of data collection were complete; however, the study was not finished. I continued to follow participants' blog updates after their return to China, allowing me to keep in touch with my participants, sharing their reentry experience, and understanding the impact of their work abroad on their career aspirations and, significantly, their lives.

4.7 Data analysis

I move now to a description of the data analysis procedures, namely, transcription and translation, member checks, categorising, coding and other procedures.

4.7.1 Transcription

The representation of a live conversation in a text format is a primary consideration in qualitative research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Reissman, 2002). Jefferson's (2004) system for transcription was adopted for focus group and interview data in this research. While linguistic features, repetition, overlapping, interruption, incomplete utterances, back channelling and description of nonverbal sounds such as laugher and sighs were also included. Blog data were, of course, already available in electronic form.

4.7.2 Translation

All the focus groups, interviews and blogs were conducted in Chinese. I translated into

English only the parts used as quotes in my research report in order to eliminate

unnecessary work. Birch et al. (1996) define translation as a process of "cultural

transfer" (p. 14) to develop "an empathy with, if not a practical knowledge of, the

cultural practices and linguistic identities of the communities from whom information is

sought" (p. 15). Instead of literally translating the primary data, I practiced

"intersemiotic translation" (Birch, 1996), highlighting the "comparability, mutuality,

unification of understanding" (p. 15) between two languages and culture. Although my

ethnic congruity with the participants was likely to help capture the original nuances,

authenticities, and subliminal messages, I was mindful of the dangers (Koga, 2009).

One of my supervisors is also a Mandarin speaker and therefore able to cross-check my

translations.

4.7.3 Coding

The data, as suggested by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010), were explored and reduced

before being analysis. Several thorough readings of the transcriptions helped to

familiarise me with the whole text allowing me to identify coherent and distinct themes

(Ratner, 2001).

I coded inductively by constant comparison (Merriam, 1998; Thomas, 2009), guided by

Byram's (2006) five assessments of intercultural experience: (1) interest in knowing

other people's way of life and introducing one's own culture to others;(2) ability to

change perspective; (3) ability to cope with living in a different culture;(4) knowledge

about one's own and others' cultures for intercultural communication, and (5)

knowledge about intercultural communication processes. Using Bourdieu's (1991)

notions of "capital", "habitus", "field" and "power" as a lens, special attention was given to participants' accounts of routine, self-conception, awareness of others, and how they applied socio-cultural capital to negotiate lives in a foreign environment. Such criteria helped me to locate the critical touch points of CICTs' cultural-psychological transition. After this initial "manual" process, the transcriptions were coded using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software program. Four main "themes", also called "nodes" in NVivo, emerged: (1) motivation and expectation; (2) cultural shock and adjustment; (3) identity and agency; (4) reflection and growth. More detailed explanation of the codes under each category is provided in appendix A.

Additional steps were taken with blog data. A within-case analysis (Kathleen Charmaz, 2006, p. 194) was undertaken so as to reveal the "local dynamics" (ibid., p. 195) in terms of power and identities between CICTs and their interlocutors. Then, cross-case analyses (ibid., p. 194; Stake, 2005) were undertaken. The themes were compared across participants in order to illustrate the factors and strategies that led to different sojourn outcomes.

4.8 Ethical considerations

According to Mason (2002), qualitative research usually involves ethical issues which need be anticipated in advance, so that the researcher can take into consideration how their research may influence participants, and in order to maintain the integrity of sociological enquiry as a discipline (Brewer, 2000). This ethical code was borne in mind before, during and after data collection and analysis in my research.

Ethical approval to undertake this study was granted by the University's Research Ethics Committee and, thereafter, was sought from the gatekeepers, in this case the CI

directors. The information sheets and consent forms (see appendix B) were then sent out to participants, introducing my research topic, purpose and procedures, so as to communicate research objectives clearly to all involved (Brewer, 2000). I explained that participation was voluntary, assured them of confidentiality issues, their right to withdraw from the study, and the anonymity of data. I subsequently contacted focus group participants to set up a mutually convenient venue. Before the start of the focus group discussions, I reminded them of the research topic, and that their anonymity would be protected, and I confirmed their permission to audio record the discussion. Similar procedures were followed with blog participants. I explained that I would keep a close track of their blog updates and that they might be invited for a supplementary interview either by phone or instant communication tool on the issues raised in their accounts. With their consent, some parts of their blog narrations would be used (and translated, if in Chinese) as quotations in research reports. Any images or symbols which would identify participants and link them to the study were blurred to ensure confidentiality. If there were some parts of blogs they did not wish me to view, they could use privacy settings to limit access. I thus felt confident that I had satisfied the guidelines on consent, anonymity and confidentiality. In terms of safeguarding the well-being of participants, I took steps to ensure that I behaved with sensitivity, respect and care.

4.9 Trustworthiness and credibility

Traditionally, validity, reliability, and objectivity are criteria used to ensure the rigour of research in positivist research. However, interpretive qualitative research differs from the positivist tradition in its fundamental assumptions, research purposes, and inference

processes, thus making the conventional criteria unsuitable for evaluating research findings (Bradley, 1993). Recent qualitative researchers have substituted these criteria with terms such as, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. *Credibility* concerns whether the findings are adequate and congruent with "the constructions of the social world under study" (Bradley, 1993, p. 436). Methodological strategies such as prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, triangulation, negative case analysis, peer debriefing, member checking, confirming results with participants and referential material adequacy all improve credibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Weber (1990) further notes that credibility needs to be considered both in research design and data analysis. He emphasizes the significant impact of the coders' knowledge and experience on findings. *Transferability* refers to whether the findings can be applied to other contexts. Because of the uniqueness of individual experience and the contextual conditions considered in qualitative research, findings can rarely be generalized in the traditional sense. However, in Yin's (2011, p. 100) words, the findings of qualitative research can achieve "analytic generalization", by explaining 1) how they are likely to inform a particular set of concepts, theoretical constructs, or hypothesized sequence of events; and 2) how the same theory could apply to other situations where similar concepts might be relevant . Providing detailed descriptions of the cases enables "reader or user generalization" (Merriam, 1998, p. 211), meaning that the reader can determine to what extent the findings could be applied to other cases and contexts. This study was likely to provide evidence of repetition of patterns among participants that hints at universality of experience. I hoped that the findings will have a positive impact on future work abroad sojourners. By the same token, the setting for this research was chosen because

of its potential for the findings to be transferred to similar settings, for instance, overseas volunteer programs, Higher Education institutions that recruit international teachers, and teachers' professional development programs.

Dependability refers to "the coherence of the internal process and the way the researcher accounts for changing conditions in the phenomena" (Bradley, 1993, p. 437). Dependability can be strengthened by auditing the consistency of the study processes (Pope & Mays, 1995; Y. Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). I followed certain procedures as consistently as possible. All the participants received the interview schedules before meeting. All the focus groups and interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and translated to be as close as possible to the original meaning. The dependability of the study increased as I incorporated multiple data collection methods in order to illustrate the diversity of CICT sojourn trajectories.

Confirmability refers to "the extent to which the characteristics of the data, as posited by the researcher, can be confirmed by others who read or review the research results" (Bradley, 1993, p. 437). However, some researchers argue that confirmability is "not pertinent …for postmodern philosophies such as feminism and critical theory in which the investigator's experience becomes part of data, and which perceive reality as dynamic and changing" (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2008). In relation to my study, it is noteworthy that all the empirical data were derived from participants' interpretations of their experiences. I was aware that this "positioning" and "wisdom" could influence the relationship between the researched and the researcher. Previous researchers caution that participants intend to portray themselves as "thoughtful, rational and reflective individuals" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 13) when recounting their experiences, with the ambiguous role of the researcher as both an "insider" and

"outsider" acting as a means of controlling the status of information. By withholding, repeating and inserting information, participants manipulate positionalities strategically for their own purposes (Baynham, 2011; Modan & Shuman, 2011). These findings are worth mentioning, particularly, in my case, because I aimed to capture insights on CICTs' behaviours. On the other hand, my knowledge, personal experience and perspective unavoidably affected research outcomes, given that I reinterpret participants' interpretations. To this extent, a conventional sense of confirmability in interpretation and recommendation is "not only fancy but impossible" (Merriam, 1998, p. 206). Nevertheless, during data analysis, I followed intracoder agreement checks of data coding. I also attempted to demonstrate that findings emerged from the data and not my own predispositions.

4.10 Summary

This chapter has described the methodology employed to study CICTs' identity change in the UK. This study adopts a mainly inductive method of data collection undertaken in three stages, in which the data collected and analysed in one stage generated new ideas to inform the next stage of data collection. Starting from assumptions based on the previous literature and my personal experience, I endeavoured to ensure that notions I held at the outset of the study were not imposed on the data but, rather, emerged from the analysis (R. Jones, 2011).

In this longitudinal research, data were collected through focus groups, which enabled me to examine how individual and group action come together within social settings (the home, the workplace, and the social occasion) to construct identities. Data derived from interviews revealed the stories behind the scenes and allowed me to understand

the CI program from administrators' points of view. The data gleaned though individual blogs compensated for the fact that I was not able to "go on site" to observe the CICTs' daily lives, serving as a zoom lens to capture meaningful moments and changes. Blogs provided a useful data source for triangulation and another means for CICTs to express themselves while constructing a further dimension of identity – virtual identities.

Chapter 5 **Motivation, Acculturation and Self-development**

In this chapter, I present the findings of a thematic analysis of the first phase of data collection, namely, two focus group interviews with eight CI teachers and four elite interviews with CI directors. I will first provide background information on each of the participants before discussing the motivation, adjustments, and changes in the beliefs and self-growth of the CICTs.

5.1 **Motivation, expectation and belief**

Dörnyei (2000, p. 520) defines motivation as being "responsible for why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it". He proposes an "L2 Motivational Self System" and defines L2 motivation as the integration of three components: the ideal L2 self, the "ought-to" L2 self, and L2 Learning Experience. The ideal L2 self relates to what people want to become, and is usually associated with the desire of professional advancement or success; the "ought-to" L2 Self is what people believe one should possess to meet expectations and standards. It is usually imposed by external forces such as authority figures. L2 Learning experience refers to the motives derived from the learning environment, learners' histories and learning experience. Dörnyei believes the L2 motivational self-system has a clear impact on L2 learners' ultimate success.

Asked to reflect on their motivation and expectations on joining the CICT program, all the CICTs admitted that career needs and curiosity about life in an English-speaking country were the main drivers behind their decision to apply. For example, Zhen, a

university teacher believed an overseas experience in an Anglophone country was a must for her "ought-to" teacher self.

Excerpt 5.1

> To promote my professional skills on one hand, on the other hand,
>
> English majors have to come to English countries for an experience, and
>
> then they can understand the culture better. (Focus group, Zhen)
>
> 一方面是为了提高专业素质，另一方面，英语专业的一定要来一下
>
> 英语国家体会一下， 才能更好的理解他们的文化 。

Mai and Nan, both teachers in secondary schools, believed joining the CICT program represented a win–win situation in terms of professional development and self-improvement.

Excerpt 5.2

> The first day in the job, I saw a colleague in her 30s; there were
>
> colleagues in their 40s and 50s. At that moment I had a vision of myself
>
> in the future. So I hoped my life could be different. […] Changing the
>
> scene, changing the mood, possibly I could discover new opportunities
>
> for myself. (Focus group, Nan)
>
> 我第一天进办公室的时候看见三十多岁的老师，我们办公室有
>
> 30.40，50 岁的老师，我那个时候好象就看见自己 30 岁的样子，所
>
> 以我希望自己的生活能够不太一样。[…] 所以换一个环境，换一个
>
> 心情，也许在的新的环境下能发现新的机会给自己。
>
> There are moments I felt puzzled and lost, in a dead end of a job, I hoped
>
> this opportunity would broaden my horizons and allow me to aim higher.
>
> (Focus group, Mai)

我们都是有过几年工作经验的，可能在工作当中也有自己迷茫或困

惑的地方，有一些工作的瓶颈，希望能通过这样一个机会开拓我们

的视野，然后让我们站的更高。

For most of the CICTs in this study, working experience in an English speaking country was deemed cultural capital and associated with a sense of self and offering alternative possibilities in life. Two culture teachers, however, expressed more altruistic motives, describing feelings of responsibility in relation to their role as ambassador for Chinese culture.

Excerpt 5.3

> I hope I can help to spread knowledge of Chinese music overseas.
>
> (Focus group, Ke)
>
> 对中国音乐的海外传播能奉献自己的一些力量。
>
> Foreigners tend to have negative views of Chinese traditional medicine, picked up from movies or in other ways. So I have decided to promote Chinese traditional medicine, to correct the prejudice […] and the bad impressions of Chinese doctors. (Focus group, Bian)
>
> 然后外国人不管是从电影里也好，还是对中医有一定的偏见的，所
>
> 以我当时出来的时候就是，推广中医，改变外国人对中医的偏见，
>
> 给中医一个正确的认识[…]把真正的中医推广出去，改变对不良医
>
> 生的一些看法。

The four CI directors had all come to Britain for career reasons. They explained that their previous experiences of either study or visits abroad meant that they met the requirements of the post, and had prompted them to apply. For instance, Jing explained:

Excerpt 5.4

> I had been studying in Britain and I am more familiar with this country.
> It's nice to be able to come back [to Britain] again. It happened that my
> university needs someone who had an overseas background to undertake
> this job, so I decided to accept this assignment. (Interview, Director Jing)
> 我在英国上过学对英国这边比较熟悉那么有过这样的经历再有一个
> 这样的机会我觉得再过来看一看也是挺好的一件事情那么这个时候
> 学校也有这样的需要一些有所在国的背景,所在的一些了解情况的老
> 师去工作会比较方便一些出于这样几方面的原因我接受了这项工
> 作。

As we will see, CICT motivations determined their attitudes towards the host society and their language investment and professional adjustment, and their final opinions about their stay. I will turn next to the challenges discussed by CI directors and the focus groups, how they overcame the difficulties and adjusted to British life style.

5.2 Differences in language, culture, habitus

As shown in tables 4.1 and 4.2, at the time the interviews were undertaken, the CICTs and directors had been in Britain for a length of time that varied from just under two months to three years. When asked if there was any discrepancy between their expectations and reality, the CICTs all agreed that their experiences had surpassed their expectations. This is possibly due to the pre-departure training which tends to prepare the CICTs for the worst case scenario. It might also be the results of efforts made to adjust to the new environment (see excerpt 5.15). Nevertheless, the CICTs all reported

experiencing culture shock in several areas: language, professional culture and classroom teaching.

5.2.1 Difference in language and accents

The focus group participants described the challenges they faced in understanding English in day-to-day life, particularly in relation to English accents and pronunciation, as shown in excerpt 5.5 and 5.6.

Excerpt 5.5

> Actually I felt rather disappointed upon my arrival. […] One reason is language. Because we were used to either British English [received pronunciation] or American English, but here they have all kinds of pronunciation and I simply cannot understand. This is especially the case when I have to pay bills by phone. In our clinic[4] we have twenty-two first year students, they came from more than ten countries, and none of them is an English native speaker. So it was a big challenge to me at the beginning. (Focus group, Bian)
>
> 我刚来的时候其实落差挺大的，[…]，一个是语言方面的原因，因为在国内的时候学的要么是英式法音要么是美式发音，到了这边后发现，各种各样的发音都有，根本就听不懂，尤其是交水电费打电话的时候，然后我们诊所里光是大一新生就有２２个，分别来自十几个国家，而且英国本土的一个也没有，多以刚开始适应他们的口音是很大一个挑战.

---

[4] Refers to the affiliated clinic of the Confucius Institute where Bian worked.

The other four CICTs based in Scotland also complained that Scottish accents were obstacles in their communication with people in the local community. It is noteworthy that the CICTs tended to think that only RP (Received Pronunciation) English is "English". They seemed unaware of the fact that English as a lingua franca has a variety of forms; and that English as a national language has regional dialect features. Mai, at first sight, appeared to depart from this pattern:

Excerpt 5.6

> Perhaps G is not the best place [to learn English], but the way they use words is very accurate, very authentic, this is still helpful for my learning. To learn and to improve English, this is my main purpose of coming here. (Focus group, Mai)
>
> 但是格拉斯哥可能不是一个很好的选择，但是他们的用词很准，很地道，让我学习的地方，我觉得还是学习提高突破，这是我来的主要目的。

In using "accurate" and "authentic" to describe how the Scots speak English she would seem to be expressing approval for this variety. The grudging use of "this is still helpful for my learning", however, suggests that she does not feel that Scots English is as prestigious as Received Pronunciation. The desirability of RP and native-like pronunciation is, of course, widespread (D. Rubin, 2012; Sharifian, 2009); awareness of the outer and expanding circles (Kachru, 2005) of world English speakers and the need to "train the listeners not just the speakers" (D. Rubin, 2012, p. 14) would appear to be limited.

While the differences in lexis in colloquial English reported by writers such as Deters (2011) were not discussed by focus groups participants, they do, however, attract the

attention of two of the case study participants, Su and Qiao (see chapters 6 and 7). This may well be explained in terms of different levels of sensitivity attributed to factors such as social circles and language investment. I will turn next to the second major theme, culture shock.

5.2.2 Difference in professional culture

In terms of culture, CICTs were impressed by the legal age for alcohol consumption and the film classification system in Britain. Several CICTs reported that their attempts to buy alcohol were rejected by cashiers who considered they were under 18 when they failed to present ID to prove their age. Such encounters can be thought of as humorous experiences which help CICTs to understand and adapt to English practice. By contrast, what a CI director shared with me at interview is best described as a more traumatic professional culture shock.

5.2.2.1 Ruled by human or ruled by regulation

CI director Lian told me a story to explain the difference between English and Chinese professional cultures. Two CICTs in her institute were planning to go back to China for the Christmas holiday. Wanting to stay with their family for as long as possible and noting that the air tickets after the Christmas break were cheaper, they planned to stay in China for three weeks and bought the air tickets before notifying their director, Lian. When Lian found two teachers wanted to extend their holiday without permission, she turned down their request, reminding them that their jobs were their priority and that this thoughtless decision would impact negatively on teaching. Lian urged them to reschedule the flights. The teachers begged Lian for understanding, explaining that their

tickets could not be changed or cancelled. The host schools expressed their unhappiness with the teachers by wanting to deduct a week's salary in spite of the fact that CICTs, including the CI directors, are sponsored by the Chinese government and receive no payment from the British partner (see chapter 2). This then required Lian, as director, to notify Hanban about the incident, knowing that the consequences would be very serious. Lian was a protective director and did not want to get her staff into trouble. She tried to negotiate with the host schools while urging the teachers to make up in their spare time the classes they would have missed. The host schools were very firm in their decision, insisting that the teachers reschedule their flights.

Excerpt 5.7

> I told them [host schools] that they [two teachers] cannot reschedule the flights and they cannot afford to give up the tickets, either. Chinese teachers are not that rich. Under such circumstance, they [host schools] still had no intention of giving in, they insisted on three things: 1. To Reschedule air tickets; 2. to make up the teaching hours missed; 3. one-week income penalty]. I said [to host schools], "sure I knew these two teachers have done wrong, and I will give them a good telling off. Please can you let them off this time? I promise this won't happen again". "No, this is unforgivable!" The host schools refused to let them have another chance. I simply cannot negotiate with them [host schools] anyway. One of the two teachers told me the other day, she said: "You see, I haven't been home for more than a year. My 80 year old father has been missing me so much; he hoped I could spend Chinese New Year with him. But that's impossible as I can't have one month off. I only asked for one

week off." I felt very sad when I heard this. (Lian burst out tears) When I

tried to discuss further with the British partners, they [host schools] said:

"You were paid for the job. You are working here and now you're

asking for one week off. It's absolutely reasonable to deduct a week's

salary." (Interview, Director Lian)

我说机票改不了了，当然我们放弃好几千块钱扔了，我们中国老师

也没有那么富有，就不可能。然后就说在这种情况下他们非常非常

的强势坚持。他们要坚持这三点啊，我就是说: "那好吧，这个老师

确实有他的问题，有他的责任。我对他进行教育，绝对不会有下

次，这次就原谅她吧？"。"不原谅，[这是] 不能原谅的事情!" 就非

要坚持不能原谅。然后呢，我就怎么沟通都沟通不了。后来这个老

师就跟我说，他说；"你看我一年多没回家了，我 80 多岁的老父亲

想我了，本来让我春节就回去，就让我春节过完了再回来。我想起

一个月的假，那就更不可能呢。我就请一个星期吧。"他跟我说的

我的心里就特别的难过，我就跟外方再在沟通的时候，他们（外

方）就说就说你们拿钱了，你们在这边工作，一个星期不工作，扣

钱是正当理由。这是正当的理由。

Lian became very emotional and the interview paused. As expatriates, both of us

understood the feeling of homesick during Chinese New Year. After a second, Lian

continued:

Then I wrote them an email. I was weeping as I wrote. Even now I still

feel very sad when I think of this. I wrote, "Yes we get paid for the job,

we are paid by Hanban. Compared with what you earn, we get really low

wages. Would you please understand that the teachers were far from
their homes and families, and they've been really working very hard in
this country? Would you please forgive them by showing some
understanding?" Even so, [the host schools] still said "No". (Interview,
Director Lian)

然后我就给他们写了一封邮件，我写邮件的时候是一边哭，一边给
他们写邮件的。现在我想起来还觉得心里非常的难过。我就说我们
老师是拿钱了，我们老师拿的是中国汉办给的补贴，并不是多么高
的工资。跟你们比起来很低，那么我们拿钱了，那你有没有考虑到
我们的老师怎么一年来辛辛苦苦，远离家乡，远离父母，远离自己
的子女，对吧？但这个工作，那么你们就给一点同情心的话，也是
这件事能不能原谅他? 就这样讲还是一个 No。

Although I did not condone the behaviour of these two CICTs, I found the response of
the host school was disproportionate to the situation. In discussion with several English
native speakers with extensive experience of the education system, two possibilities
emerged which might explain the host school's response: either there was a cultural
misunderstanding on Lian's part, or the host school had overreacted. What Lian added
next made me tend to believe the second explanation.

This incident made me feel, (pause), really, I can only share these
feelings with Chinese teachers, this is a culture shock. They [host
schools] said: You are good, you are right, but you are too soft hearted. I
said we Chinese all behave like this. "Will your principal agree, if you
ask for one week off and go home for a holiday?" [The host schools

asked]. I said he would not agree, but given the fact that things can't be changed, we Chinese compromise. The teachers take one step back, and the principal takes one step back as well. Then we sort things out. "I have stepped back, I needed the flights to be rescheduled and fined them, and this is my step back." [The host schools said]. So, I feel this is a cultural difference. Actually there are lots of these kinds of incidents. (Sigh), So, I can understand our teachers, and I can understand the British as well. […] So they say that the Chinese follow too slavishly the doctrine of the mean[5] , I admit that I do, too. (Interview, Director Lian)

这真让我觉得，这件事。我只能跟我们的中国老师讲，这是一个文化差异,他们说你这个都好，你咋都对，但是你就是太 soft heart 心肠太软了。我说我们中国人都这样，那你们校长也同意吗？如果你也是上班请了一个星期的假，回家休假去了，同意吗？我说他会不同意，但是在这种情况下，事情已经发生的事情的情况下，我说我们中国人可能会退一步，那你退一步我也退一步，那双方都退一步会把的事情圆满的解决的。我退步了呀，我要求改机票扣工资、补一个星期的课吧，我这已经是退步了。这就是退步了。所以就这样，所以我感觉带着文化差异，其实类似这样的事情，我给你讲还有很多很多，所以说喷 。所以说，很多时候其实我也理解我们的老

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[5] The doctrine of the mean is a doctrine of Confucianism. It advocates moderation and void extreme. The goal of the mean is to maintain balance and harmony from directing the mind to a state of constant equilibrium.

师，也理解外方。我也理解。所以有时候说中国人很中庸。承认我

也站得太中庸了这道。

In above excerpt, Lian is highlighting differences in leadership style between the two countries. While aware of the dangers of essentialism, the work of writers such as Ahmed, Chung, and Eichenseher (2003) and C. C. Chen and Lee (2008) offer some support for this interpretation. As Bedell, Hunter, Angie, and Vert (2006) conclude, Chinese leaders are expected to prioritise ethical considerations over the gain of profit, using persuasion rather than coercion to influence subordinates and promote harmony with nature and with others; western leadership, however, tends to place results before people. More specifically, Stambach's (2014) research on Confucius Institute teachers in American University highlights the "top-down" administrative structures in Chinese universities and the partnership between administrators and academics in American university. She reports that Chinese teachers "did not know or did not accept" the governance practice in American Campus (p. 106) and felt frustration and irritation.

5.2.2.2 Work place relationships

Other differences in professional culture such as line management relationships were also mentioned during the interviews with other CI directors. When asked to describe their job responsibilities, directors all mentioned that their roles included "baby-sitter", "secretary" and acting "like a mummy" in relation to their staff, as well as their obligation to take staff work and life needs into account. While for British directors, a job is job, and there are clear boundaries between work and one's personal life. Director Ni's comments were typical of those made by other CI directors.

Excerpt 5.8

> In our understanding, it's rational that CI directors care about their staff,
> [such as] their housing, the living conditions, relationships or families,
> etc. But for British directors, they will think these things are beyond their
> work responsibilities. They think you have been paid, you have got what
> you should have, and then the rest is none of their business. They [only]
> care about your job performance, and teaching. (Interview, Director Ni)
> 在我们看来孔子学院中方院长关心下属情况，住房，住在那里，条
> 件有没有好一点，有没有对象啊，什么家庭我们觉得是理所当然的.
> 但是英方院长就会觉得这已经超出他的工作范围了。他认为你已经
> 得到了你应该得到的待遇，已经有了，不是我关心的范围之内。那
> 么他们关注的就是你的业务，教学业务，工作教学。

In terms of the relationship among colleagues, Director An noticed the contrast between
the hierarchical relationships in China and the egalitarian nature of relationships in
Britain. She compared how she had been treated as a manager by her previous Chinese
colleagues and now by her British colleagues.

Excerpt 5.9

> In China, you were like this, (making an upward hand gesture), like this,
> here it is more equal. […] Every day I greet the security person, […]
> they say "nihao" to me. The cleaners, janitors, we are good friends. If
> they haven't seen me for a few days, they say, "Where [have you been]?
> […] I haven't seen you for a long time. […] they are very kind to me,
> but this sort of kindness was different from the kindness in China. In

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China you look up to people, but here people are treated as equals.

(Interview, Director An)

在国内呢，你是这样，（做手势），被人捧上去的， 是这样的，在

这块儿更平等些，[…]我每天都跟 security 打招呼，我都教会他们汉

语了，他们每天都跟我说你好，扫地的清洁工，还有看门的

security,这些都是很好的朋友，几天看不到我，他们都会说，where

are you ?[…] I haven't meet you for long time, […] 他们对我也很好，

但是这种好跟国内不一样，国内是一种仰视，这地方是一种平等.

As shown in table 4.2, the four CI directors had held higher status positions previously. Their interviews suggested that they felt they had been "downgraded", that their privilege status was not recognised, their power limited and their work habitus changed. However, none of them felt undermined or badly treated in their present posts. They rationalized that the "multiple roles" they played in the current post are just part of the job.

The equal working relationship mentioned by An was confirmed by focus group participants and the other three directors. Case study participant Qiao, in particular, elaborated on his appreciation of this professional culture at his repatriation interview (see chapter 7), emphasizing the positive impact on his professional adjustment.

5.2.2.3 Gender and other issues

The directors also mentioned the different approaches to working hours; they reported being willing to work additional hours in contrast with the British who emphasize the importance of maintaining a work-life balance.

Director An brought up the gender issue in relation to leadership. She thought it would be better to have a female director to manage an institute with large numbers of CICTs, most of whom are also female. She argued that female managers tend to be more considerate and caring and to take good care of staff who find themselves out of their comfort zone in a foreign country. In contrast, the two male directors thought gender difference had no impact on work performance; but that it would be more difficult for a female who has left behind her family in China and is working alone abroad. In terms of socializing, director Jing noticed that female CICTs tend integrate into British society more easily than males. Jing's observation is supported by previous studies of stays abroad (Dargent-Wallace, 2013; Westwood & Leung, 1994); however, there was no obvious evidence of this in the present study. The limited social circles discussed in excerpt 5.5 might be able to explain this discrepancy, as the CICTs often find difficulty despite their enthusiasm to connect with local people.

5.2.2.4 Interpersonal skills in the work place

The differences in professional culture flagged by the CI directors and focus group participants revealed some underlying tensions. Asked to reflect on their management experience in Britain, all directors stressed the importance of interpersonal skills in working abroad.

For instance, visa issues had emerged as very problematic for both the CI directors and the CICTs. In 2013, several visa extension applications had been rejected by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) because of the changes in policy. Consequently, the CICTs in question needed to return to China to renew their visas. The CICTs looked on this development as an opportunity for a trip back home. However, the local schools had already timetabled their teaching and could not afford to have the teachers absent for so

long. Hence the host schools and local government (including the Scottish First

Minister) made strenuous efforts to extend the CICTs visas without the need to return to

China to make a new application. When things had settled down, Director Lian sent out

large numbers of thank you emails to the people who had helped in the process. Her

gratitude was obviously appreciated by the British. However, some of the CICTs took

the help offered for granted and could not see any point in expressing their gratitude.

They argued if the British want the CICTs to keep on working for free, it was only

reasonable that they should help with the visas.

Excerpt 5.10

> Then here is the shock. As for me, I don't know how to tell this to the
>
> British and I don't know how to tell this to Chinese. […] I felt this is a
>
> culture shock. [This is] an example of culture shock.（Interview,
>
> Director Lian）
>
> 就这个就发生了一种碰撞。作为我来讲呢，我就不知道该怎么跟外
>
> 方讲，也不知道怎么跟中国人讲，这个[…] 我就觉得这是一种文化
>
> 的差异，这是一个例子。

The different responses to this situation suggest that, habitus is not a set of rules which

mould our action, it is rather a way of thinking and feeling, assumptions developed over

time through socialization and education. Habitus inculcates in us what is considered

"appropriate" or "polite" (J. S. Park & Wee, 2013). What the two CICTs deemed as

unnecessary in terms of their Chinese habitus indeed is highly valued in British society.

Habitus, however, can be changed over time and through training, as seen in the

response of Director Lian.

As far as Lian was concerned, expressing appreciation was necessary in order to maintain a harmonious partnership. As long as the problem could be solved, she did not mind whether the "thank you" was out of gratitude or courtesy, although in this particular case she did it out of gratitude. Lian can thus be seen performing "effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself" (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006), evidence of her intercultural competence.

The support from the CI director was not evident, however, when Shan came across the same visa problem. Unlike the fortunate CICTs mentioned in Lian's story, Shan's Visa application did not have such a happy ending (see chapter 8).

Working in an intercultural context, CI directors' decisions were not always welcome or understood by their co-national staff and their British counterparts. Hence the skills associated with efficient communication and negotiation, with both foreign colleagues and conational subordinates, assumed unprecedented importance. In the incident narrated in excerpt 5.7, the two CICTs in question might feel that Lian was unfeeling if she followed British expectations and stuck strictly to the rules. By the same token, the British counterparts might well consider Lian as showing "weak leadership" if she unconditionally took the side of the CICTs, and had not gone to such great lengths to negotiate with both parties. Was the issue "poor management" or was this an example of a cultural conflict? I will return to this issue in chapter nine.

5.2.3 Difference in teaching practice

5.2.3.1 TA role and inclusive education

The two most pressing issues related to teaching which emerged from focus group discussions, as well as the case studies reported in chapters six to eight, were special education and the role of teaching assistants (TAs) in British schools, both new areas of experience for the Chinese staff.

The CICTs reported no problems in adjusting to the TA role; in blogs however, case study participants felt differently. Some, such as Qiao, found the TA system minimized the difficulties in their professional adjustment (see chapter 7). For others, negative attitudes towards the TA role could be seen as a possible obstacle to professional acculturation. This will be discussed in details in chapter six.

Teaching students with special needs in inclusive schools was challenging for the CICTs. It might be helpful here to clarify exactly what is meant by special education and inclusive education in the two cultural settings.

The Chinese government uses six categories for assessing disabilities, as cited in Malinen (2013, p. 7): visual disability; hearing disability; language disability; intellectual disability; physical disability; mental disability.

These categories are mostly defined in terms of the medical model of disability. The Mainland Chinese policy of inclusive education, as encapsulated in the slogan "以特殊教育学校为骨干，以随班就读和特教班为主体" (Special education school as backbone, learning in regular classroom as main body), targets students with visual impairments, hearing impairments, and mental retardation but not all children, as is the

case in the international inclusion movement (Deng, Poon-Mcbrayer, & Farnsworth, 2001; Deng & Zhu, 2007).

The British notion of Special educational needs[6] (SEN) is different from Chinese in the way that it highlights the factors affecting a child's ability to learn:

> Behaviour or ability to socialise, e.g. not being able to make friends; reading and writing, e.g. they have dyslexia; ability to understand things; concentration levels, e.g. they have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; physical needs or impairments. (www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/overview)

Most China-educated teachers have limited understanding of special needs students (Deng & Holdsworth, 2007; J. Xu, 1999); for instance, learning difficulties are not yet widely recognized in China (Ellsworth & Zhang, 2007) but tend to be explained in terms of bad behaviour. In practice, the competitive Chinese school culture discourages teachers' enthusiasm for inclusion and leads to negative attitudes to students with disabilities in their classes (Deng & Pei, 2009; Feng, 2012; Malinen, Savolainen, & Xu, 2012); large class size and traditional instructional practices also prevent teachers from providing a more individualised curriculum and teaching methods, thus standing in the way of any development towards inclusive education (Fei, 2007; Feng, 2012; H. McCabe, 2003). In the following excerpt, Nan's words highlight the contrast between the unfavourable views she used to hold towards SEN and the appreciation she had now:

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[6] The UK government included "gifted and talented" students to SEN in the year 2002(Montgomery, 2013).

Excerpt 5.11

I am quite interested in two departments in the school, and I have more contact with the teachers from these departments. One is the learning support department; the other is the pupil support department. Learning support provides help to the students who have learning difficulties. Specialised teachers, at lunchtime, or after school, will teach or help students individually. In China this kind of work is usually the responsibility of the head teacher, or subject teacher. Teachers in China have to take care of everything, so it's a very tiring job. Pupil support deals with students' mental health, or family violence and such like. [Students] can turn to teachers for help, or if teachers notice anything they will call parents and negotiate. This is a point of strength, students can get more attention. (Focus group, Nan)

学校有两个 departments 我比较感兴趣，而且交往的老师也比较多，一个是 learning support department, 另外一个是 pupil support department. Learning support department 就是学生有学习方面的障碍，有专门的老师去辅导，中午，放学之后，或者走入课堂，一个个的去教，怎么去读，国内都是科任老师去做，或者班主任去做，[…]所以国内的老师很累，所有的事情都得去管. Pupil support 就是处理学生心理问题，或者叫庭暴力之类的，有问题去找这些老师去说，或者这些老师发现了，去协调，给家长打电话之类的。这些方面是很大的一个进步，对学生关注的多一些.

Director Jing also shared stories that left a deep impression on him. A learner in Jing's class was a student with disabilities. This student had speech difficulties even in his native language and needed a special carer all the time. Jing and another CICT worked with him on a one-one basis.

Excerpt 5.12

> This is the case, we did one-to-one teaching, and this is very rare for Chinese university teachers. I had never seen any case like this in my working life, let alone younger teachers. However, in order to accomplish our mission, to promote the Confucius Institute, we had overcome the difficulties. In my repatriation report I will say our CICTs have done a really good job overseas. […] It would be headline news if a Chinese university accepted a student with a disability. Here [in Britain] they care more about people's needs. (Interview, Director Jing)

> 那就这样的情况,我们老师,就是一对一的。哪像我们的大学老师别说是这样的学生,就是一对一都很少有这样的情况。我作为我这样的年纪的人我没有见到过我们的老师年轻的就更没有见到过了。[…] 国内的大学如果是接受一个残疾人的读书, 那简直是了不得的大事情了。那么这边对人权可能比较重视。

> [Another special student in my Chinese class was an old lady of 83]. She had difficulties with mobility but she had never missed a class. […] I had never imagined that a lady of this age could be so passionate about learning Chinese […] during my two years, this old lady made a very deep impression on me. Now that I have finished my job and am

returning to China, she is still writing to me and thinks highly of me.

(Interview, Director Jing)

[另外一个例子是一个 83 岁的老太太学中文] 。 她行动不方便但是却从来没有掉下过一次课。[…] 我 实在是没有想到这么大年纪的一个老太太都 83 岁了对中文有这样的学习兴趣。[…] 所以这两年, 这个老太太给我的印象实在是非常的深刻。那我现在要走了,她还给我来信,说一些赞扬的话.

Although the CICTs had mixed opinions on cultural differences between China and Britain (see 5.6) when it came to inclusive education, they were unanimous in their appreciation of the British approach. Some participants even showed an interest in contributing to the development of Chinese special education (see chapter 6).

5.2.3.2 Classroom management

Classroom management was another challenge discussed by the CICTs. Zhen's comment below was typical of those offered by CICTs working in statutory education.

Excerpt 5.13

As Qiao mentioned, we had been trained and prepared [for classroom management] before departure. However, there were still cases that we found difficult. For example, [I] didn't know how to deal with nice but sometimes cheeky kids. After one to two years learning and adjustment, we learned very important skills of classroom management. This is very helpful because most of us were university teachers. It is very different to teach adults and to teach kids. (Focus group, Zhen)

确实是像乔老师说的，我们在国内都是经过培训，做足了充分的准

备，思想准备来的，来到这边之后呢，还是会遇到各个方面的一些

问题，比方说在教学的时候，在遇到那些可爱但是调皮的孩子的时

候，还是会手足无措。但是经过一年两年的磨练，尤其是跟本土老

师学习，我们能学到很多非常重要的课堂管理的一些方法,确实给了

不少帮助，因为我们大部分来的，都是高校教师，面对成人和孩子

还确实是不一样的.

Special education and classroom management, then, were listed as the strongest

challenges for teaching among the CICTs (see also Ye,2014 in chapter 2). Many CICTs

admitted that they had learned a lot about British classroom management and teaching

pedagogy during their stay. Such gains were cumulative and were ultimately likely to

benefit both their future career and future students. These issues will be discussed in

greater detail, however, in chapters six and seven.

5.2.3.3 Work schedule and work load

When asked to reflect on the CICT performance in Britain, the four directors all

commented on their dedication and hard work. The findings of the Embassy survey

(Ye, 2014) suggest that both the CICTs in Britain and the CI directors have a very

heavy work load. Director Lian provided further confirmation:

Excerpt 5.14

Last year we had eleven CICTs [in our institute]. This year they [the

British partner] wanted us to double the number of teachers. Now we

have twenty-two CICTs in total, including language teachers and

volunteers. Even so there is still a lack of hands. (Interview, Director

Lian)

去年我们孔子学院有十一名汉办派的汉语教师加志愿者，那么今年

呢他们要求增加一倍，那么现在我们有 22 个教师和志愿者，就是

这样还不够用了。

Lian reported that the CICTs in her institute usually taught in three or four

schools/hubs, and some had to eat lunch when travelling from one school to another.

Director Jing explained that they also have to run Chinese classes in the evenings and

weekends, in order to meet the learning needs of full-time professionals. In addition to

their teaching jobs in Britain, some CICTs were still doing work from their home

institute in China. For instance, Shan had to supervise students' dissertation while

teaching in Northern Ireland. "Sacrifice" and "dedication" were mentioned very

frequently in both interviews and blogs.

The CICTs highlighted the need for support and understanding from their home

institutes and Hanban but, at the same time, recognised the growing demand for

Chinese and limited resources for delivering the teaching.

So far this chapter has focussed on CICTs' motivation and the challenges encountered

in teaching abroad. We turn now to the efforts they made in acculturation.

5.3 Adjustment

Bian was responsible for the promotion of traditional Chinese medicine and martial

arts. Besides working in a clinic, he also worked in the community. In the following

excerpt, he reflects on his adjustment to both teaching methods and codes of behavior.

Excerpt 5.15

Traditional Chinese medicine is closely related to health care, usually

[only] the adults care about it. When we run workshops at secondary

schools, kids don't' understand [health care]. You cannot tell them that

this [Five-Animal Exercises] is to keep you fit. For them it is fun, it

looks as cool as Kongfu. So at the beginning, my [teaching] plan often

backfired on me, I needed to make a lot of adjustments. For example I

don't teach the kids a whole set [Five-Animal Exercises] but a few

moves only, which look cool. The kids feel it is fun, it's neither too

difficult nor too easy, and then they like it. (Focus group, Bian)

推广中医肯定要推广养生这一块儿，然后一般成年人会比较注重这

个，然后当我们去工作坊去一些中小学的时候，小孩子根本不懂这

个，你不能说我教给你[五禽戏]这个是让你强身健体的，他们一般

就是好玩，觉得打起来就跟武术一样帅气，所以刚开始接触的时

候，觉得往往计划赶不上变化，往往事与愿违，就得不断的调整。

比方书我教五禽戏的时候，就不能全套的教，就只能是某几个动

作，比较漂亮好看的，孩子们学起来比较有意思，有点难度，又不

是一学就会的，这样一点点的吸引他们.

[Sometimes] I change teaching methods, connecting teaching content to

some other things such as Kongfu Panda; for kids this is a good way of

attracting their attention. Now I feel much less disappointed. (Focus

group, Bian)

应该改变一下教学方法，教一些东西的时候去结合其他的一些东

西，比方说教动作的时候，对于孩子来说，功夫熊猫就是最好的一

个例子，通过这样的方法来吸引他们了解。所以现在来说我的落差

基本减少了。

As for adult learners, Bian explained:

Excerpt 5.16

> […] the Chinese understand "ying and yang" more or less, but foreigners
>
> don't. You can't teach them in accordance with traditional Chinese
>
> logical thinking. They like Kongfu, […] then you simplify some martial
>
> arts moves to teach them. Those moves look cool but aim at strengthen
>
> the body rather than fight. It will be easier for them to understand and
>
> learn in this way. (Focus group, Bian)
>
> […] 咱们中国人对传统的阴阳本来就有些了解，外国人不一样，你
>
> 就不能用传统的思维去教 […], 他们喜欢动作， […] 那你就可以，
>
> 噢这个动作从打斗中简化而来，为了美观，但不是为了打斗，而是
>
> 为了健身。这样方便他们记忆和理解。

The most unexpected story, shared in a focus group discussion, was an accident that

happened to Bian when he was running a community activity in a local church:

Excerpt 5.17

> For example, [in a church], I was attacked by a drunk [while I was
>
> teaching children martial arts]. On occasions like this you need to know
>
> how to deal with an emergency. You need to wait for the police, [ask]
>
> the students to call a policeman […], [In China] this kind of intruder

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wouldn't show up on campus, so I had never experienced anything like this before. (Focus group, Bian)

比方说，我就遇到会有人来袭击我，有人喝醉了，回来袭击我，这时候就需要你具体怎么对待这种突发事件，你肯定得等警察来，等学生去报警，[…]在学校里碰不到外来人，所以碰不到这样的袭击事件.

Significantly, Bian responded by deftly ducking the blows, hoping the drunk would stop attacking; when this approach was unsuccessful, he pinned him to the ground and sent the young people for the police. Bian's adjustment in his teaching role and reactions under stress can be seen as evidence of his growing intercultural competence: aware of cultural differences, he made a conscious decision to behave in a British way.

Other common adjustments mentioned in the literature (Deters, 2011; Ehrenreich, 2006) such as language investment, peer support, changes in belief and attitude were not enlarged upon in focus groups but were well described by case study participants (see chapter 6,7 and 8) and so will receive no further attention here.

5.4 Socializing

Generally speaking, the CICTs I interviewed had fairly small social circles. For example,

Excerpt 5.18

> [The locals I have most contact with are] colleagues. I join in their social get-togethers as well as the contact in work time, they organize a party every month or couple of months. (Focus group, Nan)

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我只要是跟同事，就是我去的他们的聚会，除了平时白天打交道，

聚会也就是一两个月一次，或者两次这样的，

Mostly [with] colleagues. If they get to know you, they will invite you to

have a meal. Then they've introduced me to some interesting places to

visit in G. [My social contacts] mainly are colleagues, then people on

tills, and bus drivers. [Everyone laugh] (Focus group, Zuo)

主要还是同事吧，要是跟你熟的话，会主动邀请你出去吃饭。然后

会帮你介绍一下格拉斯哥一些地方，同事多一些，然后就是售货员

多一些，公交车司机.（众人笑）

The group burst out laughing at Zuo's words, suggesting her experience was by no

means unusual.Yan then also confirmed she talks to local colleagues in schools, but in

her spare time, she mainly socialises with other CICTs：

Excerpt 5.19

I work in the same hub with Mai, my roommate is also a CICT, so [the

locals] I mainly deal with are colleagues. (Focus group, Yan)

因为我跟马老师在一个 Hub，她是我最主要的接触对象，然后我的

室友也是孔院老师， 然后苏格兰人的话还是同事。

Unlike shy students who only associate with their co-nationals (Byram & Feng, 2006;

Jackson, 2008a, 2011b), I noticed the CICTs were enthusiastic about communicating

with local British people. However, they were frustrated at the lack of access to the

locals (see chapter 6) There are several possible explanations for their limited social

networking: language barriers, heavy workloads and problems of acceptance by the

local community. I will revisit this topic in next three chapters, and conclude with

suggestions in chapter nine.

5.5 Changes in beliefs

Various researchers have reported the impact of study abroad on socio-cultural learning

(V. Edwards & Li, 2011; Larzén-Östermark, 2011; Lee, 2012; Patron, 2007). Similar

findings emerged from focus group discussions and can usefully be reported in terms of

changes in belief towards British people, society and culture; and increased appreciation

of home culture.

5.5.1 Breaking the stereotype generalization

When asked to reflect on British people, society, education and culture, many CICTs

commented on how Britain in real life differed from how they had imagined it. The

newly-arrived CICTs, such as Yan and Nan, who had arrived Britain almost two

months before my interviews, tended to emphasize the positive "differences"; Mai, Zuo

and Ke who had worked in Britain for more than a year, tended to have more mixed and

nuanced perspectives. Possibly the new comers were still in the honeymoon stage of

intercultural transition (Ward et al., 1998), while their more experienced colleagues had

gradually developed reflective and critical thinking in relation to the host culture.

Yan shared her street encounter on the first day at school:

Excerpt 5.20

> From what I learned from British films and what I heard about, I thought
>
> the British were gentle, conservative, and cold in manner. However, on
>
> my arrival, I found the passers-by I met on street were very friendly,

when I pass them by they beam at me. On my first day at school, I saw an old man was cleaning the street with a broom. I didn't greet him, but when he said to me "Hi dear!" suddenly a wave of geniality came over me. I thought this is British. They are not indifferent, [actually they are] very friendly, on trains, everywhere. [Yan smiled] They don't think less about you just because of your Asian face. They are very nice. (Focus group, Yan)

我以前看过一些英国电影，也听一些人说，觉得英国人比较绅士，严谨，然后不老热情地那一种，然后我来这儿以后，马路上遇到的人都非常热情，过马路擦肩而过的时候都晓得特别灿烂，我已第一次去学校的时候过马路的时候，我们国内就叫什么交通协管大爷，拿着一个扫把扫来扫去，我当时赶时间没打算跟他打招呼，他突然说 hi dear，我当时就一阵热流涌上心头，觉得这就是英国人，他们不是那么冷漠，很热情，火车上，随处可见，[笑] 不会因为你是亚洲脸孔就不 care 你，就会对你很 nice。

Nan thought highly of the habits of reading and queuing among the British, and felt that Britain was a very well developed country in terms of modernization and civilization. However, Mai argued that not all of the British are well-mannered:

Excerpt 5.21

Not everyone [is nice]. Most [of the British] are polite and modest, but some are also rude and impolite. I saw some people putting feet on seats on the bus, spiting. […] This is different from my expectations. (Focus group, Mai)

不是全部。大部分的热彬彬有礼很谦和，也有不讲礼貌不文明的，

我们上车的时候也有人把脚放在座椅上，随地吐痰，[…] 我觉得这

是和我预想的不一样的地方。

She rationalized the discrepancy:

Excerpt 5.22

> This is my fault. Before I came here, I pictured the whole of Britain as a
>
> single entity, a one-size-fits-all impression of the British. I expect them
>
> to be the same, but I found they are not after I came here. This is a
>
> society; people definitely are different from each other in a society.
>
> Some are extroverted, some are introverted, some are enthusiastic, and
>
> some are self-involved […]. (Focus group, Mai)
>
> 这是我自己的问题，我来之前把英国想想成一个整体，所有的英国
>
> 人一刀切，都应该是怎么样的，但来了之后发现不是。英国也是一
>
> 个社会，社会里的人和人就是有差异，有的人就比较外向，有的人
>
> 就比较内敛，有的人比较热情，有的人比较自我，[…]就跟我想的
>
> 不太一样。

She realized the stereotypical image of the British she used to hold, and expressed her

appreciation of some aspects of their behavior：

Excerpt 5.23

> I found the British were more conservative than I expected. The
>
> impression we had of western countries was that they are very open, in
>
> every aspect. Actually after a period of time of contact, I found the
>
> British are traditional; sometimes I talked to local teachers and found

they have strong notions of family […].They have very strict film

classification, […] not like what we imagined. We used to think

westerners were very open, including in sex. Actually they are

traditional, and they have their own rules. This is useful information.

(Focus group, Mai)

我觉得英国人比我想想得要更传统，在国内一提到西方国家，欧美

国家就是非常的开放，然后是各个方面，其实一段时间接触下来我

觉得，英国人很传统，包括有时和当地老师聊天，，觉得他们家庭

观念很强， […]发现他们这儿很严格的进行级别标注，[…]不像我

们想想得，以前中国人认为西方人无论在哪方面包括性，都很开

放，其实他们很传统，有自己的规矩，这一点倒值得我们借鉴.

Regarding the differences in education, Zuo valued the strength and weakness in both

systems and argued two countries should learn from each other:

Excerpt 5.24

We used to think education abroad was better than in China, […]

actually this idea is wrong. When you compare eastern and western

education, they have their own strengths and weakness. We came from

China and teach Chinese here, besides teaching; a very important thing is

to improve our approach to [teaching]. Part of the process of change is to

learn from each other. (Focus group, Zuo)

[…] 就是国外的教育怎么怎么样，我们的中国教育就怎么怎么不

好， […] 其实也不然，这就是我一年来的最大的感触。对比中西方

的教育，各有所长，各有千秋，那么我们从中国来教汉语，除了教

汉语以外，还有一个重要的作用就是去转变一些观念，[...]我觉得

在这个转变观念的过程中就是各取所长吧.

Most CICTs expressed approval of social practices such as "age control on alcohol".

Ke, however, thought this was not a simple matter of "good" or "bad"; it was simply

"different":

Excerpt 5.25

> Because every country has its own culture and systems, as far as the age
>
> control on alcohol is concerned, my understanding is the unique features
>
> of the local environment are shaped by the special characteristics to its
>
> inhabitants. [I] cannot say it is good or bad, [I] can only say it works
>
> here [in Britain]. (Focus group, Ke)
>
> 因为每个国家文化体制不一样，就像买烟买酒得到一定年龄。我的
>
> 理解就是一方水土养一方人，不能说他是好，或是不好，只能说是
>
> 比较适合这样一个体制

Ke's opinion was supported by Bian who used the issue of whether motor vehicles

should give way to pedestrians or the pedestrians to motor vehicles as an example:

Excerpt 5.26

> This is related to different national circumstances. China has a larger
>
> population, Britain has much less. […] Wherever there are yellow lights
>
> at crossroads, the cars have to give way to pedestrians. If China was to
>
> do this, then the traffic would be at a standstill. Hence different countries
>
> have different practices; [we] cannot simply copy [each other]. (Focus
>
> group, Bian)

我觉得根据不同的国情，中国人口众多，英国相对人口少些，[...]

小黄灯必须礼让行人，[...]只要有行人走过去，车必须得让，但如

果中国这样实行的话，中国的交通就瘫痪了，所以不同的国情实行

不一样的办法，不能照搬.

Overseas work experience frees the CICTs from their usual ways of thinking; awareness of a different cultural system offers opportunities for multiple interpretation, an important step in gaining intercultural competence.

Kinginger (2008, 2011) concludes that individual differences determine why "some sojourners thrive while others founder. By the same token, different motivations and goals are associated with different levels of adjustment and effort and therefore lead to different outcomes. Irrespective of the range of opinions towards the host country, both the CICTs and the CI directors shared a heightened culture awareness, another manifestation of which was their strengthened national pride.

5.5.2 National pride

CICTs all acknowledged the changes in perspectives after working in Britain. Some concluded that they had been "westernized", and welcomed the changes.

Excerpt 5.27

> I feel I am better informed, […] my previous knowledge about Britain
>
> was learned from the Chinese media. Now I am in Britain, I have had the
>
> chance to communicate with my colleagues and understand their
>
> thoughts. Now I realize that not all of my prior knowledge was right. I
>
> understand the British better. Viewing China from Britain, we may be
>
> better informed. (Focus group, Zhen)

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我觉得更理性化了，[…] 以前对英国是从国内的媒体，从国内的了解到的，现在能深处其中， 从身边同事有交流，能更好的了解他们的一些想法，才知道原来有些事情不是那个样子的，更理解他们了。我们站在这个位置看国内，有一些观点我们能更理性地看问题。

I felt I have become more westernized. […] Of course, in some aspects I am still very Chinese. (Focus group, Bian)

然后，比如说我的性格逐渐变得西化了,[…] 当然有些问题还是骨子里非常中国化。

CI directors Lian, Ni and Jing also noticed the changes in the ways they thought and worked.

Excerpt 5.28

When I return to China, I believe I will think and work in a different way. As a result, I may be more focused on reality and efficiency. (Interview, Director Lian)

就是等我回去以后我相信我的思维方式工作方式都会发生一定的变化。这个变化呢，就是我可能会更重视一些务实的，效率性的东西。

However, director Jing refused to use the word "westernized" to describe himself. He took me, a PhD student in Britain as an example, explaining the different effects that residence abroad could have on students and the CICTs. In his point of view, it would be a failure in duty if he had been "westernized".

Excerpt 5.29

> Although there has been some influence from the surroundings, such as
>
> the influence on thinking, we still observe Chinese traditions. This might
>
> be very different from your experiences; you might have been influenced
>
> more. You need to study and research with them [the British] every day.
>
> Our responsibility is to promote Chinese culture, how the Chinese are,
>
> you cannot forget. Otherwise it is negligence of duty. (Interview,
>
> Director Jing)
>
> 虽然是受到这边的环境的一些，比方说, 思维方法一些的影响,但是
>
> 总的来说我们还是保留了中国的传统的,这个给你可能很不一样,因
>
> 为你可能就会受很大的影响,因为你和他们一起，每天都要去学习去
>
> 研究。那我们每天就是要传播汉语中国文化,中国是怎么回事,你不
>
> 能说忘了,那不是失职了吗?

Jing's words are reminiscent of Byram's (1993) observation that the English assistants

in France felt that they were 'paid to *be*' English. Will the Chinese teaching job, the

"culture ambassador" role hinder the CICT acculturation and participation in host

society? Other than "westernization", are there any other forms of identity shift among

the CICT cohort? I will try to unpack these two questions in the chapters that follow.

The embassy survey findings (Ye, 2014) show that in the dissemination of Chinese

language and culture actually enhanced the CICTs' understanding and appreciation of

their own culture. This position was supported by Mai:

Excerpt 5.30

> After working here for a period, I felt my sense of pride in being Chinese
>
> has been strengthened. [We] cannot say foreign countries are good,

China is not good. We have to admit that Britain is advanced in many aspects, but if you just compare the population and people's standards of living, China has done a very good job. If Britain had as big a population, they wouldn't have managed it. Their trains often get cancelled, delayed, we know. […] I am proud of being Chinese, I never worry that people will look down on me because of my yellow skin and black hair. I feel my home country is very strong, I am proud. Objectively speaking, it is not like: I am Chinese, so China is great in every aspect. [I] need to be objective, we [Chinese] have a lot of to learn, to improve […] When we go back to China, our [knowledge and] experiences may be beneficial to the students in China, enable them to know the real world, the real China. (Focus group, Mai)

在这儿工作一段时间后，我觉得还是要充分认同作为中国人的自豪感，不能说外国就怎么怎么样，中国就不行了，我们要承认英国有先进的地方，但相对他的人口和我们的比例而言，我们中国已经做得很好了，如果说，把中国那么多人都呼啦啦挤到英国来，英国肯定招架不了，他们这儿整天火车被ｃａｎｃｅｌ，晚点，这个我们每天都会遇到。[...] 我是中国人我很自豪，从来不会觉得我是黄皮肤黑头发别人就会小瞧我一样。首先我觉得我的祖国很强大，我很自豪，然后站在这种立场上你要去可观的评价，不是我是中国人所以中国哪儿都好，就是，要很可观，我们有要学习的地方，有要改进的地方 [...]. 最终的目的是回国，让我们中国的学生去受益。让他们知道一个真实的世界，一个真实的中国。

Mai's reflection was well supported by the rest of the group, their applause seemed to indicate a feeling of strengthened national identity among the CICTs:

Excerpt 5.31

> The group: [everyone laughs] Well said!
>
>   Yes, you speak our minds! (Focus group)
>
> 众人：[笑] 说的太好了!
>
>   是啊，说出了我们的心声!

In a similar vein, reviewing their study abroad experiences in Britain in the 1980s, Directors Jing and Ni related how they feel now to sense of national pride.

Excerpt 5.32

> My first impression after I started to work here is that we are well-respected. This is because of China is getting stronger. I studied in Britain nearly thirty years ago, at that time, they looked down at us. They made a distinction [between us and] Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan. We had low social status. Now, I feel there have been great changes precisely (because of) the economic development [in China]. (Interview, Director Ni)
>
> 我到这边来之后第一个感觉就是，应当还是比较尊重我们的。这主要是我们国家强大了。我将近30年前出国，那个时候人家是看不起我们的。把我们和台湾的香港的日本的还有截然分开的，那个时候应该来说没有什么太大的地位。现在来说，那么我觉得跟过去情况已经发生了非常大的变化，确实是国家在经济方面强大了。
>
> In the intervening years, China has developed very quickly, it is totally different from many years ago when I studied in this country. You may

think I am saying this just because of my age and my experience. No, it is not like that. I really feel attitudes towards China have really changed. […] Who wanted to learn Chinese 20 years ago? Now, there might be random people come to ask, Can I learn Chinese? I would like to speak Chinese. If I am going to share anything about my experience in Britain, this is a very important feeling.（Interview, Director Jing）

这些年中国发展的很快,那么跟我几十年前到英国来的时候的情况是完全不一样的。可能会觉得跟我的年纪和我的经历有关系, 其实不是那样的. 我真的是觉得这个对中国的态度很不一样的。[…] 过去有谁会去学中文? 那现在, 走过来一个人就会问说我也可以学中文吗?我也想说两句。那么如果我回去要跟别人讲,那这是一个很重要的一个感受.

5.6 Summary

This chapter has sought to synthesize the broad themes related to the CICT experience which have emerged from focus group discussions and the CI director interviews. The findings reflect a wide range of perspectives from a diverse group of individuals, in terms of age, gender, and length of sojourn, education, responsibilities and location. Attention has been paid to the problems of program management, the importance of good interpersonal skills, and the needs to accommodate differences in professional culture. Most important, the picture which emerges from participant comments and reflections will help dispel the many misconceptions regarding the programme discussed in chapter two, allowing a more nuanced understanding of this special cohort

of border-crossers. Last but by no means least, the exploration of the CICT beliefs, goals and attitude shift during their stay represents an invaluable contribution to the analysis of identity construction, agency and intercultural development. In the next three chapters, I will probe in depth individual dynamics in the form of a more holistic analysis of three case study participants' trajectories during their stay.

Chapter 6 **Case Study of Su**

Whether 60 or 16, there is in every human being's heart the lure of wonder, the unfailing childlike appetite of what's next and the joy of the game of living.

Youth by Samuel Ullman

This chapter reports issues emerged from Su's 34 blog entries on QQ space (similar to the Facebook), three follow up interviews and one repatriation interview, covering her motivation, attitudes, investment, adjustment, value and beliefs, reflection and growth.

6.1 Su

Su, a 40 year old secondary school head teacher with a master's degree in Geography, had previously worked in a big city in mainland China and had achieved considerable professional success. Su had made several short-term overseas visits to South East Asian and North European counties before she participated in the CICT program in July 2013. After 45 days' pre-departure training, she arrived Britain to start her one year service in a city in the south of England. Su was working as a teaching assistant for the weekly Chinese classes in 5 Confucius classrooms and was responsible for culture promotion activities in another 17 local schools. She shared a flat with another CICT, who was in her second year of service.

6.2 Research procedures

I met Su when she had just started her CICT post through a survey project I had undertaken for Hanban and the Chinese Embassy in Britain. I was looking for research participants for the present project and Su had kindly volunteered to participate. At that time, along with three other CICTs, Su was encouraged to either continue or start detailed diary-like blogs (including photos), to record experiences and reflections on their daily activities, including work, intercultural encounters, excursions, research and socialization (Berwick & Walley, 2000; Jackson, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2008a). I kept a close track on their entries and, as necessary, conducted supplementary interviews via telephone/skype/QQ (an instant internet communication tool) on the questions arising from their accounts.

6.3 Motivation

The idea of "Going out to see the world" is what had driven Su to join the CICT programme. In a blog entry at arrival, she wrote:

Excerpt 6.1

> I don't know if there will be another chance to go abroad, even if there
> is, it will probably will be a short trip. The chance to live abroad for a
> period of time would is an incredible opportunity. I know this will be the
> first time, and the last time maybe, hence I value this experience and will
> try to write down everything about it. When I am old, when my memory
> fades, like the movie The Notebook, these words will help me reminisce.
> (Blog excerpt, 20-10-2013)

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不知以后我是否还有机会去别的国家，即使去恐怕只能是短期旅

游，像现在这样居住一段时间的机会肯定很少了，但我明确知道在

这里肯定是第一次，也是最后一次了，所以很珍惜，也尽可能敲下

更多的字符，到垂暮之年，即使记忆衰退，也能像电影《The

Notebook》里一样，有文字可以帮助翻新。

As a mother of a ten year old son, Su is still full of curiosity and willing to learn new things. She told me at a follow up interview that her goal is to be a cultivated old lady: "Everyone is an independent individual, we need to have our own spaces and own lives. If you lose yourself, how can you ask others to love you?" (Blog excerpt，23-11-2013) （我觉得每个人都是独立的，都该有自己的生活。如果连自己都没有了，别人又爱你什么呢？）Su's inquiring mind, previous overseas experience and she background of city living made her open to new environments.

6.4 Intercultural encounters

Alred and Byram (2002) note that living and working abroad may lead to changes in self-concept, attitudes and behaviour as perceptions and threats attached to the foreign environment may trigger new meanings and identities. This section draws on Byram's (2002) notion of the intercultural mediator to demonstrate how Su mediates her understanding of two cultures and develop interculturality through daily interactions.

6.4.1 From homogeneous identity to intercultural awareness

In the first month after arrival, Su portrayed herself as "Granny Liu in the Grand View Garden" (Granny Liu is a character in *Dreams of a Red Mansion,* a classic Chinese

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novel, thus alluding to people who have seen nothing of life who are exposed to a new and exciting environment). Positioning herself as a foreigner and an outsider, "rustic but simple ", Su enthusiastically scrutinized her surroundings through the lens of words – the air, the food, the park, the church, the football players on the meadow, the graffiti and street performers, the fisherman by the sea – everything is new and different to her. She constructs boundaries between herself and her surroundings, and tends to overgeneralize: "the English are…, the Chinese are…", "the English children…the Chinese children…" Such patterns of social-cultural observation were frequently found in her blog as Su was exposed to English society and English culture. This is identical with the Malleus and Slattery (2014) argument that sojourners develop their interculturality and understanding of the host culture by making comparisons with the familiar.

Consciously or subconsciously, Su started comparing and evaluating the norms, the beliefs and the practices of two cultures. In an entry titled "hazard preparedness", Su narrated a midnight fire incident at a hotel. Like the English guests in the hotel, Su ran out of her room immediately as she heard the fire alarm; but she noticed some Chinese guests had a wait-and-see attitude, and some didn't leave until they had packed all their belongings. She started to question the awareness of danger, the preparedness and the response of the Chinese.

6.4.2 Expert and novice

It is noteworthy that Su's intercultural observation was triggered when she was assigned a translation job for visiting principals from Chinese schools. She wrote three entries specifically recording her experience of being an "interpreter". In these blog narrations,

I found Su's identity constantly shifting between "novice" and "expert". As an "expert", Su deemed it her responsibility to acquaint and remind the Chinese visitors of English culture and etiquette. She detailed English tea culture and English breakfast:

Excerpt 6.2

> The breakfast is very simple, juice, coffee and donuts, usually self-service, so the diner simply needs to take care of himself. But we are hospitable，we think it's impolite to drink ahead while the others have not been served yet. So Z (a Chinese principal) served a cup of juice for Mark (an English program coordinator in the local school), and another cup for the English person sitting next to Mark. I noticed Mark was surprised for a second then he thanked Z. I was about to tell Z that he only needed to take care of himself […] (Blog excerpt, 14-12-2013)
>
> 所谓的早餐会议很简单，有果汁、咖啡和小面包，随意就好，一般是自己照顾自己。咱们就是好客，觉得别人还没喝，就给自己倒上很没礼貌，所以，Z 就主动给对面的 Mark 到了一杯果汁，不仅如此，还主动给 Mark 旁边的另一位也倒了果汁。我看到人家恍了一下，但还是很礼貌地说谢谢。我正要跟 Z 解释照顾好自己就可以。

Su reverted to her "novice" identity when she noted the local Mayor's apparent ease and patience at the requests for group pictures. She commented "I cannot imagine a Chinese Mayor doing this". However, later when Mark was showing the Chinese principals around, and they started to ask Mark about his income and house, Su's expert status in relation to English culture remerged. She wrote:

Excerpt 6.3

Questions like that about income are too private and you're not supposed

to ask them. But the Chinese are too curious sometimes, if they can't ask

directly, they will try to find out the answer indirectly. (Blog excerpt, 14-

12-2013)

一般情况下，个人隐私问题是不能随便问的，但咱们总是特别好

奇：你家房子多大，多少钱一平，工资多少？即使没有直接问，也

要旁敲侧击，估摸出来。

At the follow-up interview, Su brought this up and explained that she had reminded the

principals about the English notion of privacy but her efforts did not work. Reflecting

on her previous overseas business trip, Su was, however, happy to see the changes in

Chinese gift practices:

Excerpt 6.4

We used to think cheap gifts are humiliating for foreign friends, but

actually, the foreigners tend to give low cost gifts, a book, or a school

uniform... I think hand-made cards from the (English) school with

students' signatures […] looks very good. (Blog excerpt, 14-12-2013)

以前给老外送礼，总觉得便宜了拿不出手，可是老外还回来的一般

就是一本书甚至就是一件学校的校服，反正不怎么花钱的那种[…]

把学生制作的问候小卡片汇集在一起，[…]很好看，成本也低。

In addition, Su also gave advice on the design of the name card for one of the principals

from an intercultural mediator's perspective, suggesting that the use a QQ address as an

international contact looks unprofessional, and that bigger mail services such as Gmail,

and Hotmail should be considered instead. According to Byram (2000), Su could be

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seen as having acquired competence an intercultural mediator as: "someone who is able to see relationships between different cultures - both internal and external to a society - and is able to mediate, that is interpret each in terms of the other, either for themselves or for other people" (p. 9).

6.4.3 "Culture ambassador" in and out of classroom

Su's "culture ambassador" role was not limited to her Chinese classroom. As someone who worked and lived in Britain and knew the English from first-hand experience, Su also actively introduced Englishness to her fellow nationals. Her blog account covered a wide range of topics, including church services, English school education, Christmas traditions, obesity in English society, and English food, London public transportation and café culture. In an entry titled "bourgeois life style", she reflected and criticized the phenomenon of "xiaozi"[7] in mainland China. She explained that coffee is an everyday drink in Britain, and that drinking coffee will not really make you bourgeois. She also acknowledged: "There is no good culture or bad culture, no culture is superior to any other. What matters is to respect, to understand others, when you are in Rome, do as Romans do." (Blog excerpt, 14-12-2013). This is indeed an interesting change in perspective, as Su herself used to be defined as "xiaozi" because of her preference for English breakfast. Although at the repatriation interview Su claimed that her opinions of English people, English culture, Chinese people and Chinese culture hadn't changed, her increased awareness of otherness, and her intercultural communication competence and critical reflection can none the less be traced through blog narrations. On the one hand, the nature of first person narration in personal blogs allows Su to position herself

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[7] Means "pseudo", petty. Xiaozi are criticized for spending beyond their means.

as an expert, an insider of English society and culture, introducing the other part of the world to her family, friends, colleagues and students, influencing and inspiring them through the critical thinking she had developed. On the other hand, the reflective attitude and new self-understanding cultivated during her sojourning journey indicated the transformation in Su's learning.

6.5 Language, community and belonging

While the precious section focused on social-cultural observation and reflection on daily encounters in England, we turn next to Su's investment in language and socialization during her time working aboard.

6.5.1 Language investment

Su kept on telling me at interview that her English is not good and that she had not "used" English at all after completing her master's degree ten years before. She thought her English reading skills were better than her listening and speaking. In fact, her linguistic shortcomings didn't seem to hinder her; on the contrary, her eagerness to communicate and learn about "the other" had strongly motivated her to improve her English. Su rationalized her participation in a church service in her blog as follows:

Excerpt 6.5

> Today is my first time to go to a church; I am goal-oriented in this. One
> reason is to experience the religious culture, another is to practice my
> English listening skills, improve my communication competence. More
> and more I feel, language is the tool for self-expression and
> communication. Without this tool, a lot of ideas can't be articulated. I

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also missed a lot of chances of knowing other people and other cultures,

a lot of information was missing, and this is rather unacceptable.

今天第一次去教堂，目的并不单纯，一是为了感受一下宗教文化，

二是为了练听力，以提高一下与人的沟通能力，因为越来越觉得，

语言是表达自己及与人交流的工具，没了这个工具，很多想说的话

总在舌尖犹豫，也错过了很多了解他人与异国文化的机会，错过了

很多信息，这多少是有点不能接受的。

I looked into the church entrance, there are a lot of people, I was

preparing to ask for permission, but the lady was surprisingly nice, she

came to talk to me […] and gave me a flyer, told me about the recent

activities […] she also gave me a pack of postcards, the backs of which

list the details of regular activities. I think I should have a look, then

choose some to attend, so as to fill my free time and to learn about

religious culture. (Blog excerpt, 11-17-2013)

走到教堂门口的时候向里张望了一下，看到里面很多人走动，准备

说点什么再进去，没想到的人家特别热情，主动前来招呼我，[…]

她还拿来一张宣传单，告诉我上面的近期活动可以参加，[…]另外

还额外赠送我一本明信片，背面是所有常规活动的安排，非常详

细，我想应该看看，然后选择自己可以参加哪些，也算填补一下的

自己的业余时间，顺道也深入了解一下宗教文化。

Su also noted down several successful random conversations with local people. The

easy access to and hospitality of the church community and the positive feedback from

other social contacts hugely encouraged Su's investment in language and participation

in the local community. She subsequently joined a zumba dance club and chatted with the people she met there; she audited the English classroom in her schools and searched for university open class, she started to watch BBC programs, read English newspapers and seize every chance to talk to local people. At the repatriation interview, I asked how she felt about her English after living in England for nearly a year. Su concluded:

Excerpt 6.6

> My English is still not good but if you are bold enough, and don't worry about losing face, then that does not matter much. Sincerity in communication can make others more understanding and tolerant. This is like we feel hearing foreigners speak Chinese. Although they don't speak standard Chinese, as long as they get ideas across, then we smile and encourage them. (Repatriation interview excerpt, 23-06-2014)
>
> 我英语依然不算好的, 但是我敢说，自己挺高兴的. 与人沟通，真诚，会获得别人宽容。就像我们听老外中文一样，不标准但是只要能懂，就会报以微笑和鼓励。

Su was very glad at the fact that her limited English proficiency met her basic survival needs and could solve problems. She commented: "In *Budapest*, there was someone asking me for directions. I felt so great that I could be of help. I felt *high*, ha-ha." (Italics are original English words used by Su, Blog excerpt, 17-04-2014,)（在 Budapest，竟然有人向我问路。我帮人忙之后，觉得自己挺棒的，很 high，哈哈）

Code-switching such as " high", "Budapest"," blahblah" frequently appeared in blog entries, manifesting Su's progress in English language and appeared to boost her confidence in intercultural interaction.

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6.5.2 Community of sojourning and community of belonging

Wenger's (1998) community of practice theory holds that participation begins with simple and low-risk tasks such as daily routines that are nonetheless productive and necessary. Through peripheral activities, novices become acquainted with the tasks, vocabulary, and behaviours of the community. Peripheral participation allowed Su to gain some understanding of English society and gradually developed some "insider" opinions. However, this immersion falls far short of allowing her to construct a sense of belonging. In the repatriation interview Su emphasized that "here" (England) can never be thought of as her home. Su didn't report any culture shock in either blogs or interviews: her Chinese habitus seemed to stand in the way of adaption. Su didn't like western food at all, she wrote in a blog entry that the "*xiaozi*" bread and milk breakfast she used to like in China turned out to be inedible. Besides, during her stay, Su had a few contacts with her English colleagues at work, but her social networks were basically limited to local Chinese immigrants or other CICTs. Reflecting on the fact that she shared a flat with another CI teacher, Su expresses disappointment at the mismatch between actual and desired contact with the host society.

Excerpt 6.7

> Me: Do you think, if you speak better English, then your job, your life in
> Britain would be somehow different?
>
> Me: 如果您的英语水平比目前能好一些，您觉得您在英国的工作生
> 活，会不会跟现在不一样？
>
> Su: The advantage is my flat mate had experience, we cooperate well.
> This saves me from a lot of troubles, and we take care of each other.

However, there are still disadvantages. Frankly speaking, I would prefer a totally new environment, to challenge and improve myself […] if I was surrounded by Chinese, then the meaning of this working abroad experience is dwindled down greatly. (Repatriation interview excerpt, 23-06-2014)

我这个点有个留任。好的方面说，她有经验，跟她合作很愉快，我也省事许多，而且两人在一起互相照顾；但也有坏的一面。坦白讲我更希望自己进入一个完全陌生的环境，考验、锻炼自己[…] 如果周围都是中国人，那我这趟出来的意义就打折扣了。

In Su's imagined community, she should be surrounded by English people and fully immersed in English society, she should be able to hang out with the locals and communicate in English all the time, and learn everything about English people and English culture. When this imagined community failed to materialise, she created another community, one without linguistic and geographical boundaries, to seek a voice, support and belonging. Su admitted that most of her evenings were spent on writing blogs. This virtual participation seemed to be rewarding in the context of the relatively small audience for a personal blog: Su's entries usually attracted more than 20 reads, 10 likes and 4-5 comments. Most of the comments are supportive, encouraging, engaging in discussion of problems, exchange of opinion, and offers of help. As a two way form of communication, the blog provides Su with a comfortable platform to "release emotional tension" and update others on her sojourning activities and whereabouts, allow her to "think by writing", "express opinions to influence others", seek feedback and gain a sense of belonging (Nardi, Schiano, & Gumbrecht, 2004).

Notably, the real community in the host country and the virtual community based on the internet do not deconstruct Su's identity into distinct trajectories. As Wenger (1998, p. 138) points out,

> Our various forms of participation delineate pieces of a puzzle we put together rather than sharp boundaries between disconnected parts of ourselves. An identity is thus more than just a single trajectory; instead, it should be viewed as a nexus of multi-membership.

Su engages and behaves different in the communities of practice to which she belongs, negotiating different aspects of self. In the gap between how she recognizes herself and how she is recognized by others, she endeavours to construct an intercultural mediator identity based on her personal needs and living context (Wenger, 1998; S.-H. Yang, 2009).

6.6 Professional acculturation

Previous literature reports the major constrains to professional acculturation in terms of language and culture, interactions with students and parents, professional beliefs and behaviours and discrimination (Deters, 2011). Similar themes were identified in Su's case. In addition to the challenge of using English as the language of instruction in the classroom, obstacles included English teaching pedagogy, teacher beliefs and behaviours, special education and TA identity. In the following pages, I will describe in detail the four themes related to Su's professional acculturation.

Su had been teaching geography in China to high school students for more than 10 years. In England, as already mentioned, she worked as a teaching assistant in 5

Confucius classrooms and was responsible for cultural promotion activities in another 17 local schools. She explains:

Excerpt 6.8

> The most distinctive feature of our work in this city is there are no fixed teaching sites. I teach half a day at (each) of the main sites [5 Confucius classrooms]. Any school can apply to Lian as long as they want to hold Chinese activities. Lian will check timetable then make arrangements. We call her a line manager, sounds like our broker, only we aren't paid. All the classes are free. However, every coin has two sides. I can take this chance to teach in many schools and learn about the differences."
> (Blog excerpt, 18-12-2013)
>
> 我们在个城市工作最大的特点是没有固定的学校，即使是主校也只有半天的课程。只要有学校想开中文活动，向 Elspeth 申请，她就会查下 timetable，然后给安排，我们称她为 Line manager，这么说她好像是我们的经纪人，只是我们没有钱赚而已，每次出去上课都是免费的。但任何事情都有利有弊，我倒是可以利用这样的机会走进不同的学校，了解他们的特点及差异。

6.6.1 Classroom observation and reflection

Out of her interest in improving her English, Su wanted to audit other teachers' classes. She was amazed at the classroom displays, classroom management, and most of all, the English teaching pedagogy. Su made extensive entries on two Year 8 geography classes focused on understanding life in less economically developed countries:

Excerpt 6.9

The game harnessed students' emotions. I think the students role play as

Ghanaians, the strong sense of helplessness and frustration at being born

into poverty will make them remember this class for ever… How

valuable is this kind of emotional experience in teaching... It's refreshing

to observe [the geography class]. How could students not develop skills

of independent thinking in a teaching situation like this? Reflection:

Does our teaching overemphasize knowledge? Could we overcome

disciplinary boundaries to integrate knowledge and skills? (Blog excerpt,

30-11-2013)

竞赛会激发小孩的好胜之心，我想对于 Ghana 组的同学来说，虽然

是游戏，但可天生贫穷却无法改变的无力感、受挫感有多么强烈？

我相信他们会牢牢地记住这节课的。[…] 这样的情感体验多么难

得？[…] 每次都有耳目一新的感觉。如果长期在这种理念的熏陶

下，学生的独立的思考能力怎么可能不发展？反思：我们的课堂是

不是过多地关注知识了？能不能尝试打破学科界限，将所学过的知

识技能充分地连结、运用？

Classroom observation helped Su to gain an insight into English pedagogy and the

education system. However, the fairly heavy work load prevented her from further

"situated learning"(Lave & Wenger, 1991) and eventually diminished her passion for

her work.

Excerpt 6.10

> The schedule is tighter and tighter, every day is full. If I don't have a
> timetable, I definitely will collapse … Sometimes I worry about working
> around the clock like this, being as busy as this, I simply have no time to
> observe other teachers' classes. If I can't learn anything new and can't
> see any improvement, my motivation to work will plunge, and I will be
> weary of all of this. (Blog excerpt, 14-01-2014)
>
> […] 日程安排越来越周到，以至于我们每天都满满当当。如果没有
> timetable，我肯定已经崩溃了，即使每天查看，脑子也会时不时也
> 会陷入混沌状态。 偶尔也会想，每天这样匆忙，赶场子似的工作，
> 没有时间听其当地老师的课，再感受不到新鲜和提高的话，动力定
> 会大打折扣、滋生厌倦情绪。

6.6.2 Special education and teachers' belief, value and attitude

In contrast to the inspiring geography classes, Su found the approach to special needs
students a new and shocking experience that made a profound and probably lasting
impact her professional beliefs, values and attitudes

Excerpt 6.11

> From Wednesday to Friday, three days in succession, I met different
> kinds of special needs students; each time was a huge shock for me.
> Wednesday. A special education school. Some students are out of
> control, they are hysteric, yelling… [One boy] held my hands whining, I
> simply couldn't understand what he was saying.

[…] In a class of 8-10 students, there are 7 teachers plus two of us (CICTs); we still have been batting around all the time.

My knowledge about special schools took a step forward on Friday. As I entered the school, all kinds of equipment, wheelchairs, walking sticks. I had mixed feelings when I looked at them. Sympathy? Definitely not. They have been well cared for […] ten students have one teacher and four helpers […] I asked who will pay the bill? 'The Government.' Beth answered. Because these students have serious symptoms, they are boarders and go home only at weekends, hence their parents can be freed and have time to do their jobs. Can you imagine this in China? So, in terms of the treatment these students receive, I admire them. The special needs students in this country are lucky. (Blog excerpt, 22-02-2014)

周三到周五，连续三天见到不同类型的特殊学生，每一次与我都是强大的冲击。

周三，特殊小学，有的孩子静不下来，激动，喊叫；有的是注意力根本无法集中[…]他就拉着我的手呜噜呜噜的说话，我根本就听不懂 […]一节课 22 个 8～10 岁的小孩，配置了 7 个老师，再加上我们 2 个人，还是有些照顾不过来。

如果特殊学校就是这样的话，其实都不算什么，但是周五立马升级了。一进去看到的就是各种器械，轮椅、拐杖，病号床在楼道里来来去去。

但是看着那些孩子们真的是心里有说不出的感受。同情？ 怜悯? 肯定不是，她们被关照的特别好[…] 我看了老师的配置，一个 10 人

的班级，配备一个专职老师和 4 个 Supports […] 我问谁支付这笔教

育经费，家长还是政府？Beth 说政府支付。而且由于这些学生障碍

比较严重，所以住校，只有周末才回去，这样可以把家长解放出

来，也能有自己的时间，不至于严重影响工作、生活质量。试想在

国内这可是不可能的事吧？所以若从孩子的待遇看，恐怕还是羡慕

更多一些，英国的特殊儿童是幸运的。

Su expressed amazement and wonder at the well-developed English education system, but what truly made her think was the special education teachers' beliefs. It is worth mentioning here that China faces particular challenges in regard to inclusive education (see chapter 2). Special education in China mainly covers hearing impairment and visual impairment. Learning difficulties are not yet widely recognized in China (Ellsworth & Zhang, 2007). Most China-educated teachers have limited understanding of special needs students (Deng & Holdsworth, 2007; J. Xu, 1999); Experts appeal to all teachers to establish inclusive ideas through practical school-based activities (Deng & Poon-McBrayer, 2004). In fact, inclusive and special needs education in English school has been reported as a major challenge for the CICTs, both in focus group interviews and individual case studies. The implications of this observation will be discussed in chapter nine.

The literature on teachers' beliefs suggests that cognitive and affective experience guides behaviour and determine what is considered worthwhile and desirable. Beliefs and values jointly contribute to the formation of attitudes. Attitudes predispose behaviour or reaction in a particular way (Deters, 2011; Pajares, 1992; Sigel, McGillicuddy-DeLisi, & Goodnow, 1992). The experience of working with special education teachers changed Su's professional beliefs, and also influenced her attitude

towards life. At the beginning she felt stressed, awkward and bewildered when dealing with special needs students. She self-mocked "am I healing?" and she had to go to dance after school to release the depression caused in special schools. She suspected how much differences teachers could make by their efforts until a special education teacher told her that teachers have to keep trying, otherwise the gap between the ordinary and the special needs students will be bigger and bigger.

Excerpt 6.12

> I don't know how much patience these teachers have as to be adequate for such kind of job. These teachers make me feel inferior. I used to think it must be difficult to find a proper job then they have no choice but to undertake it. But L told me, as for the British, if it is not the job they really enjoy, they'd rather live on social benefits. I am ashamed of my narrow mind, and really respect and admire these teachers. (Blog excerpt, 22-02-2014)
>
> 我想这老师得有多大的耐心才能胜任这样的工作，我自叹相差甚远。曾经我按照自己的思维方式去猜测在英国工作多难找他们才决定干这个？因为她们不可能都是因为爱心才从事了这样的职业，尤其是那些年轻的小伙子。但 L 说告诉我，对于英国人而言如果不是自己喜欢的或者认可的工作，他们宁可申请政府救济也不会做的。
>
> 这么说来我要为自己的狭隘惭愧了，不由得对那些老师心生敬意！

At the follow up interview, Su told me that she still doesn't think she would like to be a special education teacher, because it is too depressing. However, she would like volunteer to work with Chinese special needs children in her spare time, to contribute

and to help improve Chinese special education. She connected this experience with the difficulties she encountered in Britain and wrote:

Excerpt 6.13

I often told myself, if there is difficulty, view this difficulty in a bigger space, and then all the adversity will be as nothing. (Blog excerpt, 22-02-2014)

时常告诫自己，若遇困苦，就把这困苦放到更大的时空里去看，所有的所有都会变成微缩版。

6.6.3 Professional philosopher

Su was also aware of the philosophy behind teachers' language and assessment. She noticed English teachers' use of words such as "venerable, emotional, sensitive…" to describe the special needs students. She commented: "This is the strength of English teachers; usually they don't use negative words, they always give students positive assessments."（Blog excerpt, 19-12-2013）（不过老外就这点好，再那样的学生他们一般也不说负面的词汇，最讲究 positive assessment。）

The development of language awareness has been argued to be crucial to education because it underlies learners' unique ability to understand and adopt the perspective of the other (Coleman, 1997, p. 11); by the same token, the use of English to teach Chinese language and culture in an Anglophone context, facilitates Su's ability to examine her own culture from outside, to become aware that culture is a social construct, is relative and unique (ibid.)

6.6.4 Teacher identity

Classroom observation, the support of English colleagues and other CICT peers reported in her blog helped Su's professional adjustment. However, as Nisbett and Ross (1980, p. 28) note, beliefs established early on in life are resistant to change even when they are demonstrated to be inadequate. As an authority and a head teacher in a key high school in China, Su had difficulty in adjusting to her "teaching assistant" identity in English schools. In both the follow up interview held on 17 April 2014 and the repatriation on 23 June 2014, she mentioned that "this is not my field".

Excerpt 6.14

> I always feel the life here is at slow pace. This doesn't harmonize with my temperament. Sometimes I wonder why, then I realized this is not my field, though I never slack off in work. This related to my role and cooperation. Here I am a TA, what I need to do in Confucius classrooms is to help students to practice oral Chinese and listening skills. In the other schools, my job is to organize Chinese cultural activities. If I could choose, I'd prefer the cultural activities, because I am the teacher. I like to be the main instructor, possibly because of my previous work experience. I really can't get rid of this preference. (Repatriation interview, 23-06-2014)
>
> 我始终觉得这里的生活节奏有些慢，不是我的风格。我有时候也在想为啥是这样的，后来明白了这不是我的主战场，尽管我从不愿意懈怠工作。这里面涉及一个角色定位与合作关系，在这里我就是一个助教，在孔子课堂学校要做的就是帮助学生联系口语或者听力，

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在其他辐射学校就是做文化活动。若有所选择，我愿意去辐射学

校，因为可以主讲。我习惯于讲课，可能跟经历有关，无法摆脱的

个人习惯

Su felt her TA job offered very limited scope for her creativity. Her skills were

downgraded, underused, like a big fish in small pond. What's worse, she had to move

rapidly from school to school in a very inefficient way. She elaborated on this point:

Excerpt 6.15

> For example, every Tuesday I follow a local Chinese teacher to a school.
>
> I leave at 7am, and then return after 4 pm. All I have done in this school
>
> is to help students to practice spoken Chinese, and then wait until school
>
> is over. All this fragmentation was time wasted. (Follow up interview,
>
> 17-04-2014)
>
> 比如周二我跟一个中文老师去学校。早晨 7：20 出发，有课的时候
>
> 就跟着他，他先讲半节课，然后就是我们陪着学生练习。没事的时
>
> 候就在学校耗着，一直到下午 4 点多回来。对于我来说，很多时间
>
> 就碎片化的浪费掉了。

Su concluded that while the lack of enthusiasm for Chinese learning in some local

schools did not discourage her, the lack of accomplishment made her feel empty. Su's

previous work experience and head teacher role seemed to reinforce her negative

stereotype of TA identity, preventing her from viewing TA as a job with its own

distinctive responsibilities and underlining its low status. This perception runs counter

to the notion in the literature that working as teachers' assistants allows international

educated teachers to learn about the education system and professional culture in target

environment (Deters, 2011). While other participants in this study reported as an advantage the fact that the TA role carried less classroom management pressure, interestingly this perception did not carry weight with Su suggesting that CICTs' beliefs, values and attitudes have an impact upon their professional adjustment. Indeed, professional changes would appear to be not only an intellectual but also an emotional task, requiring modifications in beliefs and assumptions in relation to the teacher's role and identity (Kohonen, 2003; Lehtovaara, 2001)

6.7 Reflection and growth

Su expressed in the blog her homesickness and anxiety to return to her family. However, as the departure day approached, rather than excitement, she started to feel upset at how she had changed during the sojourning year. On the one hand, the personal growth was rewarding: it encompassed pleasure in her increased competence and even a kind of "expansion":

Excerpt 6.16

> Me: Do you think you have changed at all during your staying in
>
> Britain?
>
> Su: I think I am more calm, more rational now, and (I have) a bigger
>
> heart. I don't want to exaggerate my changes and achievements during
>
> this period. Even if I hadn't gone to England, I still would have changed
>
> somehow. My English is better, I am more independent, braver, and my
>
> views had been broadened. I'm like – what did you call it? – A global
>
> citizen.
>
> 我：您觉得您在英国的这一年有没有发生什么变化？

我觉得是更冷静，更理性；还有觉得自己的内心更强大了。我不想

夸大这一年自己的收获与变化，即使不出来，变化无处不在，但出

国工作的影响不容忽视。语言强了，人独立了，更勇敢了，眼界更

宽阔了。借用你的话，我算是在走在世界公民的道路上不？

On the other hand, this professional growth also entailed feelings of conflict and

inadequacy:

Excerpt 6.17

I felt I have changed in some ways. I used to think the entrance exam for

university was important, but the scores were not everything. Now this

idea had been strengthened. The intense competition in China made me

attach importance to marks, but I also value the students' all round

performance. So how do you keep these in balance? How can you

improve curriculum design in such a way as to expand students'

horizons? (Interview excerpt, 23-06-2014)

因为我自己还是感觉到内心的一些变化。我虽然看重高考，但是不

愿意只紧盯着分数。现在观念有过之而无不及，在思考怎样对小孩

子将来长远的发展更好，但是我又必须沉浸在分数的竞争中。需要

时间调整，这之间要努力寻求一种平衡。怎样精选案例 使之更具有

时代性和国际视野。

It is possible to detect signs of transformative learning in this reflection, as Su moves

from the role of knowledge transmitter to reflective practitioner (Kohonen, 2007),

issues to which I will return later.

When asked her opinions, on the one hand, on British people, culture, society, and education and, on the other hand, Chinese people, culture, society and education, Su concluded:

Excerpt 6.18

No blind worship any more. Before I came to Britain, all my favourable impressions about the British had been learned from books, TV and newspapers. Now I still think British are very nice, the people I met travelling were all very nice. The strength of English education is to cultivate students' creativity, but they also have weaknesses, in mathematics education for example. So we need to learn from each other. The British are well-known for being stubborn and conservative; I think this is the result of well-established legal system […] I am not belittling the Chinese, but the Chinese really need to change their attitudes. This is a long-term project. I am very confident about development in China, but we can't neglect the problems…" (Interview excerpt, 23-06-2014)

不盲目崇拜，以前的都是传闻，从电视报纸上看到的。我个人非常喜欢，整体素质较好。我现在对英国人印象还是很好，出门旅行时，遇到的英国人也十分友好。觉得英国教育宽松，怎样开发学生的创造力等等，这一点确实英国做的好，但是英国教育的缺陷也是有的，比如数学方面。所以彼此借鉴才是王道。英国人的保守和固执好像是大家公认的，我认为这是法律和制度的作用[...]我无意贬

低国人，但是国人的素质确实需要提高。这是个长期工程，虽然我

对中国的发展充满信心,但不能无视很多问题的存在。

At the end of the interview, Su said she would like to go abroad again when the

opportunity presented itself, whether for travel or for work. She believes the best means

of intercultural exchange is communication, appreciation and inclusiveness. She cited

the following words from a geography textbook *A Child's Geography of the World* into

her blog:

Excerpt 6.19

"A polar bear on an iceberg might tell her little polar bears, 'The World

is all snow and ice- – just a huge refrigerator; I've been everywhere and I

know.' A bear in the woods might tell her little bear cubs, 'The World is

all woods – just a huge forest; I've been everywhere and I know.'"

Our views are constrained by our experiences, Going places doesn't

mean you get to see the whole world. But if you don't go places, you

will think what you have seen is the world.

What we think of as right is right only in terms of our current thinking.

Ten years or five year later, or maybe two years later, we could doubt

and challenge our present selves. This kind of denial could be

subversive; but it is precisely this kind of denial that exemplifies self-

growth. (Blog excerpt, 20-04-April)

视野总是受到阅历的制约，出去看了，也未必就认识到了全世界。

但"如果你不出去看看，你就以为这是全世界。"书中这段恐怕算是

对这句话的很好诠释了。

我们所认为的对也只能目前认知水平下的对，也许十年、或者五

年，甚至两年后我我们就会否认现在的自己，这种否认也可能是颠

覆性的，而恰恰是这种自我否定证明了成长。

6.8 Discussion and implications

Intercultural competence is extremely relevant to attitudes and other variables (Citron, 1995). CICT motivation, openness to English culture, investment tin language learning, identity and critical reflection all influence attitudes and actions while working abroad. By the same token, the welcome and hospitality in the host country determines the level of CICT participation and adaptation.

The eight months stay in Britain did not eliminate Su's stereotypes of the English. "Nice", "gentleman", "conservative", "and stubborn" all remained traits in her portrayal of "Englishness". As Coleman (1997) notes, however, stereotypes often contain an element of truth, and can be viewed as an unsophisticated way of understanding human variation. They are not necessarily based on observation of individuals but may be overgeneralized from personal experiences, particularly if negative experiences are reinforced in discussion with in-group members. Previous research on intercultuality also shows convincingly that contact with other cultures alone is not sufficient to dispel stereotypes; stereotyping has a tendency to impede deeper learning and cross-cultural development, and even encourage hostility (Byram, 1989; Kinginger, 2008; Tusting, Crawshaw, & Callen, 2002). Hence conscious reflection and re-entry guidance is particular important in cases like Su's, when in-depth contact with host residents is absent. While Su had showed some signs of critical reflection in her blogs, most of her entries are more descriptive than reflective, and her reflection touched some issues only

superficially. Ng, Lan, and Thye (2004) argue that teachers should be able to regularly reflect on teaching practice through critical thinking; critical reflection allows teachers to discover how their beliefs about teaching need to change in order to implement transformative teaching strategies (Sockman & Sharma, 2008). All of these arguments point to the importance of preparing teachers to be critical thinkers. Critical reflection also had been identified by Mezirow (1990) as a trigger that leads to transformative learning, the "process of constructing and appropriating new and revised interpretations of the meaning of an experience in the world" (Taylor, 2008, p. 5) (See chapter 3). I will discuss in further details in chapter nine.

Chapter 7 **Case Study of Qiao**

We travel initially to see the world; we travel next to find ourselves.

<div align="right">

---Pico Lyer(2001)

</div>

This chapter tells the sojourning story of Qiao as revealed by his Weixin blog (similar to the Instagram) and in his own words. After introducing Qiao's personal background, I will focus on his motivation, his identity expansion and professional adjustment, reflection and personal growth.

7.1 Qiao

Qiao is in his early thirties. Compared to other participants in my research, he is very much a "veteran" teacher as he was in his fourth year in Britain. He started as a CICT in October 2010; when he finished his first contract in 2012, he applied for a renewal and was then assigned to another CI in the same city. Qiao has a Master's degree in English translation. Before he joined the CI program, he had been working in a Chinese university for a few years and had been to south-east Asian countries for business trips. At the time of the fieldwork for my research, he was responsible for Chinese language and culture in a local school. Qiao shared accommodation with another CICT in his host city.

I first met Qiao at a focus group interview conducted in December, 2013; he kindly accepted my invitation to be a blog participant for this research. This chapter analyses his Weixin blog updates on everyday life experience during his last ten months in Britain, a twenty-minute follow up interviews, and a two-hour repatriation interview. In order to offer a complete trajectory for Qiao's sojourn, data relevant to his motivation

and adjustments from his participation in the focus group discussed in chapter five, will also be included.

Qiao used QQ space to record his first two years' experiences in Britain. He switched to Weixin when it emerged as a popular and more convenient tool for social networking among the Chinese. Weixin is a mobile picture blog. It handles picture and text by sorting them according to the time and date posted and presents them in a structured way. Weixin users take pictures of objects, people, events, and situations they wish to share using their phone. Audiences are able to see things and place events they normally do not see.

The seamlessly synchronous two-way communication and interaction which Weixin allows generates enormous amounts of data. From November, 2013 to August, 2014, till Qiao finished his assignment in Britain and returned to China, I followed his updates and collected 398 Weixin posts. Each post contains at least four pictures and a text description. Because it proved too time consuming to import individual Weixin posts into Nvivo, I manually sorted Qiao's blog data into the following categories: English culture and society; work and the work place; travel; daily life; current issues; and social sharing links.

7.2 Motivation and "ought-to teacher self"

Qiao's motivation for becoming a CICT derived from his career needs. He was a university teacher of English in China. He believed that an English teacher needs to know about English-speaking countries, and the CICT program provided him with the perfect chance to go into English schools and teach. His "ought-to teacher self"

(Dornyei, 2009; Higgins, 1987) urged him to learn about English society, but soon after his arrival he realized that language was a barrier to his socializing:

Excerpt 7.1

I rarely use English in classroom, and the communication with English colleagues is not much, either. It's difficult to hold a deep conversation with them, after seven or eight sentences, I run out vocabulary. (Interview, June 2014)

[英语] 在英国课堂上用的不多，和同事交流也不多。很难深入聊话题，7-8 句后就聊不动。

Qiao also found his limited language proficiency obstructed his teaching:

Excerpt 7.2

Students use their own language, you know, their slang, I cannot understand. We cannot fully communicate and this causes difficulties in classroom management. (Interview, June 2014)

语言沟通不到位，也会造成课堂管理的困难。 学生用俚语，学生自己的语言，那我们听不懂。

The external incentive (professional adjustment) and internal incentive (personal expectations) triggered Qiao's agency. He started to invest in his English language learning by reading the *Metro* newspaper, watching English TV programmes, and listening to the BBC news. He even thought about volunteering in a charity shop so he could learn "living English". However, the heavy workload and tight schedule prevented him from spending much time on learning English; his English language learning efforts were largely unsuccessful. After a while, he moved his focus from English language improvement to English cultural experience

Compared to other blog participants, Qiao revealed less about his emotions, feelings and reflections, but engaged in more self-disclosure, in the sense of a "live show". His blog impressed me as being like a tourist handbook where he was the *Lonely Planet* guide. In a follow up interview Qiao explained that he found English culture and English education appealing, and, because these are not accessible for many people in China, he wanted to share these first hand resources with his students and friends. Qiao also joked that he had a big fan group follow his blog, urging him to post something new if he forgot to update.

A quarter of Qiao's posts were about English society and culture, covering a wide range of topics, from everyday life to social events, such as the mounted police in the street, amusing advertisements, gardening, housing, holiday celebrations, the Tweed Run8, Pride in London, musical festivals, blind date TV shows, naked cyclists and polo matches; a similar proportion of posts shared his travelling experience around Europe and Middle Eastern counties. About a fifth reported his daily life, mainly the food he prepared for himself. The remaining posts focused on his work and work environment. All of the photos were taken from Qiao's point of view, providing frequent insights into the communities in which he participated, and making explicit the meaningful moments during his sojourn; the comments attached to the photos, were mostly written in a teasing style, exemplifying how Qiao made sense of these moments in his life, and, by the same token, those of others. A distinctive feature of Qiao's posts is the extensive use of emoji, a staple of millennial identity (Luttrell & McGrath, 2016). Emoji allows speakers to convey what the text-based communication cannot: tone, emotion and

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[8] Defined as: "a metropolitan bicycle ride with a bit of style. We take to the streets in our well-pressed best, and cycle through the city's iconic landmarks" (www.tweedrun.com)

qualities of speech, such as sarcasm or mirth (Dresner & Herring, 2010), helping to control the perceived emotional valence of text and mediate interpersonal relationships (Walther & D'Addario, 2001). In order to give a flavor of Qiao's blog posts and how he deconstructed his identity as an intercultural mediator and a global citizen, the discussion that follows will be presented under five main headings: identity shift, global citizenship, professional adjustment, enhanced self-efficacy and habitus.

7.3 Cultural shifting and shifting identity

Cultural shifting refers to the cognitive and behavioural capacity of an individual to shift or switch language, gestures or behaviour in response to interlocutors and the larger context or situation (UNESCO, 2013). It requires the individual not only to be aware of conspicuous differences, but also to be able to capture, understand and convey what is considered subtle within one culture to members of another. Qiao's cultural shifting was evident in two areas: behavioural adaption and group identity switching.

7.3.1 Appreciation of and adaption to English behaviour

Excerpt 7.3 How the English Deal with Car Accidents?

> Early morning on the way to work, there was a car accident. The English
> way of handling a car crash is shaking hands, asking each other if they
> are ok, then photos, tons of photos, then wait for police. (Blog post,
> January, 2014)

一大早上班，发生车祸，英国人的方式是下车，握手，询问对方有

无受伤，接下来拿出各自手机，各种拍照，等警察到来。

This entry indicates Qiao's appreciation of the English way of doing things. What is noteworthy about this and other images is that he rarely captures full face pictures; most of the time they are rear views, or at least profiles (as seen in excerpts 7.4 and 7.7). In excerpt 7.3, there are no faces at all. When a new way of thinking and behaving starts to be considered viable, it becomes part of an existing disposition: a cultural shift has occurred (Condeluci, 2002). Qiao's changes in disposition provide support for Deardorff (2006) proposal that the more favourable the attitude of sojourners towards the host culture, the more this helps to develop intercultural awareness.

During the focus group interview, Qiao admitted this work abroad experience had influenced his personality: "[I] became more frank, because I had been here for quite a while, more or less; there are some western traits in my way of thinking and behaving." (Focus group interview, November, 2013) (就是变得比较直接，因为呆的比较久了，可能受西方思维的一些潜移默化的影响。)

7.3.2 Humour and in-group/out-group positioning

Qiao's extensive understanding and content-rich knowledge of the host and home cultures enable him to sense what group members consider to be funny. Previous research notes that teachers often frame and express aspects of their personal and professional lives through rhetorical devices (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Qiao's blog was characterized by his outstanding use of humour, which ultimately facilitates his in-group and out-group identity shift.

Humour and teasing are considered elements in the construction of solidarity, in-group

identity (Archakis & Tsakona, 2005; L. Brown & Levinson, 1987; J. Holmes, 2000).

Brown and Levinson argue that jokes are based on mutual shared background

knowledge and values and may be used to reinforce these bonds (L. Brown & Levinson,

1987, p. 204), while Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) note that joking and teasing are

not only a means of social control and identity display, but also help to develop a

relational identity among participants through "bonding" and "biting".

In excerpt 7.4 below, the left hand pictures shows an Arab man wearing a pink "qipao",

a tight-fitting traditional Chinese dress for women. The right hand photo shows a black

woman wearing a paper dragon, a Chinese New Year ornament, as a hair accessory.

Qiao makes fun of the misuse of Chinese auspicious adornments by the Arab man and

the black woman, the scared face emoji thus seeming to add humour to his blog. He

addresses the males in pictures with "bro", "dude", "sister", and the face with cold

sweat emoji implying a sense of community membership in a plural society (O'Reilly,

2006); on the other hand, by sharing the pictures, he is commenting to his audience on

the social position of Chinese culture and festivals in Britain.

Excerpt 7.4

Hey Middle Eastern bro, do you think Qipao is your Arab robe? 😡

😡 Hey Indian dude, how old are you and you still play rattle-drum?

This sister, would you please take the funny fish necklace off? 🤭

Come on! Paper dragon is not a hair accessory! 😝 (Blog post,

February, 2014)

这位中东大哥，你以为旗袍是你们阿拉伯男人人的长袍吗? 😡

😡印度　阿三及小锅，你几岁了还手拿小龙和拨浪鼓? 姐姐您能不

能不那么雷人把一串鱼儿挂脖子上 😝 拜托，小纸龙不是用来插头

发的！ 😝

In Except 7.5, Qiao makes fun of the design of English gardens, based on shared

knowledge of the huge variety of Chinese gardens and the perception that English

gardens are all the same. In contrast, his teasing in excerpt 7.6 is directed at the

stereotyped Chinese apartment buildings: he comments with irony "Is Britain Communist?" This kind of self-mockery actually underlines his Chinese identity.

Excerpt 7.5

Super invincible green. Finally understand why there are so many "English gardens" in Europe 😣. The feature of English garden is no features, just build one path, set several benches, as for the rest, and just throw trees and flowers in. That's it. 😣 (Blog post, April, 2014)

超级无敌小绿绿。终于明白为毛欧洲很多城市都有个公园叫英国花园了吧 😣 英国花园的特色就是没有特色，只修一条小路，摆几张凳子，其余的就往死里乱种树种花，仅此而已 😣

Excerpt 7.6

Rows of houses, all in the same key 😲. Fixed in space and monotonous in layout 😣, is Britain Communist? 😲 (Blog post, March, 2014)

一排排的房子，设计得千篇一律 😠 户户面积，户型一模一样 😖，

英国这是共产主义的节奏吗? 😲

However, in excerpt 7.7 below, teasing is used to display Qiao's identification with his host country. The accompanying picture shows a mass pillow fight designed to provide stress relief which took place in Trafalgar Square. Qiao addresses the British as "这货" (Zhehuo), which has a meaning similar to "blockhead" or "stupid" but can also be used among friends to indicate close and intimacy. Qiao uses "you" to refer to the people in the picture, his use of the pretentious angry face emoji suggesting that he knew them, and thus creating an emotional bond with the British and a sense of belonging to his host city when he was travelling outside Britain.

Excerpt 7.7 International pillow fight day

Well, well, jolly good! You thickies, you, you, and you! The second I

left (my city), you were having a wild party! 😠 Pillow fight […] (Blog

post, April, 2014)

好哇你们这群货，你，你，还有你！你们[左哼哼]我前脚刚离开伦

敦，你们后脚就有活动，😠什么枕头节减压[…]

The above excerpts, then, illustrate the shifts in Qiao's reflective positioning (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004b) as he negotiates his identity in relation, on the one hand, to his co-nationals and, on the other, to his host country. However, Qiao's story marks the beginning of his cultural shift, rather than the end. As already mentioned in the quote at the start of this chapter, Qiao initially travels to see the world, but eventually to find himself. The following discussion will explore the way in which Qiao interprets and makes sense of his travel experience, and how this has impacted on both his understandings as a global citizen and on his personal growth.

7.4 From tourist to global citizen

As Darling-Hammond (1996) comments: "Teachers learn best by studying, doing, and reflecting […] and by sharing what they see." Prompted by his "ought-to teacher self", four years' life overseas transformed Qiao into a very experienced self-guided backpacker. His travels covered almost the whole of Europe and some Middle Eastern countries. As shown in excerpt 7.8 below, he continued his humorous tourist guide role in Greece and Egypt, actively passing his new knowledge to his audience.

Excerpt 7.8
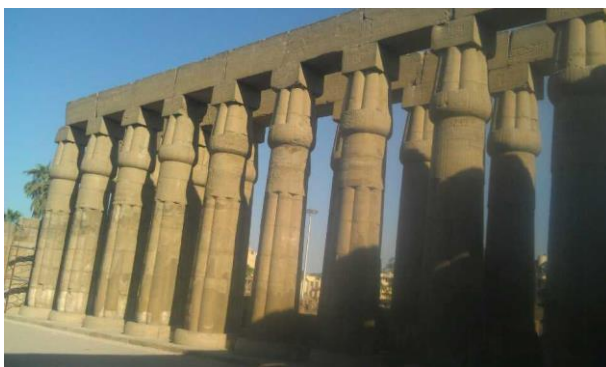
Knights of the Zodiac, protect Athena! 😠 The Parthenon and the

temple of Poseidon have both got their charms, but they are not as grand

as Egyptian temples. 😔 A museum guide helped me with a novel idea

😗 : the Greeks inherited Egyptian culture, the Romans inherited Greek

culture, and the Europeans inherited Roman culture 😛. Anyway,

whatever, as long as the Koreans do not talk nonsense 😁… (Blog post,

January, 2014)

圣斗士星矢们，保护好雅典娜阿 😠 娜姐和波塞东这对冤家的神庙

各有特色。但论宏伟，是真心比不过埃及 😔 那天在博物馆短脖子

大叔帮我理清了思绪 😗 希腊继承埃及的文化，古罗马继承希腊的

文化，欧洲继承罗马文化 😛 总之不管谁继承谁了，只要韩国棒子

不要跳出来乱说话就好 😁…

Excerpt 7.9

[…] Egyptian civilization dates back much earlier than the Greeks. Other

than the fact they worship different gods, the Greeks inherited almost all

the essence of Egyptian culture, and then they demolished ancient Egypt.

Then the Romans defeated the Greeks and took over Egypt, and then the

Persians took over Egypt. That means, then, the ancestors of the modern

Egyptians were Arab, but most of the archaeological research was done

by Anglo-Saxons. 😣… (Blog post, February, 2014)

[…] 埃及文明早于希腊很久，除了不信仰一样的神灵，希腊继承了

埃及几乎所有的文化精髓包括后来把埃及给灭了，接着罗马又把希

腊给灭了再接管埃及，再再后来就是波斯帝国接管埃及。也就是说

现代埃及人是阿拉伯人，他们对埃及语言，文字的研究都考欧美来

完成😣…

In excerpt 7.8, Qiao's joke about Athena would have triggered shared memories of a

popular cartoon series on Greek mythology in the1990s, *Saint Seiya Omega,* among his

audience as he went on to explain the history of cultural transmission from ancient

Egypt to modern Europe. Qiao's joke about Koreans in excerpt 7.8 underlined his

rejection of the recent rumours spread by Korean supremacy nationalists, who claim

Confucius and other Chinese history figures were Koreans. Qiao's humorous comments

once again align him with his nationals, by uniting the Post-1980s generation who know

"Saint Seiya Omega", and thus strengthening his affiliation to a group with shared

inheritance.

 Interestingly, unlike Qiao's alignment in excerpt 7.7 with the British while traveling

outside the UK, in excerpt 7.9 he distances himself from Anglo-Saxons. The

embarrassing face emoji at the end of the excerpt speaks of his sorrow at the lack of

involvement of Arabs in archaeological research, as if he was one of them. While

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Qiao's national identity was reinforced throughout his sojourn, his understanding of and empathy with his destination counties indicates his growth as a global citizen. Detailed examples will be discussed below.

Excerpt 7.10

[…] Sugar cane, kapok, bougainvillea, scorching sun. Am I passing through Z (a city in Qiao's home province)? I can't bear the heat wave, so I went to the river for a walk with the Swiss and the Russian I met in the hotel. Oh my! They got sunstroke! I bought some sugarcane juice for them, and then sent them back to the hotel by taxi. The hotel manager was very surprised that I wasn't bothered by the heat wave and I was even taking care of others. HOHOHO 🤩 😎 😝 warm-hearted Chinese 😌 (Blog post, February, 2014)

[…] 甘蔗，木棉花，三角梅，热辣辣的太阳，哥这是穿越回崇左了吗? 受不鸟啦，和同酒店的瑞士和鹅螺丝人一起去河边走走。矮马，他们居然中暑，俺带他们先去搞了几杯甘蔗汁，然后打的回

去。店主惊讶我木有中暑而且还廓以送他们回酒店。哇咔咔 😍

😎 😝 热心的中国娃 ☺️

Excerpt 7.11
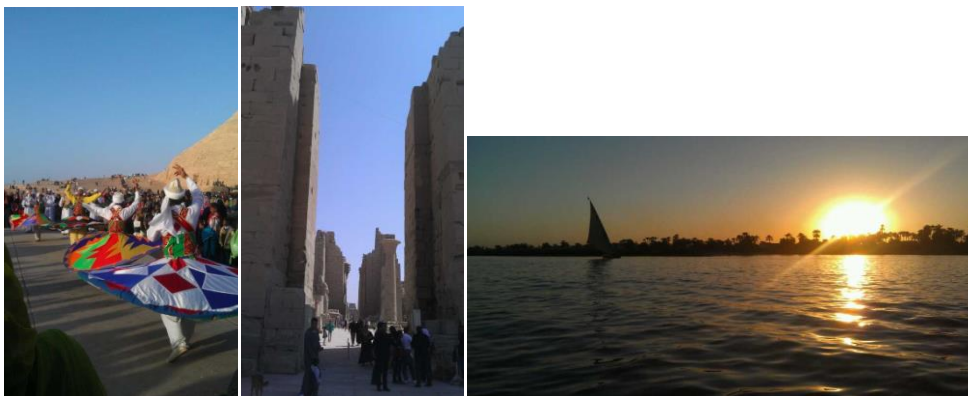
Impressions of Egypt: soaring temples, sparkling frescos, Egypt's history goes back 2000 years longer in history than China. Ancient Egypt carries a lot of weight in human history. When ancient Egypt was demolished by Arabs, Egyptians were marginalized and assimilated. Their language perished. If the fall of ancient Roman was the retrogression of European civilization, then the fall of ancient Egypt was, as well. Modern Egyptians are mostly Arabs; they are poor, but simple and honest. On the train to Aswan, a father and a son kindly shared oranges and bananas with me. On the way to the pyramids, a local farmer voluntarily guided me all the way through. Of course the vendors at tourist sites were annoying; but putting myself in their shoes, I can understand how difficult it is for them to make a living as the market is in crisis. Think about it, five pence a bus ticket, ten pence a mug of sugar cane juice, two pound fifty a night for a hotel, thirty pence for breakfast … Except he vendors who are constantly trying to sell junk to tourists, they are

peaceful old people and curious youths, […] there were the friendly folks who shook my hands good-bye at the bus stop; there were the honest old men who told off the vendor who was trying to sell me a tea at a high price; there were the lads who liked to follow me but only wanted a picture with me (the whites often reject them but I am always easy going); there were the boatmen who weren't getting any customers but sitting quietly watching the sunset (the tourist market has collapsed). As long as there is hope, life will carry on. These are the impressions the Egyptians left on me: moderate, honest and kind. (Blog post, February, 2014)

埃及印象：高耸入云的神庙，炫丽的壁画，比中国还早两千多年的历史。古埃及在人类史上的这笔画得相当有分量。其实，埃及被阿拉伯灭亡后，埃及人被边缘及融合，语言不复存在，对祖先的文字也一窍不通。如果说古罗马的灭亡是欧洲文明的倒退，我想古埃及的灭亡亦是如此。现代埃及人多为阿拉伯人，虽然很穷，但其实很纯朴，比如今天坐的火车来阿斯旺，一对父子请俺吃香蕉和橘子。比如去阶梯金字塔，人家一农民愣是一路免费护送。当然景区的埃及人的确行为太夸张，让人觉得他们只有小聪明，没有大智慧。但是从侧面看，旅游市场的崩溃真的让他们生计难讨阿。大家想想吧，五毛钱的公车，一块一杯的甘蔗汁，二十五一个晚上的旅馆，三块钱的早餐……抛开景区内为了生计而费力粘着游客的埃及人，我必须飙一下我这次旅游感悟：埃及人：平和的老人和希望了解世界的年轻人，[…] 一下车就主动和你握手道别的小伙子；在十元去

阿斯旺火车上斥责小贩不可以要我两元一杯红茶[实际价格是__两毛

钱]的老者；景区内喜欢跟着我并希望可以合影的年轻人[欧美人很

屌，而我是一向平易近人]；帆船上平静地遥望远方的船夫[旅游市

场重創]，但只要有一丝希望，生活还是要继续。埃及人给我的整体

感觉是平和、善良，实在。

Qiao's trip to Egypt offers evidence of the evolution of his interculturality. As he says in a post on April 2014, his interests in travelling had moved from visiting museums and castles to the daily life of local people. He likes talking to people he meets at random in the market, on the train or in the hotel. In contrast with pictures of the Pyramids and Sphinx, Qiao chooses to share the pictures of the street boys, local farmers and boatmen he met, describing the ordinary lives of modern Egyptians, sharing their simple pleasures and sympathising with their sorrows. He was able to think critically about his surroundings, viewing things from others' perspectives and reacting correspondingly, even in relation to the vendors he found annoying. Consistent with Byram's (1997) assessment of intercultural communication competence, Qiao has a strong interest in knowing other people's way of life; he copes with life in different countries, making friends and helping others along the way; he understands others' behaviours and, most importantly, the social, historical and cultural reasons for different behaviours.

Through his travels, he learns to appreciate "otherness". He admires the high commitment and dedication of the Germans, the relaxed and optimistic attitudes of the Spanish, and traditional popular music in Hungary. These constructive encounters with diverse cultures help to break down the polarity between "us" and "them" and move to a sense of trust and community with "the Other" (Daloz, 2000). As discussed in the

literature, sojourners undergo a journey of self-discovery as the relocation from their comfort zone to an unfamiliar environment tests and stretches their resourcefulness, forcing them to revise their self-understanding (Y. Kim, 1988; Milstein, 2005). Qiao admits and gladly accepts the changes: "[I] have become a person almost unrecognizable to myself. Cherish what I have at the moment."（做一个自己都不认识的自己，且行且珍惜，［…]）(Blog post, June, 2014).

During a follow up interview, Qiao raised a question that I could not answer: "Why when one Chinese meets another Chinese in a foreign country, don't they greet each other or smile or nod to each other?" （中国人在海外遇见另外一个中国人，为什么既不点头微笑也不打招呼？）This question was in respond to a news report he shared on his Weixin blog: "Culture Clash? German Hotel Warns Guests About Behaviour of Chinese[9]". Except 7.12 is Qiao's comment on this news item.

Excerpt 7.12

> If I said this is what I have witnessed all the way along, what would you guys think 😖? "Old Hans"' reaction really has nothing to do with discrimination; they were the victims 😖. Even in China, do you like to have a queue of people blocking the entrance of your restaurant by sitting in the doorway eating instant noodles? Do you like everyone to see you as a statue, taking turns to take pictures with you? Can you bear

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[9] A travel journalist reported in the German newspaper Der Spiegel on 9 July 2013 warnings from a hotel regarding the behaviour of Chinese guests. The hotel alerted other guests about Chinese table manners such as burping and slurping noises. The hotel suggested avoiding the Chinese guests' dinner time if they wanted a quiet meal. This news item was translated into Chinese and gave rise to hot debate. Retrieved 15 November, 2014 from: http://www.echinacities.com/news/Culture-Clash-German-Hotel-Warns-Guests-About-Behavior-of-Chinese

being asked to change seats again, again and again just because people want to sit together and talk? Can you bear that one second ago you kindly reminded an auntie not to touch the museum exhibition when the next second her mate leaves finger prints on the cultural relic and takes a sneaky snapshot? If they get caught, they play the trump card of pretending they don't know English […] It doesn't matter how old they are, they are a close and incestuous lot […] What's worst, as a fellow countryman, you beam a 'hello' to them, they act really scared as if you are going to rob them 😁; or they give you a foul look: why are you smiling at me? What do you want from me? No way! The way they act, they only smile when they're asking for a favour. Isn't this what happens in China? I leave the rest for you guys to comment 😣 if people criticize you, you have to try to have a bash at changing their opinion. This is so easy! (Blog post, April, 2014).

如果说这都是我一路来看到的大家会仲么想😖而且老德这种做法真心和种族歧视无关，赶脚他们都是被逼的😖即使是在中国，你受得了别人在你家店门口排排坐吃泡面的架势吗?你受得了挨个儿上来和你合照把你当雕像的赶脚吗?你受得了在灰机上频频私下换座位就为了发表他们聊天的节奏吗?你受得了博物馆里前一秒钟刚和甲大妈说表要触摸雕像，真是文物，一转身乙大大妈就咸猪手一摸，哎赶紧偷拍一张喂?被发现了就假装自己听不懂英语的下三烂节奏。[…] 不管是大妈大叔还是留学生，基本抱团行动，[…] 关键

是作为同胞，你微笑地送去一句你好，他会恐惧地觉得你要抢他钱

啦😁或者直接回个白眼，傻逼，你干吗要向我微笑，想讨好我吗?

没门儿。在他们眼里，只有有求于人才会对人微笑，国内不基本如

此的节奏吗?剩下的大家来补充😝即使是别人歧视你，也需要你自

己争气去改变别人的眼光，事情就辣么简单!

Personally speaking, I have experienced all the embarrassing examples Qiao mentions

in his comments. However, in the follow up interview, I avoided expressing my own

personal views and answered his question ambiguously: "Perhaps some people are shy.

What do you think?" Qiao was obviously not happy with my answer; he told me:

Excerpt 7.13

You're going to have a PhD; can you go deeper into my question? If this

phenomenon could be properly studied, it would be very instructive and

helpful. All this suggests our education in school and in the family has

failed … I think highly of the kids who say hello to others, they will be

entrepreneurs; those who are unfriendly will turn into labourers. In any

country, any dynasty, any society, being sociable is very important. The

blind spots in Chinese education make Chinese people develop

unhealthy patterns of behaviour ... How can a person who can't relate to

others make a living?" (Follow up interview, April, 2014).

你是博士，能深入思考一下我的问题吗？如果这个现象能好好研究

一下，将会是非常有意义和益处的事情。 这说明我们的学校和家庭

教育是失败的…我看好那些主动跟人打招呼的孩子，他们将来就是

当老板的；那些不打招呼的就只是打工仔了。无论在哪个国家，哪

个朝代，哪个社会，社交是非常重要的。中国教育的盲点就是让国

人养成了一些不良行为…一个不能交际的人如何能够生存？

Excerpt 7.13 illustrates Qiao's critical reflective attitudes towards educational practices and their philosophical underpinnings. As Faure (1972) notes, education should focus on development of the "complete man" which entails the "physical, intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of the individual". Qiao was seen to zoom out his focus from the micro lens of English teaching to the broader view of the kind of people the Chinese education system should foster. He even considered running his own schools where he would be able to put his educational philosophy into practice (see excerpt 7.23). Qiao seemed to have stepped out of his "ethnocentrism", and was able to respond to Chinese education from a global citizen point of view. For him, China and Britain are not the entire world. Qiao's perception of his fellow countrymen not only exemplified the shifts in his habitus and cultural reference framework, but also the shifts in his professional beliefs. By constructing a new identity influenced by the new socio-cultural environment, Qiao also acquired a new sense of place in the world (Dargent-Wallace, 2013, p. 184)

At the repatriation interview, Qiao elaborated on the changes in his values, beliefs and perspectives.

Excerpt 7.14

> I find now I tend to think from a different perspective. [Before coming to
>
> Britain,] I had been learning and teaching English for so many years;
>
> more or less, I had been westernized. There were some things I didn't
>
> feel comfortable with, but I just let it go. Now I want to look into it: why
>
> is there such a big difference? […] I'm going to search for references

that will give the answers. [Years ago] I would have been pissed off and

I wouldn't have asked why if I saw that people weren't queuing for

tickets; now I think of this in terms of custom and education. I think

about how to improve things – with penalties? Through public opinion?

Now I tend to think about things calmly and rationally. (Repatriation

interview, 22 July, 2014)

看问题的角度会很不一样， [来英国之前]，那学了这么多年英语，

当了英语老师，多少也有西化。对一些行为会不太舒服，但也仅此

而已。 但现在会深入的考虑，为什么有这么大差距，[...] 会通过查

文献资料等来深入找答案。 以前买东西不排队会生气，不会想为什

么。现在会从教育，习惯，处罚措施，公众舆论压力等方面来考

虑。 现在更理性冷静的思考。

Having discussed Qiao's personal life and how he grew from a tourist into a global

citizen, I will turn next to his professional life.

7.5 Professional adjustment

In the fourth year of his stay, Qiao had acquired rich knowledge and experience of

education in English schools. His professional adjustments were very much in evidence

in his retrospective narrative. In the focus group interview, Qiao admitted the

difficulties he encountered in the beginning:

Excerpt 7.15

I was a university teacher in China, so the teaching methods I was

familiar with were not a good fit with English secondary education … I

was struggling to work out how to cooperate with local teachers, and school rules. However, once I'd adjusted to the English teaching style, I learned a lot from them. (Focus group interview, November, 2013)

我们在国内是一个大学老师，在中小学方面不是马上就能够上手，[…]然后就是和本土教师的一些磨合融合，然后学校里的一些规章制度等等，刚开始会有一段时间是比较挣扎的，但是一旦课堂管理和语言上面适应了的话呢，我们就能从他们的教育体系中学到非常非常多的东西。

Qiao also mentioned his understanding of the role of teaching assistant (TA):

Excerpt 7.16

We don't have TAs in primary or secondary education in China. […] In the beginning I thought being a TA was an easy job. Possibly the schools thought I needed time to adjust, so I didn't have much work to do except helping students with speaking and writing. Gradually, I was assigned more and more responsibilities, such as managing the classroom, setting test papers, preparing slides. The students come from different cultural backgrounds. Some are from China; some are from Europe or the Middle East […] Sometimes I need to help with their English as well. Then I realized being a TA was not an easy job. No matter how important or how trivial, the difference between TAs and the class teacher is only in their responsibilities. (Focus group interview, November, 2013)

因为国内中小学好像没有ＴＡ这个概念，[…] 刚开始我是觉得ＴＡ的工作有些简单，刚开始也可能是觉得我们才来，需要一段时间适

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应，给我们的工作不是非常的多，我就是对学生的口语，作文方面

进行一些辅导，都比较简单一些，但慢慢上手后，给的工作就越来

越多，你就需要帮助控制这个学生，帮助做课件，出试卷，还有一

些孩子是国内来的，这就不仅局限于中国的孩子了，还有一些东

欧，中东的孩子，[...] 那我们还要去辅导这些学生帮助他们的英语

这些，到后来我就意识到 TA 的工作并不好做，也是要做到事无巨

细的，只是与主讲教师有一个分工上的区别.

7.5.1 Increased appreciation of Chinese culture

Qiao rarely discuss his teaching activities in the interviews; however, from the photos

he uploaded to the blog, the audiences were given a clear window into his professional

life:

Excerpt 7.17

Excerpt 7.18

The biggest feature of boys' handwriting is, BIG, neat and powerful.

Holy cow, I finally understand why it is called "square characters" 😲,

even I can't write it in squares like that 😁

男校的特点是字写得够大，够工整有力，矮马，终于知道什么是方

块字了 😲 我都写不了那么方😁

Kids feel the poem on spring is very beautiful. I am so proud of my

students!

Actually, we need to include traditional Chinese culture in China as well,

the key point is to spark the interests of the different age groups. (Blog

post, March, 2014)

书法大赛，高龄组完胜低龄组，赞美春天的古诗他们也觉得美得不

得了，真心为自己的学生感到骄傲。

As already mentioned, teaching Chinese language and culture had a negative effect on

Qiao's English language improvement. However, his involvement in this teaching

helped him to appreciate his own culture and raise his awareness of the importance of

Chinese traditions.

7.5.2 Transformative learning

Qiao introduced English school activities to his audience, especially the after-school clubs which are unfamiliar to most Chinese: horse riding, rowing, scouts, golf and ballet. He was very impressed at how the English teach world geography, something he elaborated on when describing a school field trip:

Excerpt 7.19
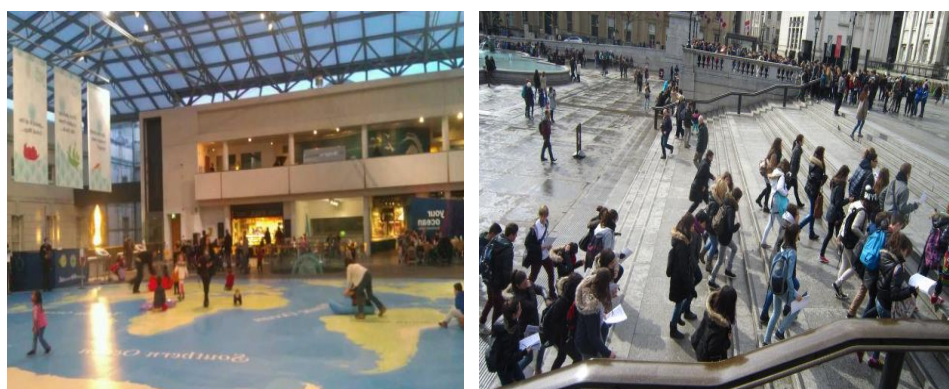
This is how the English teach about the world map and oceans. (Blog post, December, 2013)

英国人是介么教世界地图和海洋知识的.

English schools have various field trips. For instance, the National Gallery receives tons of kids every day. Teachers give assignments outside the gallery; kids get in and finish all kinds of tasks. At the moment Van Gogh's Sunflower is open to public again, kids discuss their impression after visiting the exhibition. Is this going to make another "Van Gogh"? Anyway, kids are kid. They climb the lion statue outside the gallery furtively… (Blog post, March, 2014)

英国中小学的户外教学课真是多死多命，就拿这身后的国家美术馆来说吧，每天不知道要接纳多少小盆友。课堂多半是老湿先在户外

布置任务，接着孩纸们进入馆内完成各种各样的奇葩任务。这段时

间镇馆之宝向日葵又展开，童鞋们还要排队观看，出来还要讨论

这是让小孩都变疯子画家的节奏吗?当然，孩纸就是孩纸，会抽空

偷偷爬爬大狮子什么的…

However, what most impressed him was the equal rights of students and teaching staff.

Excerpt 7.20

A lot of English secondary schools […] have a poster like on site and on school websites, convent schools excluded. As a member of the teaching staff, I also needed to attend the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) Safe Space Training. (Blog post, November, 2013)

英国许多中学[…]平时都粘贴类似第二张图片的标语。教会学校除

外，但是身为教会男校的俺也经常需要参加学校为教职工开设的如

何正确面对学生的同性行为.

Qiao, then, shows an open-mindedness in relation to issues affecting LGBT equality even though there is little discussion of such issues in China (Hildebrandt, 2011).

Excerpt 7.21

> I am very impressed with the relationships between senior managers and more junior staff. This is very different from what we have in China … Here there is no rigid hierarchy. The difference is that some people are more involved in administration, others in teaching. They will ask for your consent before they assign you a job. They respect my opinion and give advice as well. Despite the different roles in terms of responsibility, we are equal. (Focus group interview, November, 2013)
>
> 我印象深刻的就是他们在工作上面领导和下属的关系，国内是不一样的文化背景，英国是完全不一样的效果[…] 区别在于有的做一些管理工作，我们在下面作一些教学，文化的推广，就没有过于明显的级别上的差别。在工作上把工作交给你，会征求你的意见，然后你提出什么方案，他们也会给一些意见，他们就是非常非常尊重你原来的想法. 他们下属和上司只是分工的不同，我们是平等的。

As van Lier (2014) points out, learning first requires that the learner *notices* the learning target. Qiao's observation, comprehension, appreciation and reflection on English teaching methods, school management and school culture demonstrate the transformative learning that is taking place (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Kohonen, 2003, 2007; Kohonen, Jaatinen, Kaikkonen, & Lehtovaara, 2014). He has realised the significance of professional interaction for growth and developed an open, critical stance towards his work, seeing himself as a continuous learner. He thinks deeply about educational practices and philosophy and has new self-understanding in real life situations. He reflects on critical events and learns from personal insights. He has

behaved in new ways in the workplace and, last but not least, he has learned to live with uncertainty. I will return to these last two features in discussing except 7.23 below.

7.6 Enhanced self-efficacy

At the repatriation interview, Qiao acknowledged his sojourn had totally exceeded his expectations. He was very grateful for this experience and talked about his achievements:

Excerpt 7.22

> My biggest achievement is in my teaching. My job is more than transmitting textbook knowledge. I need to take part in cultural activities, tours, community events and university open days; […] my students come from very different age groups. All of these things have greatly enriched my knowledge and experiences of teaching, classroom and school management. (Repatriation interview, 22 July, 2014)
>
> 我最大的收获是在教学方面。 不仅仅是教书匠。我的工作需要参与文化推广，巡演，社区活动，大学开放日[…]学生年龄层次差别，大大丰富了我的教学经验,课堂和学校管理。

According to Mezirow et al's (2000) transformation theory, the constructivist learning adult learners undertake can trigger shifts in their mental models and perspectives, turning learners into authors of their own knowledge and increasing personal agency. Also, the prolonged absence from the home country provides sojourners with the space to reflect on their domestic and professional roles (L. Brown, 2009; Galani-Moutafi, 2000; Martin & Harrell, 1996). At the repatriation interview, Qiao pondered on the administrative hassles which he foresaw on his return and decided to prioritize his

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personal interests and his development as an individual over social status and reputation.

Excerpt 7.23

> Years ago I was still thinking of going back to my previous job, to be a university teacher, because of its respectability, social status and reputation. Now I think why do I have to be a university teacher? The administrative system is still conservative. Why don't I establish my own school so that the students can learn about English culture, English thinking? I want to apply what I have learned about [school management] to teaching… to make the children really enjoy learning English… I will make my school English. I have registered with Couch surfing[10], I will make a room available in my house for Couch surfers. In return, I will ask my guests to give my students a culture lesson. So children in China will know about the real outside world. Learning English is not simply about learning textbook knowledge. Rather it's to provide children the skills for going out to see the world. (Repatriation interview, 22 July, 2014)
>
> 以前还想着回去做大学教师。因为地位，认可度。 现在想为什么非要做大学老师呢，那很多管理制度还很老套。我为什么不自己创建一个机构，让学生学到英语国家人的思维，文化， 想把这些年学到的管理运用到教学中，[…]让孩子们真正喜欢上学习英语… 回想很

---

[10] Couch surfing is a hospitality exchange and social networking website that provides a platform for members to "surf" on couches by staying as a guest at people's homes, to host other travellers themselves, or join an event (www.couchsurfing.org).

多办法， 如何让我的机构变成英国化。因为我注册了沙发客， 我

也会把自己家腾一间做沙发客，要求就是请他们给学生上一堂体验

课。 让国内孩子们真正了解外面的世界。 学英语不是简单的课本

知识， 二是让孩子们有这样一个技能，出去看世界。

These changes in priorities highlight Qiao's growth in self-efficacy, allowing him to put his values and beliefs into practice, and bringing him closer to his "ideal teacher self" (Dornyei, 2009). When I was writing this chapter, Qiao was already launching his own school in China. Qiao's story is reminiscent of previous accounts of overseas experience influencing sojourners' life paths (Dargent-Wallace, 2013; Jackson, 2008a). However, Qiao's overseas experience is not without regrets. Some of his grounded Chinese habitus hindered his fully immersion into English society.

7.7 Habitus and immersion

Qiao's weixin blog mainly served as a channel for passing his newly acquired knowledge and first hand resources to his audience; it was also used as a platform for staying in touch with his family and friends, as approximately a fifth of his posts were about his personal life; the most frequent of these was his complete record of daily meals. Qiao seemed firmly wedded to Chinese food habits. This assumption was confirmed at a cafe, where I met Qiao for the repatriation interview. Qiao told me he had never been to a Cafe before; this reminded me one of his blog posts:

Excerpt 7.24

Anyway I just like the pubs in this city. Though I don't go, and I don't

like football matches, I just feel the atmosphere in pubs is good, Oh la la.

(Blog post, December, 2013)

反正就是很喜欢伦敦的酒吧，虽然不大进去，也不懂足球，但是就

是觉得气氛好，啦啦啦

Qiao explained to me that he had never been to a café or a pub during his stay in

Britain, because he does not drink coffee or alcohol. While Qiao impressed me as a

very open-minded and sociable person, his Chinese food habits were arguably to some

extent a barrier to social immersion.

7.8 Conflicting and incoherent identity

This analysis challenges the findings of some previous research. Reece and Palmgreen

(2000) argue that when sojourners adapt to the host culture, their cultural identity will

become less rigid. Gudykunst and Kim (2003) theory of intercultural transformation

holds that adaptation is a process involving acculturation and deculturation, which

means that, while learning new host culture, sojourners are losing home culture.

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Qiao's sojourn trajectory shows that the construction and negotiation of multiple dimensions of identity do not always fall neatly into line; personality and luck also play parts in people's response to adaptation. Qiao's acculturation to the host context and his plan of running an "English school" indicates the formation of an English professional identity; his rich travelling experience and well-developed sense of "human community" suggest a global citizen identity. But at the same time, his position as a CICT strengthened his Chinese habitus and his national identity: as Qiao concluded at the repatriation interview, he viewed himself as "a Chinese man who had seen a lot and developed many new ideas." (Repatriation interview, 22 July, 2014) (脑子里装了很多，相对来说，装了很多先进理念, 一个中国人。)

It is interesting, however, that Qiao's strengthened national identity did not protect him from reverse culture shock. On July, 2014, Qiao accepted his last work assignment in Britain, taking a group of British students to China for a ten day summer camp. Qiao faced difficulties similar to those described in previous research (L. Brown, 2009; Martin & Harrell, 1996; Steyn & Grant, 2007; Szkudlarek, 2010) in adjusting to his home culture, just as he had done upon arrival in Britain four years previously: "It was as if I had come to an unfamiliar country, I doubted whether I could survive here. What has happened to me?" (Blog post, July, 2014) （好像来到了一个陌生的国度，我怀疑我能否在这里生存下去。 这是怎么了？）. The four year sojourn was a temporary, self-imposed "fragment of the life-world" (Ehrenreich, 2006)) and the journey was not over until Qiao had negotiated his return to his home world. As previous researchers caution, the new values, new behaviours and new personal priorities are not necessarily embraced in a collectivist society (L. Brown, 2009; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal,

Asai, & Lucca, 1988). Time will be the test of whether the intercultural benefits will have lasting effects on Qiao's life path or whether they will fade.

7.9 Conclusion

This chapter reports Qiao's four year sojourn in Britain, and has explored his motivation, expectations, travel experiences, professional acculturation and personal growth. Qiao used pictures and emoji to clarify what he actually experienced, adding humour to make his point, to transform images into models, and to organize his interpretation of the sojourn (Dalsgaard, Skov, & Thomassen, 2007).

The "ought-to teacher self" led Qiao to construct new identities, in particular as intercultural mediator and global actor. By participating in the host communities, by adjusting and acquiring new skills in English schools and by actively passing newly acquired knowledge to his audience, Qiao constructed a dynamic intercultural mediator identity through travel, fleeting communication with people from the countries he visited, constant critical reflective thinking and accumulated world knowledge and cultural capital, In short, he constructed an identity as a global citizen.

The changes in Qiao's personal disposition echo O'Reilly's (2006) observations on the transformative potential of travel. Challenging encounters encourage tenacity and the ability to cope with the new situation and the stress-adaptation-growth process enhances sojourners' self-efficacy (Hampton, 2007; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Y. Kim, 1988). The intercultural transformation and increased self-efficacy are eventually translated into cultural capital, helping Qiao to achieve his "ideal teacher self" upon repatriation. The juxtaposition of Qiao's strengthened national identity and newly formed "global self" underline the conflicting and fluid nature of identity.

However, blog posts do not always fit neatly into one category; sometimes the same blog falls into several categories (Malleus & Slattery, 2014). For example, a single post on the English cultural event "tweed run" combines elements of social-historical background information, and English dress code with Qiao's clothes shopping and dining experience for that day. This pattern underlines the complexity of Qiao's interpretation and adjustments to the host culture, as well as the reflexivity of my role as Qiao's compatriot, a fellow sojourner researcher.

It is worth mentioning that the evidence for Qiao's English language progress in the blog was limited. It is not clear if this sparse reflection was due to his limited chances to socialize with English people; to the fact that the language challenges in Qiao's fourth year of sojourning may have been less of an issue; or whether his English language development was simply not an issue that he chose to reflect on.

Chapter 8 **Case Study of Shan**

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall[11].

---Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

This chapter tells the story of Shan, the case study participant who had achieved the highest level of education. Her educational background had had a profound impact on her experience in the UK, especially in the terms of her use of symbolic capital in negotiating a new life. This chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly I will briefly introduce Shan's background; then I will revisit the relevant theoretical underpinnings. Finally I will elaborate on Shan's experience in Britain, her motivation and emotion, reflection and transformation.

8.1 Shan

Shan is in her forties. After finishing her post-doctoral research in 2009, she had worked in a top Chinese university. She also had experience with publishing. From December 2012 to June 2014, Shan joined the CI program in Northern Ireland. During two years' service, she mainly lived on her own in a rented flat, although she had also experienced different types of temporary housing.

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[11]September 23, 1998, New York Times, Mandela, at White House, Says World Backs Clinton by James Bennet, Quote Page A26, New York. (ProQuest)

Shan had been keeping two weblogs: one is a professional blog open to the public, and another is for personal contacts only. She allowed me to have access to both. However, for present purposes, I mainly focus on her personal blog updates from December 2012 to June 2014. Like Su, Shan used QQ space to share her life in Britain with her contacts. She had posted more than 87 entries in two years. In order to complete the picture of Shan's life as a sojourner, I also analyze a small number of entries originally written in English on her professional blog as evidence of her English language investment; a two-hour repatriation interview; and her QQ posts and interaction with her audiences.

8.2 Identity, agency and acculturation

Compared with the other two case study participants, what struck me most about Shan's story is her agentive skills (Vygotsky, 1980). Therefore, it is helpful at this point to revisit the notions of identity and agency, and their connection with acculturation. Identity enactment occurs via specific channels, highlighted at particular moments, visible in certain places and spaces (Farrell & Fenwick, 2007); it is mediated by language and other cultural artefacts (M. Cole, 1998; Vygotsky, 1980); it can be thought of as an amalgam of past experiences, available cultural resources, and possible subject positions[12] in the present and future (Farrell & Fenwick, 2007, p. 202); it is

---

[12] A subject position incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that share that repertoire. Once having taken up a particular position as one's own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, storylines and concepts relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned. At least a possibility of notional choice is inevitably involved because each of us engages in many and contradictory discursive practices (Davies & Harré, 1990, p. 46)

inseparable from learning and especially mastery or the acquisition of expertise

(Dressen-Hammouda, 2008) ; it is continuously revised and articulated through story or

narrative (Chamberlain & Leydesdorff, 2004).

Holland (2001) maintains that identity mediates agency. When self-identity is

threatened, agency will be exerted as resistance to preserve one's self-identity (Deters,

2011). In defining the connection between agency and acculturation, Gezentsvey and

Ward (2008, p. 217) conclude:

> Agency is the active engagement of individuals in the acculturation
>
> process, that (a) encompasses the belief in one's capability of reaching
>
> selected meaningful acculturative goals; the ethno cultural and civic
>
> navigation skills necessary to achieve those goals; and the management
>
> of environmental stressors with effective coping strategies within the
>
> social, cultural, and historical constraints of the larger society; and (b)
>
> has positive consequences for individuals ' psychological and socio-
>
> cultural adaptation. In other words, agency is the active, positive
>
> engagement of individuals in the acculturation process.

Previous research notes personal agency includes beliefs about one's capabilities, such

as control and self-efficacy; goal setting; self-regulation; and strategies for coping with

environmental stressors (Crockett, 2001). Shan's self-agency is manifested "in strivings

for mastery and power which enhance and protect that differentiation" while, at the

same time, she aligns herself with the foreign social entity, through "strivings for

intimacy, union, and solidarity with that larger entity"(Wiggins, 1991, p. 89). Before

using these theories as a lens to examine Shan's story, I will share her motivation and

expectations, the driving force through all her malaise and difficulties, as revealed in interview.

8.3 Motivation and expectation

Shan became a CICT in the UK partially for professional reasons and partially because of her son. She had studied English as an undergraduate and had always longed for a chance to go to an Anglophone country to improve her language skills. As a professor, her research interests in cross-cultural media meant that she was also keen to access English resources. As the mother of a teenager boy, she wanted her son to come to Britain to experience education through English. In December 2012, Shan arrived in Northern Ireland and started her job as a CICT.

8.4 Negotiating her new life

The literature indicates that sojourning and transnational changes often give rise to psychological pressure, known as acculturative stress (Berry, 2006; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987; Hovey & King, 1996) or culture shock (L. Brown & Holloway, 2008; Ward et al., 2001). Such stress has been associated with intrapersonal (i.e., homesickness), interpersonal (i.e., intercultural contact) and intergroup (i.e., identity, prejudice) dimensions though not with cultural distance (Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013). As a newcomer and foreign woman in Northern Ireland, Shan's story was not an exception. During her two year stay, she kept very frequent records of her daily life; the most notable accounts focussed on housing, social security and visa issues.

8.4.1 Housing

Before her departure, Shan had arranged short stay student accommodation at campus A (the main campus of her host University) in city A. Soon after her arrival, she was assigned to work in campus B in city B; so she had to move into a hostel for a few nights as the contract with student accommodation had ended and she could not find a suitable place to rent in city B.

Excerpt 8.1

> Be strong, strong and stronger
>
> I still haven't found anywhere to rent, but the contract [with student accommodation] has come to the end. ...Today I was notified that I need to check out on the 12th. ... The very first time in my life I felt like a homeless drifter ... I will get on the train at 8 am to city B for my third trip to look for housing. That place is chaotic, but I have to go. My English friend warned me that Northern Ireland has been an unsafe place for many years. Very often there have been bombings in city B. I hope I won't come cross any. (Blog excerpt, 10-01-2013)
>
> 坚强、坚强、再坚强
>
> 房子还未租到，这里的合同已经到期。... 可是今天宿管中心就有人送信过来说要 1 月 12 日交房。... 平生第一次找到流浪者的感觉。... 我就可以踏上 8 点的火车前往贝尔法斯特开始我第三次找房之旅。尽管那个地方很乱，但是还得硬着头皮前往。我的一个英国朋友一再告诫我，北爱尔兰好多年来并不太平，贝尔法斯特经常发生炸弹事件，希望我不要碰上这种事情。

House hunting proved a tough adventure for Shan, as City B had broken out in a series of protests, clashes and riots. Therefore, safety became her major concern.

Excerpt 8.2

> Safety is my priority. It seems I can only look for houses in the north, because the west is not a good area, there are riots in the east, the south is quite noisy. ... Now cars are being set alight in the north. Nowhere is safe in B. (blog excerpt, 04-02-2013)
>
> 看来安全是我首要考虑的问题。只所以租房到北边，是因为那里相对安全，因为西边不是很好的住宅区，治安状况不好，东边发生过骚乱，...比较吵闹，...现在北边也发生汽车烧毁事件。看来贝法是无处不安定啊。

Shan searched on the internet and arranged several house viewings but she did not find anything satisfactory. Some properties were in unsafe areas; some landlords did not want to rent to foreigners. Sometimes she lost her way and was late for the appointment and the agent couldn't wait for her. Shan's Chinese habitus of "Fengshui"[13] was a further obstacle to her housing choice.

Excerpt 8.3

> The agent left. I was wandering alone on the road. One reason was to ask about this secondary school. The people around all said it was a good school. They told me to check the phone number on the school web page, then to make an appointment. Another reason was I wanted to know about the direction of the house. I stopped a lady and ask her

---

[13]Fengshui is a Chinese philosophy that considers how to balance the energies of architecture to assure health and fortune.

which direction is north. She got confused and asked me where on earth I wanted to go. I told her I didn't want to go anywhere; I just wanted to know about the direction ... After quite a while, she gave me a vague idea. Then I knew this house was more or less east-facing, but not facing to due east. Later I found that the British do not care about the house direction. They don't have any idea about "sitting south". If I popularize the conception of "Fengshui", possibly some people might show interest? (Blog excerpt, 17-01-2013)

中介工作人员离开了，我一个人在马路上徘徊，一方面是打听这所中学的情况，周围的人都告诉我不错，让我去网站找学校的电话预约一下。一方面测量这座房子的朝向问题。我拦住一个女士，问她哪里是北，她丈二和尚摸不着头脑，问我到底要去哪里，我说我哪里都不去，我只要知道方向。... 费了半天劲，她才大致给我指了一下方向，我知道这座房子是东西走向的，但是不是很正的东西走向。后来才知道，英国人根本就不问房子的走向。没有坐北朝南的概念。看来我在这里普及一下中国的风水，可能会有感兴趣的人。

Hence Shan had to go back to city A and renew the contract with the student accommodation, meanwhile applying for a hall of residence on campus C, which is closer to campus B where Shan mainly worked. With the help of her Chinese colleagues, eventually Shan found a flat she liked:

Excerpt 8.4

But the agent and I had a lot of discussions. Firstly, [the agent required me] to rent for 12 months; secondly, no desk would be provided. I

presented my passport and the invitation letter from the university to the

agent, and explained to him why I could only rent for ten months now.

Then I showed him my proof of earnings, the proof of identity letter the

host university provided, and my staff identity card. Then I even took out

my bank card and showed him the swift code, to convince him that I

could afford the rent (Blog excerpt, 19-01-2013)

但是中介跟我接下来就对一些问题进行了热烈的讨论。第一，必须

租 12 个月。第二，不给配写字台。我把自己的护照和邀请函拿出

来让他看，告诉他为何我只能先租 10 个月。我把自己的收入证

明，学校开具的我的身份证明, 工作证等一一亮出来, 最后还把银行

卡和 swift code 量出来，使他坚信我有足够的经济能力支付房租。

In the above excerpt, Shan was seen exerting her social and economic capital to

construct a full-time professional, fully legitimated, trustworthy identity with the agent

and landlord, which established her as a professional rather than "a foreigner", "a

drifter". After hard negotiation, the landlord finally agreed to rent the flat to Shan.

However, this was not yet the end of her "drifting" experience. On the same day, City B

had a bomb alert and the train station was closed down. Shan had to stay in a different

hostel for another three nights before the tenancy started. She had a very cold,

frightening, lonely and sleepless time in the hostel.

Excerpt 8.5

I was the only one left in the room at night; ... the radiator didn't work....

[I was so cold] my teeth were chattering. ... I couldn't sleep at all for a

whole night, because of the cold, because of police cars' lights flashing

and sirens blaring ... (blog excerpt, 20-01-2013)

晚上回到房间，发现只要我一个人了... 由于暖气不好 ...牙齿打颤 ...

一夜几乎睡不着，一是冷，二是警车一辆辆呼啸而过...

The civil unrest and violence in B made Shan felt like "A bird startled by the mere twang of a bow-string" (惊弓之鸟) (blog excerpt, 20-01-2013). Even when things finally settled down, this did not ease her nerves.

Excerpt 8.6

> After work I returned to the house, I looked around out of the corner of my eyes to check if there were any stalkers. I had to see the lift door close behind me then I started to walk to my flat. I opened the door, and got a fright – the lights were on! Is anyone there? I walked stealthily into the room and thought of what to do if there was someone. I couldn't relax until I found nobody there. Perhaps the agent forgot to switch off the lights … I was so tired that I skipped my dinner and went to sleep. (Blog excerpt, 21-01-2013)
>
> 晚上下班后回到家里，用余光瞄一眼是否有人跟踪。看到电梯门安然关上时，我才向我房门走去。打开门，吓了一跳, 卧室里卫生间的灯居然开着, 是不是有人在里面呢？蹑手蹑脚进去, 边想如果是有人如何对付。结果没有发现一个人在, 可能是中介带人看过房子之后忘记关灯了, 忐忑的心终于下来, 好像那天没有吃晚饭就睡觉了。

When reflecting on her experiences of house hunting, Shan wrote:

Excerpt 8.7

> I have experienced something the others didn't experience. I have a better understanding of life." (Blog excerpt, 21-01-2013)

感觉自己经历了其他人没有经历过遭遇，又多了一份人生的体验。

This "understanding of life" was accentuated later by visa and other incidents, and turned out to be the "most important achievement" of her sojourn.

8.4.2 Family and visa Issues

House hunting and concerns about security were just some of the difficulties Shan encountered. Visa issues and the contract with Hanban also proved traumatic for Shan and her family. Originally, Shan's contract was supposed to last for three years. However, she had to leave the UK in June, 2014 half a year earlier than planned. Shan's experiences mirror those raised in focus group interviews (see chapter 5), and point to the need for attention from program organisers and stakeholders. The following extracts from blog entries and interviews focus on the main obstacles that defeated Shan and brought forward her return to China.

Shan arrived Northern Ireland in December 2012 with an academic visitor visa, which she believed would not allow her to work in the UK; she thought she actually needed a Tier 5 visa[14]. This made her feel she was "working undercover", as she said in

---

[14] An academic visitor visa is for academics on sabbatical, doing research or accompanying students on a study abroad programme. The visa holders are permitted to undertake activities related to their jobs as long as they are employed and paid by an overseas company. They are not allowed to take other paid or unpaid work （www.gov.uk）. As already mentioned in chapter 2, CI teachers are recruited and paid by Chinese government. CI teachers are legible to work for CIs and CI hubs, but they are not allowed to undertake any other jobs in the UK. A Tier 5 visa is for people who want to come to the UK for a short time for work experience or to do training, an overseas Government Language Programme, and research or a fellowship through an approved government authorised exchange scheme. The visa holders are allowed to work in the job described in their certificate of sponsorship, and can do a second job for up to 20 hours per week（www.gov.uk）

interview. She had to leave her son alone in City B and go back to China to renew her Visa.

Excerpt 8.8

On 25th August [2013], I had to leave my son who had just arrived in B twelve days before and go back to China to renew my visa. I was very upset about leaving my son alone to deal with his school registration. With friends' help, my son enrolled in the first week … If I was still hopeful about my application when I submitted it for the first time, then the rejection that came on 21th September was almost a catastrophe for a sixteen year old boy. Because of the rejection, my previous visa, which was supposed to expire in November, was now invalid. I had to stay in China and wait. My son cried bitterly when he heard about it … On 9th October, I arrived in B with the visa that I had gone through so much trouble to gain. The father of my son's classmate took him to meet me at the airport. (Blog excerpt, 03-11-2013)

8月25日，忐忑不安地离开了北爱尔兰回国签证，把刚到北爱尔兰12天的儿子独自留下，让他自己办理入学事宜。第一周在朋友的帮助下顺利入学，... 如果第一个月我的签证还能让孩子看到希望的话，那么9月21日的拒签信的到来对于这个16岁的孩子简直是毁灭性的打击。由于8月底申请的签证拒签，导致我之前持有的11月才到期的签证作废，只能滞留在中国等候。当孩子知道我拒签的消息的时候，放声大哭。... 10月9日，当我历经苦难拿到签证返回贝尔法斯特城市机场时，是同学的父亲带着儿子来机场接我。

By the same token, due to the visa issue, Shan's son's education in the UK came to an end after just a term in City B. In May 2014, Shan had been notified that her contract with the host university had been terminated; this was nearly seven months earlier than she had expected. At interview, she said her original contract was supposed to be three years. However, Hanban had not provided any evidence in writing, and the host CI claimed her contract with them was only for two years. On June 2014, she finished her service with the CI program and returned to China. On account of the visa and the administrative issues associated with the CI, Shan had a lot to say and she told me that she really wanted to have her voice heard. She cited political science and mass communication theory in the interview: "The spiral of silence" (沉默的螺旋), she said, and complicated political relationships should not be a reason for poor program management. Hanban should allow the CICTs to offer feedback on the performance of CIs. Administrative complications were also raised by the CI directors (see chapter 5) in focus group discussions and by other blog participants. In the next chapter, I will draw on this evidence as the basis for deeper discussion.

8.4.3 Acculturative stress and resilience

In addition to the house hunting, security, family and visa issues discussed above, malaise, loneliness, homesick and intrapersonal factors were a source of additional pressure.

The cold weather affected Shan badly: she was ill from the first day following her arrival. A wide range of emotionally stressful events then followed that made her particularly vulnerable. She nearly fainted and pulled the alarm cord in the bathroom before a security guard came in to help her; she had serious travel sickness because of

the long commute to work; she had to "讨" (Tao, means begging in Chinese, Shan's original word) for hot water to warm herself[15]; she had to deal with the hoodies on the street, bike theft, a greedy and indifferent janitor and the riots in the city. In this overwrought state, her blog became a platform where she could seek emotional comfort and spiritual support.

From 26th to 28th April, 2013, Shan posted thirteen QQ posts:

Excerpt 8.9

> I dreamed that I was robbed on the way to the airport … my spectacles got broken … Now I have woken up from the dream in tears. (QQ post, 26-04-2013)
>
> 一夜做恶梦，梦到我...出国到机场的路上被打劫了。眼镜摔成稀巴烂。... 我醒了。睁眼一看，眼泪在往下淌呢。
>
> I asked the bus driver if he could stop at Xx Street. He refused … I told him I felt very sick, so could he do me a favour? Then he did … I got drowned in the rain … I felt paralysed when I arrived home. (QQ post, 27-04-2013)
>
> 问司机是否可以把我在[xx 街]放下，答曰不可以，…我说我难受得很，能否帮我一次？司机同意了，…又淋雨了，...走回家全身就要瘫了。
>
> Yesterday I read an article on "learning to die" in Li Yinhe's[16]' blog. She means that when people are getting older, they should face death with an

---

[15] Chinese people tend to prefer drinking hot water to cold water, particularly in the case of feeling unwell or cold.
[16] Li Yinhe is a famous Chinese writer.

attitude of delight. Should I follow that? But I am still young and I have a dependent son. (QQ post, 27-04-2013)

昨天...看了李银河的博客，学会死亡。她的意思是让人老的时候以一种享受死亡的姿态面对死亡。我现在的情形难道应当像此？可是我还年轻，我还有未成年的孩子。

[I]woke up from a trance... I have never longed for life more, and miss my family.（QQ post, 27-04-2013）

从昏睡中醒了... 从来没有觉得像现在渴望生命，渴望见到家人。

[I was] drowned by rain, kept vomiting, and running a fever （QQ post, 27-04-2013）

被雨浇了，一路呕吐，发烧了！

As Marianne Moore (1996) reflects, "writing was resilience, resilience was an adventure". Shan's resilience[17] was mediated by interpersonal support (her blog audiences and colleagues in the host university; the latter will be discussed below), and reflection on the meaning of life. The written form of online communications with her associates in China actually helped to lighten Shan's mood, as shown in following excerpt. This finding supports Pan's (2008) argument that finding meaning in life is a significant protective factor that has positive effects on cross-cultural adaptation.

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[17] Resilience refers to the dynamic and interactive process through which individual utilize internal and external resources to achieve positive adaptation despite the occurrence of stressful experience (Masten, 2001; J.-Y. Pan, 2011).

Excerpt 8.10

Recently a lot of friends left many messages on my blog; I felt your love

and care, thank you all very much. I am the kind of person that likes to

externalize overwhelming feelings, but I am not easily defeated. Even if

I fall, I will get up again. My spirit has never admitted defeat. The

greater the difficulties are, the greater my passion and enthusiasm for

life. Looking at the momentary and valuable sunshine in this country, I

think I should cherish what I have at the moment: the rich English

research literature, friendly foreigners that like to talk to me, and

comfortable shoes, the Titanic museum, and happy seagulls hovering in

the sky. I need to learn to discover the beauty of life, and enjoy the

spring time. (Blog excerpt, 01-05-2013)

最近有朋友看到我的日志都纷纷留言，表达对我的关切，谢谢你

们。我是一个爱宣泄的人，但是绝对不是随便可以被任何环境打倒

的人，即便暂时倒下，我也会最终站起来。而且是那种不服输的

人，似乎困难越多，越能激发我对生活的热爱和热情。 看到虽然短

暂而宝贵的英伦阳光，我觉得应该珍惜我身处的这一切，这里有大

量的英文让我阅读，有热情与我交流的老外，还有舒适的皮鞋，窗

外的泰塔尼克博物馆，还有快乐飞翔的海鸥。我应当发现更多的生

活之美，享受这里的春天。

In the above excerpts, Shan manifests increased resilience and the ability to cope

(Giddens, 1991; Y. Kim, 1988). She quotes Mandela's words to encourage herself in

her blog: "The greatest glory in living lies in never falling, but in rising every time we

fall." （blog excerpt, 08-12-2013） （生命中最伟大的光辉不在于永不坠落，而是坠落后总能再度升起）

As previously mentioned, Holland (2001) maintains that identity mediates agency. When self-identity is threatened, agency is exerted in the form of resistance (Deters, 2011). Shan found herself in a social context in City B where she felt disprivileged and strained, and where her previous social, economic status and identity were not recognised. Hence she resolved to draw on her previous education and professional experience to build up a legitimate professional identity. Her efforts proved successful when Shan was welcomed as a valuable member in the work context. In next section, I will deliberate on three affordances related to Shan's professional identity construction, namely, her academic capital, her relational agency and the support from her professional community.

8.4.4 Professional identity

The key aspects of Shan's professional identity construction can be exemplified both in virtual space and in real life. I will start the discussion with the first dimension. Sarup (1996) notes that the construction of identity is the construction of a narrative or story. Shan's virtual professional identity was constructed using academic voice and style.

8.4.4.1 Identity via voice and affiliation

Writing style, including elements such as level of authority, tone, and phrasing, is a unique identifier of many bloggers (Dennen, 2009).Words not only tell stories, but also manifest the bloggers' knowledge, interests and life style. Shan's blog differs from

those of the other two case study participants in the way that it adopts an academic

writing style, for instance:

Excerpt 8.11

> The sun brings warmth. This is a self-evident truth. However, after I
>
> came to Britain, I found this truth could be challenged. In Popper's
>
> words, the sunshine [here] can falsify this idea. ... Certainly, my
>
> observation invites **falsification** as well… (Blog excerpt, 13-03-2013)
>
> 阳光带来温暖。这是不言自明的道理，然而到了英国以后，我发现
>
> 这条放之四海而皆准的真理受到了挑战，用波普尔的术语说就是[这
>
> 里的]阳光可以证伪这条真理。... 当然我这样的观察也需要证伪。
>
> The **consumer price index** is fairly high! (Blog entry title, 28-12-2013)
>
> 我的日常消费指数很高
>
> I would like to do a sample survey, comparing the local **Engel**
>
> **coefficient** level in XX (Shan's home city) and that in Britain, discover
>
> the difference between these two countries. ... I feel the **Engel**
>
> **coefficient** level in China is rather high. (Blog excerpt, 01-09-2013)
>
> 我真想进行抽样调查，看看下沙普通老百姓的恩格尔系数，然后到
>
> 英国后也抽样调查一下那里老百姓的恩格尔系数，找到两个国家的
>
> 差距。... 我觉得国内的恩格尔系数是高的。

Terminology, theory (such as "spiral of silence" (Neumann, 1993)) and quotations are

quite often used in Shan's blog as to make a point or emphasize her feelings. In

addition, Shan shares links or forwards news and information on politics or

humanitarian causes; introduces her own research and publications; and recommends others' publications.

Having defined how Shan articulates her professional identity in virtual space, I will now move on to discuss Shan's identity construction in real life.

8.4.4.2 Identity via academic activities

Shan mentions developing the ability to read English literature for research purposes was an incentive for her to come to Britain. Her blog accounts and interview also reveal her passion and enthusiasm for research which, to some extent, alleviate the stress associated with the foreign environment. Her academic motivation functioned as a diversionary tactic, made her tolerant of trifles and helped her to overcome difficulties during her sojourn.

For example, she had ongoing contact with trades-people as appliances continued breaking down; however, she refused to be disheartened because the disruptions meant that she had managed to finish reading a book.

Excerpt 8.12

> I finished reading the book "Spatial diffusion" and took some notes and
> began to read another book Urban Social Geography, both of which
> enlightened me.
>
> As the Chinese saying goes, "misfortune may be an actual blessing". I
> benefited a lot from the so-called bad things. (Blog excerpt, original in
> English, 27-12-2012)

... 一是把 spatial diffusion 一书读完，二是开始看 urban social geography。感觉国外的经典著作确实启发很大。 这真应验了"塞翁失马焉知非福"那句古话。

Excerpt 8.13

...Even if I turn on all the lights, the room is still not bright enough… I found the bathroom is a good study space. It's small, so my eyes can concentrate on books or laptops rather than looking around. Secondly, the four spotlights and mirror make this room very bright. Thirdly, there is a radiator on the wall, so it is warm enough ... I moved a small table and a chair into the bathroom ... I like this special study room. (Blog excerpt, 25-01-2013)

... 可是家里的灯即便是全部打开，也没有我原来房间的亮。... 发现卫生间是一个不错的读书地方。一是面积小，足以使我的目光专注于书籍或者电脑，而不是张望四周。第二，头顶四盏射灯下来的灯光在镜子的反射下使得这个小屋明亮无比。第三，还有一个挂在墙上的暖气，足够暖和。... 我一个小桌子和椅子搬进去。... 我喜欢这个特殊的书房。

Like most of the CI teachers in Britain, Shan had a heavy work load and, because the teaching sites were scattered, she had to spend a long time every day commuting.

Excerpt 8.14

...What a pleasure it is to read in a warm room with warm light.

However, my free time always gets disturbed by all kinds of things. Now

it's normal to have to take unfinished work home with me. I have to

squeeze time for the research I truly love. (Blog excerpt, 09-03-2013)

... 坐在温暖的房间，在温和的灯光下阅读是件多么惬意的事情。然

而好景不长，我的业余生活就被林林总总的事情打乱。现在加班加

点把 8 小时内做不完的活拿回家做已经是家常便饭了。只能挤时间

从事自己挚爱的学术研究了。

Despite of the heavy workload and tight schedule, Shan was still clearly goal-oriented

and self-disciplined; she actively participated in academic events such as lectures,

seminars, and conferences.

Excerpt 8.15

I did not eat anything for a whole day [because of illness]. I took some

pills ... I went to the office to ask about a conference on culture and

media, and I decided to attend. (Blog excerpt, 15-01-2013)

一天滴米未进。吃了不少药...去办公室...咨询了该校组织的媒介与

文化的一个学术会议。决定前往参加。

What is more, Shan utilized her previous education and her current Chinese teaching

job in City B as social cultural capital, helping her prove her legitimacy and win respect

from locals. Shan recorded her experience of meeting a local secondary school principal

in relation to her son's education.

Excerpt 8.16

I can express my ideas fluently, and convinced him [the principal]. He

had positive feelings about China. He said he would like to visit China

and develop cooperation and communication with a Chinese school. He

said China is fast-developing ... British students should go to China to

have a look. I told him this is indeed the mission of the CI, to pave the

road for communication between two countries. I also introduced

myself. He seemed to completely accept me. (Blog excerpt, 28-02-2013)

我能很顺畅地表达自己的意思，并设法说服他。他对中国很有好

感，并表达有机会到中国访问的想法，特别是与中国的中学进行友

好往来。他说中国的变化是惊人的，... 要让英国的学生到中国走

走。我说我们孔子学院正是有这样的使命，所以能为中英两国的交

往奠定良好的基础。期间我还简单地介绍了自己，看来他对我还是

很信服的。

While the visa issues made Shan felt like an illegal immigrant and language

deficiencies made her felt like a "child learning to speak", reading and thinking kept her

motivated and preserved her self-identity. Her formal educational experiences appeared

to be an important source of empowerment, enabling her to reconstruct a well-educated,

rational, expert identity and negotiate the same "insider" life that she would have

enjoyed in her home country.

8.4.4.3 Identity via relational agency

Another affordance that helped to improve Shan's professional identity and adaptation

was her relational agency. Relational agency refers to the ability of an individual to

align thoughts and actions with others in order to understand and gain new insights on

practical problems (A. Edwards, 2005, 2010). Shan's relational agency was manifested,

for instance, in her reflections on textbook design.

Excerpt 8.17

Local characteristics and universities (Blog entry title, 15-05-2013)

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During my post-doc research, I had a strong interest in local knowledge; I read a lot and published some high quality papers … Since coming to Britain, I have deepened my understanding of this topic through Chinese teaching.

在博士后期间,对地方性知识发生浓厚的兴趣.通过阅读相关著作，结合自己的研究，写出了一些高质量的论文... 到达英国后，通过数次汉语教学，对地方性知识有了更加直观的了解。

...Today I came across a problem in delivering a Chinese class ... Students were expected to learn to say: "Which country are you from?" "I am English." A lot of students argued that they are Irish, not English. Then I suddenly realized this is actually related to "national identity". I explained to them that this sentence actually asked about "where are you from?" not about nationality or ethnicity ... However, the text book doesn't support my explanation. The new words in Chinese characters are "国家"，but had been translated into "nation" and "country". These two words obviously have different meanings … The editor [of the text book] should take other ethnic groups' attitudes towards England into consideration. For example, the long conflicts between Northern Ireland and England, the upcoming referendum in Scotland ... I felt the need to improve and localize the textbook design, otherwise it will cause problems. (Blog excerpt, 15-05-2013)

... 而今天我上课就遇到了问题。... 其中要让学生学这么一句"你是哪国人？"我是英国人。好多学生在学习这句时，说他是爱尔兰人，不是英国人。我突然意识到这里面存在着一个民族认同的问

题，尽管我再三解释，我这个句子仅仅问你从哪里来，而非问你国

籍，这只是一个地理问题而已，并非民族认同问题.... 但是教材的英

文翻译却深深地打了我一巴掌，编辑写的中文是国家，结果英文翻

译是 nation 和 country。这两个单词有明显的不同，...，编辑应该关

照到英国其他民族对 English 的反叛。比如北爱尔兰人在民族认同

中发生了多年的骚乱，流血事件不断。苏格兰提出要公投独立，而

且指日可待了。... 我深感在英国不同的地区需要改造教材的必要，

否则会出现各种各样的问题。

The importance of localizing textbook design helped Shan to relate to her students more

effectively and facilitated rapport. In addition, this relational agency enabled her to

exam her work from an "insider" perspective and to develop insights on the big project

of Chinese language and culture dissemination. Such insights were also reflected in an

entry about the London Book Fair.

Excerpt 8.18

I was honoured to participate in the London Book Fair. This experience

not only tested my skills of negotiation and my knowledge of copyright,

but also deepened my understanding of Chinese cultural

dissemination...I noticed some books on two neighboring [Chinese]

stalls were the same...Any experienced copyright agent or publisher will

want to know [who on earth owns the copyright], and this will result in

no business at all.

Many [Chinese] publishers attended this book fair, but very few

publications were likely to catch the eye of foreign publishers... Some

books didn't even appeal to someone like me who has studied

publishing, not to mention overseas copyright agencies... Do you think

these books can find a place in the world market? ... It's very rare to see

Chinese publishers holding press conferences or book launches ...This

big country's performance at an international book affair is rather

disappointing. As a publisher, I felt a heavy burden on my shoulders.

There is still a long way to go to spread Chinese culture. (Blog excerpt,

21-04-2013)

有幸作为国家汉办展台工作人员参加了伦敦国际书展，不仅考验了

自己的谈判能力、版权贸易专业知识，更对中国文化走出去有了更

深的认识。...。但是我观察了这两家相邻的集团，很多展出的图书

都是重的。... ，如果有经验的版权代理人或者出版社就会纳闷了，

[到底是谁拥有这两本书的版权]， 最后的结果无非是两家谁都无法

进行版权交易。

参加本次图书展的出版社可谓不少，但是能真正让国外出版社看得

上眼的出版物少之又少。... 其他出版社展出的书，连我这里学出版

的专业人都没有一点阅读兴趣，更何况不太懂中国文化的国外版权

代理人。... 大家评判一下这些书可以跟国际接轨吗？ ... 很少见我国

出版社在自己的展场发布新闻，开 party 等。... 看到一个泱泱大国

在国际图书舞台的种种表现，深表遗憾，也觉得我们出版人身上担

子很重。促进中国文化走出去仍然任重道远。

In the above excerpt, Shan positions herself as a professional insider (applying her

expertise in publishing) and relational agency (her knowledge of international practices,

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such as press conferences and book launches), critically reflecting on the performance of some Chinese publishers. Here Shan appears to use her "relational agency" rather than her "English culture/practice insider view" to understand the expectations and behaviour of the international book business. Although based in Britain at that time, she used words like "国外", "外国", which means "foreign", to refer to Britain and other countries. This is an interesting contrast with the other two participants: Su often uses the formal name "英国" (meaning Britain), showing a neutral stance; while Qiao likes to use jokingly "腐国"（gay nation）[18], aligning himself with the British through humourous "biting" (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). As Billig (1995) notes, national identity is constantly flagged in daily life through routine symbols and habits of language, in the mirror of "others". One's national identity can also encompass a sense of solidarity with a particular group, without necessarily being a citizen (Guibernau, 2004) (see 3.4.2.2.1). These choices can be argued to reveals the participants' feelings towards their host country, and their positions in the "world of nations" (Billig, 1995). As discussed above, Shan exerts her academic capital and relational agency to negotiate her desired identity. Indeed, the welcome from local colleagues and educational authorities affirm her professional competence and identity, which in turn, mediate Shan's agency to successfully fulfil her work responsibilities.

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[18] Internet slang, 腐 means bromance,国 means country）The terms Britain and "Gay Nation" are interchangeable in Chinese popular culture. It is not that the Chinese believe that all British men are homosexuals but it is more of the projection of seemingly homoerotic, and ever-popular, modern British culture on Chinese audiences. (http://www.theworldofchinese.com/2014/01/britain-a-gay-nation-in-chinese-pop-culture/)

8.4.4.4 Identity via professional community support

8.4.4.4.1 Language investment

Before moving to a discussion of how hospitality and welcome from local colleagues facilitated Shan's identity construction, it is necessary to review Shan's efforts on improving her English language skills, although such investment was mainly driven by her academic needs, as revealed in a blog entry.

Excerpt 8.19

> I started to write in English to train my English logical thinking. Otherwise, I would hardly be able to understand academic conferences and communicate with English-native experts. (Blog excerpt, 27-12-2012)
>
> 我开始用英文写作，训练自己的英文思维。如果不从现在开始训练，很难听懂各种学术会议，难以与英语为母语的专家交流。

The bitter experience of house hunting and negotiation with estate agents also made Shan "ashamed of [her] English" and feeling the need for improvement. Affected by the surrounding environment, Shan recognized the power of linguistic capital, she tended to believe if she possessed better language her legitimate in the host society will be acknowledged. Though in the current study, no attempt will be made to assess Shan's progress in English, it is noteworthy that she started blogging in a mixture of English and Chinese (see excerpt 8.12) and seized every opportunity to speak English. Incidents like complaining to the bank, getting lost, losing and finding her phone, arguing with the greedy janitor, contacting the plumber, and losing her train ticket, all became free "lessons in English". In one entry, she elaborated on her contact with a local bank:

Excerpt 8.20

I gave the bank a thirty-minute long phone call, listed all the troubles

caused by the delay with the bank card. The bank said I would receive it

next Wednesday. However, this Wednesday night I still hadn't received

the bank card. I was about to call the bank and make a complaint.

However, it was too late and the bank had closed – I had to give up the

chance of practicing my English! Thursday I had a busy day with

Chinese program promotion, I couldn't make a call. That night I

received the bank card, so, I lost another chance to communicate with

the bank. (Blog excerpt, 23-03-2013)

我给银行打了一个长达 30 分钟的电话，历数我银行卡的艰难过

程。对方说下周三给我寄到卡。然而这周三晚上回来，还是没有见

到银行卡。正准备打电话投诉一通，一想银行此时已经下班只能把

练习口语的机会放弃掉。周四一天在课程推广会上，没有办法打电

话投诉，晚上回来看到银行卡，这样又失去跟银行交流的机会。

She recorded all of these encounters in her blog, and made fun of herself:

Excerpt 8.21

Look, one accident followed another – is this testing my patience? Is this

giving me an opportunity to practice my English?! (Blog excerpt, 23-03-

2013)

看看，不停地出状况，是不是在考验我的耐心？是不是在提供让我

不停讲英语的机会呢？

In research on study abroad students' stress and resilience, Cheung and Yue (2012) report that humour can assist adjustment and buffer stress. In the above excerpt, Shan's humorous comments also indicate her resilience in adversity.

8.4.4.4.2 Socializing in the community of practice

During her stay in City B, Shan made some friends through work and travel. She described all of her contacts with these friends, including her experience of being invited to a local family. Lucy was a lecturer in fashion and design at Shan's host university. They got to know each other as their offices were close and Shan had an interest in this area. Lucy kindly invited Shan to join her class, sometimes bringing cakes to share with her. They became friends. Through the contact with Lucy, Shan learned about sewing, western table manners and the local way of life.

In addition to the support from local colleagues, the welcome and appreciation from the host principal also helped with Shan's adjustment, at the same time as affirming the professional identity she was struggling to construct.

Excerpt 8.22

> Today I went to F, a county in the western part of Northern Ireland, for teaching. The principal greeted us on arrival. Another volunteer [CI] teacher and I were very impressed by his warm welcome and kindness. This put us at our ease …The principal said he could host the volunteer teacher and drive her to work; this was really surprising for us, very different from the stereotype of the English: conservative and reticent …When we finished class, the principal had someone drive us to the station. He said he had arranged the commute for us – the teachers would take turns to drive us to the station. Working under these

conditions, no matter how tiring it might be, I will feel happy. (Blog

excerpt, 21-11-2013)

今天去北爱尔兰西部的[F]上课，一进学校登记处，就被校长迎接到

办公室，热情到了极致，这让我和另外一名汉语志愿者很释然。...

校长居然提出让我们的志愿者可以住他家，如果愿意的话，并主动

提出载着她一起来上班，大大出乎我们的意料，感觉没有我们心目

中的英国人的刻板成见——保守和缄默。... 上完课后，校长安排老

师把我们送到了公交站，并说已经安排老师没有轮流送我们。 在这

样的环境下工作，即使再累也感到心情舒畅。

Worth noting in above excerpt are the two expressions: "释然" (relieved), and "大大出

乎我们的意料" (very surprising), which underline Shan's earlier worries. As already

discussed, the visa issues made her feel as if she was "感觉是在当地人的掩护下工作"

(working as an illegal immigrant under the cover of local people) (see interview

excerpt). She seemed to have concerns about her legal rights in Britain. Hence the

acceptance on the part of the host society meant a great deal to her. The friendship with

the local colleague and the warm support from school principle apparently eased her

mind and confirmed her legitimacy and identity as a university teacher. The

appreciation of the principal stands in contrast with the indifference experienced by Su

in her host school.

This finding also highlights the importance of "dialogical exchanges and discursive

practices in shaping the teacher self" (Trejo-Guzman, 2009, p. 138). When dialogical

exchanges between the CICT and local colleagues developed into personal issues and

discussions of trust, equality and respect, they yielded positive results including higher

levels of motivation and commitment, transformative learning, feelings of

empowerment and a sense of belonging to the host institution (Giddens, 1991; Holstein

& Gubrium, 2000; Trejo-Guzman, 2009).

On the other hand, as S.-H. Yang (2009) points out, a community of practice

encourages each member "to take responsibility for information-sharing and problem-

solving, to develop their personal identities in the community, and to foster unification

of the community" (p. 12). Successful intercultural communication cannot be a one-

sided effort on the part of the sojourners; it also very much relies on the openness and

the willingness to share on the part of the host society.

8.5 Habitus and transformation

I turn now to the impact the sojourn on Shan's transformation. We have already seen

how her reflection on the meaning of life helped with her resilience. By the same token,

her attitudes towards life also underwent change. In the first few months after arrival,

Shan found the life style in Northern Island something of a culture shock for someone

used to the hectic life in China. She wrote:

Excerpt 8.23

> Since I came to the UK, I have a better understanding of what Karl Marx
>
> said：human nature is determined by social relationships in reality.
>
> Because our behaviours are shaped by our surroundings. If you want to
>
> do something in Britain, it will not get done within one or two weeks. ...
>
> Therefore, I have to slow down and understand that I can't finish many
>
> jobs in a day. This is a torture to someone like me that is always aiming
>
> to be highly efficient. (Blog excerpt, 08-01-2013)

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来到英国之后，对马克思所言的"人是一切社会关系的总和"深有感

慨，因为个人的行为要受制于周围的事物和人。在英国办一件事

情，没有一两个星期是无法搞定的。...于是，你的生活节奏不得不

放慢，以至于无法在一天内做成好几件事情。对于我这个追求高效

的人来说，实在是一种折磨。

Excerpt 8.24

... In China, the earth turns around twice every day, but in Britain it

possibly turns once a month. (Shan's reply to a reader comment, 09-01-

2013)

... 在中国地球一天转 2 次，英国应该是一个月转一次。

Nevertheless, in her repatriation interview, Shan admitted that her attitude towards life

had changed. Being in Northern Ireland had given her an opportunity to examine the

notion of "home" and family relationships which would have been impossible if she

was still in China, in her own society. Being uprooted and dropped into another culture

gives individuals a rare chance to look at themselves and the people around them

(Deters, 2011).

Shan recounted that she used to think watching movies with friends was a waste of

time, but now she found it fun. She asked herself, "Why on earth am I working so

hard?" (Interview) and had started to discover and enjoy the small pleasures in life.

Shan said her friends also noticed her change and remarked: Shan enjoys work, enjoys

life and has a zest for life.

This transformation illustrates the various stages of intercultural sensitivity: from

feeling "strange" (ethnocentric stage) to actually "accepting" and "adapting" (ethno-

relative stage) to the cultural difference stage (Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Korne et al.,

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2007). At the repatriation interview, Shan acknowledged that she had learned to view and think from a different perspective. This change provides support for Coleman (1997, p. 15) argument that culture shock is a transitional experience on the way to adopting new values, attitudes and behaviours.

8.6 Summary

This chapter has reviewed three key aspects of Shan's two year stay in Northern Ireland, namely, how she remained resilient and negotiated a way forward under adverse conditions; how she exerted social cultural capital and agency to construct a legitimate professional identity; and how her way of life and outlook had changed during her sojourn. The findings from this case study highlight the importance of support from both the CI program and the local gatekeeper; they also show how symbolic capital and resilience mediate the agency of a highly-skilled sojourner in adapting to the host society.

Similar findings emerge from other participants and from the two focus group interviews. A summary of the main findings and of the principal issues and suggestions which have arisen in the previous discussion will be provided in the next chapter.

Chapter 9 **Conclusion**

In this last chapter, I summarize the findings from this study which aim to answer my research questions concerning the challenges for CICTs in Britain, and the impact of their teaching abroad experience on their identity expansion and symbolic competence. I also discuss the theoretical concepts of identity and agency developed in my analysis, the practical and policy implications of my study and their relevance to other contexts.

9.1 Q1: What promotes and constrains acculturation?

In this section, I summarize issues that either promote or constrain the successful professional and personal acculturation of CICTs.

9.1.1 Constraints on professional acculturation

Five themes related to the constraints on professional acculturation emerged from the analysis of interviews with CI directors, the group discussions with CICTs and the in-depth case studies: language-related issues; differences in job responsibilities; differences in professional cultures; lack of opportunities for professional development; and lack of support from sending institutions.

CICTs experienced a wide range of difficulties related to slang, youth culture and accent in daily life. The restricted linguistic capital in the host society influences their habitus, such as small social circle and life style. Interestingly, however, they made no mention of cultural appropriateness or the preference for indirect ways of expression reported challenging for internationally educated teachers (Deters, 2011). This may be a

function of their limited interaction with the British; by the same token, insensitivity to nuance may impede the acculturation process.

In terms of work conditions, heavy workloads, long hours, the need to move between sites and multi-level classroom teaching were identified as major challenges for CICTs. Many CICTs have to shuttle between different teaching sites weekly, or even daily. Heavy timetables took their toll: Su felt exhausted; Qiao had to change his aim of improving his English language skills to a focus on cultural experience; and Shan manifested continuing physical symptoms associated with difficulties in adjustment. Differences in approaches to school management were another cultural shock for CICTs. Su noticed British teachers tended to give positive assessments to students; director Ni expressed surprised at the firm boundary between work and personal life; directors Lian, An and Jing felt that their social status had been "downgraded", as they ran errands which would have been done by secretaries in their previous work environment. It is pleasing to see that these differences did not have a negative impact on the directors. However, the "ruled by regulation" incident reported in chapter five was a painful lesson for director Lian and her CICTs. Such conflicts are not simply a matter of programme management; they also have implication for both self-identification and professional acculturation. Whether CICTs see themselves as fully-fledged members of the British education system, or as peripheral visiting scholars will lead to different stances and different levels of commitment.

In terms of interactions with students, constraints included classroom management and inclusive education. The extent of diversity and the presence of students with special educational needs were especially challenging for CICTs who were used to a homogeneous and obedient Chinese student body. University lecturers, for example,

Zhen and Qiao, found teaching young children very different from teaching adults. Issues around classroom management considerably increased the tensions experienced by the CICTs: in China their authority was endorsed by society, whereas, in Britain, they have to earn students' respect.

Another constraint related to teaching resources and curriculum design. For some disciplines, such as traditional Chinese medicine, the lack of systematic and sequential teaching materials resulted in extra teaching preparation. Some language textbooks proved unsuitable for the target student groups.

The last but by no means least of the constraints was the lack of support from the home organization, mentioned in particular in the survey report (Ye, 2014), and detailed in greater depth in Shan's story. Many CICTs, like Shan, were still assuming responsibilities from their home institutes in addition to their teaching commitment on the programme. However, not all of their contributions and achievements during their work overseas were acknowledged on their return. Many CICTs reported feeling discouraged. The need for help with housing was also highlighted, while the experiences of Shan and two other CICTs of visa renewal pointed to a further weakness in the CI program.

9.1.2 Support for professional acculturation

Four themes related to support for the CICTs' professional acculturation emerged from the analysis: observation of practice in the host institutions; social support from host colleagues; beliefs and attitudes.

CICTs acknowledged that observation of local colleagues' teaching helped them with work adjustment. The practice of co-teaching and the TA role relieved the anxiety of

new CICTs, and prepared them with classroom management skills and British teaching methods. CICTs also felt these gains would be beneficial for their future students in China. For example, by observing the geography class, Su realized the potential of including an emotional dimension in teaching and thought of integrating interdisciplinary knowledge into her future work, while Qiao considered that he had developed new skills in teaching and school management.

CICTs also attributed their successful professional adjustment to the support from host school leaders and local colleagues, who appreciated and valued their contribution, generously shared teaching resources and experiences, and gave emotional as well as practical support and advice. As Shan put it, working with the acceptance of and support from the host school, she felt happy no matter how tiring the job was. In contrast, Su was dispirited by the indifference of her host schools. The support she received came mainly from the Chinese community: her CICT peers, and local Chinese immigrants.

For some participants, exposure to new beliefs and values was greatly appreciated though the extent to which exposure to a new education system was perceived as beneficial varied. Some CICTs felt the TA role constrained teacher's competence and performance while others, more open and flexible in their teaching practices, found this role helpful in learning about British classrooms. In a similar vein, many in the group considered British inclusive education as "a point of strength", as reflected, for instance, by focus group participant, Nan. While working with special needs students proved very stressing at the beginning for most CICTs, once they started to understand the UK philosophy of special education, they developed more positive attitudes. For

instance, Su expressed an interest in contributing to the development of Chinese inclusive education.

In short, no two CICTs' overseas work experience is identical. CICTs may reject British ways of teaching, or actively learn through peripheral participation. By identifying the obstacles and opportunities they faced and responded to, this study provides a deeper understanding of the challenges for CICTs as intercultural educators.

9.2 Q2: How does overseas work experience influence CICTs' identity and agency?

In order to unpick my second research question, it is important to consider the CICTs' experience of teaching abroad from two angles: internal and external.

In chapter two, I introduced the social status of English in contemporary China. All of the participants were keenly aware of the symbolic capital of English and the value of learning/working in Anglophone countries. CICTs admitted that instrumental motives and curiosity were the main drivers behind their decision to participate in the CI program. They viewed English primarily as a tool for the development of their career and personal life.

At the same time, the Guoxue revival, the promotion of Confucius Institutes and the increasing importance of Chinese in international communication dispose CICTs, as teachers of Chinese, to ponder their positioning in Chinese society and the world. The participants in my research are an embodiment of educational diplomacy and academic mobility within the wider context of globalization. As such, the negotiation of identity, and especially professional identity, is likely to be a major preoccupation. I will now summarize the three case study participants' accounts of how their overseas

work experience triggered their agency and influenced their understandings of self, otherness and their position in relation to globalization.

Su's impetus for becoming a CICT was her wish to see the world. Her sojourning experience is consistent with what Alred and Byram (2002) called "savoir apprendre/faire", i.e. discovering and acquiring knowledge of the differences, and then utilizing this knowledge in a real setting. She was seen constantly shifting between "insider" and "outsider", "novice" and "expert" so as to maintain her previous identity at the same time as presenting her newly gained intercultural mediator identity. When she felt undervalued by the host schools and restrained by the TA role designated to her, she accepted the identity that the work context was projecting on her in a non-confrontational way, while actively using her intercultural experience to construct a more competent, more respectable self in the virtual community to which she belonged. Qiao's "teacher self" led him to construct the new identity of intercultural mediator but did not halt there. By participating in the host communities, by adjusting and acquiring new skills in English schools and by actively passing newly acquired knowledge to his virtual audience, Qiao constructed a dynamic intercultural mediator identity. In response to his heavy workload, his aspirations to become more linguistically competent took a back seat to his quest for cultural knowledge. As a very experienced traveller, Qiao appeared to be much more socially mindful and pragmatically capable, through exposure to world Englishes and different cultures, fleeting communication with people from the countries he visited, and constant critical reflective thinking. His broadened horizons, together with enhanced self-efficacy and increased independence, were converted into symbolic capital, contributing to the "ideal teacher self" he aimed

to achieve. His "in-group" and "out-group" identity shifts act as agency to reserve his national identity while negotiating his position as a global actor.

Shan emerged as a participant with remarkable resilience in the face of all kinds of adversity: housing, visa, personal security, the overloaded timetable, long commutes and the physical symptoms of home sickness. She was also the participant who most obviously exercised her agency to negotiate a life where her social status and legitimate identity were not recognized. She was stimulated by her research interests to join the program; hence English language improvement and the affirmation of her professional identity were her prime tasks. In contrast with Su and Qiao, Shan's identity negotiation was accomplished not only through her linguistic and cultural capital and her relational agency, but also through the support from her host professional community.

The three case study participants all employed the same coping mechanism – blogging – which served them well to draw on social and emotional support from their friends at home, and to construct a desirable virtual identity when their real identities had been threatened in the host society. The form which this virtual identity and agency took, however, was designed to meet their individual needs. Su gave detailed accounts of socio-cultural differences to build up an intercultural mediator image; Qiao juggled with humour to "bite" and "bond", swiftly switching between the cognitive stance of "Chinese" and "global citizen"; Shan adopted an academic writing style, to present herself as a highly educated intercultural academic.

Their experiences of teaching Chinese in Britain raised awareness of nationality to a level that CICTs would not have experienced in their home countries. Their attachment to national identity was particularly marked. For example, the two directors with prior study experience in Britain were very pleased with the rising social status of Chinese in

the UK and the world. This increased national pride and encouraged CICTs to cling to their national identity. Several participants reported that they had been westernized to some extent, although they were still very Chinese in heart and soul. However, for some CICTs, agency was related specifically to the mission of Chinese culture dissemination: they needed to preserve an element of "Chineseness" consistent with their roles, as director Jing explained. I would argue that the Chinese habitus served as a means to preserve their national identity. It is open to question whether Su and Qiao's exclusive diet of Chinese food or Shan's concern with Fengshui stand in the way of active social immersion and acculturation (Jackson, 2005, 2006a). Irrespective, overseas work experience seems to have a stronger impact on CICTs' ways of doing things, but less on their ways of being.

9.3 Q3: What is the impact on intercultural development and growth?

Participants' oral and written narratives provide perspectives on the attributes of successful work abroad and personal growth.

This research did not test the participants' English language proficiency at repatriation, but all of the CICTs I interviewed claimed their English had improved. They reported greater confidence in using English in an unfamiliar setting and greater familiarity with a range of social settings.

CICTs stressed their change in perspective and awareness of different ways shaped by different cultural frameworks (Bennett, 2004). As my participants reflected, they learned about how others perceive China and, in return, broadened their own perceptions of home. At the same time, they learned about differences in social practices, communication styles, norms and culture-based personal and career

expectations. Teaching in the CI program challenged the stereotypical image of the British which they used to hold, strengthening their awareness of the cultural self and otherness. They realized that every country has its strengths and weaknesses and that no one culture is superior to the other.

Participants reported that they had become more direct, calmer, more optimistic, more efficient, more rational and more independent. Such changes in personal disposition echo O'Reilly's (2006) observations on the transformative potential of travel where challenging encounters encourage tenacity and the ability to cope with the new situation, and the stress-adaptation-growth process enhances self-efficacy (Hampton, 2007; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Y. Kim, 1988). This intercultural transformation and increased self- efficacy are eventually translated into symbolic competence, facilitating a better understanding of self and the world, and changing their attitude towards life. Qiao, for instance, stepped out of his habitual ways of thinking and decided to establish his own school; Shan learned new ways of interacting with people and valued friendship and family time more. Su developed more sympathy for the disabled and became braver and more positive in the face of adversity.

The gains in intercultural competence of the CICTs summarised above encompass the cognitive, behavioural, and affective skills that enable them to interact effectively and appropriately within culturally diverse contexts. These findings are consistent with the previous residence abroad literature.

9.4 Contribution

This research is one of the few studies that examine long-term teaching abroad with a spotlight on individual experience, particularly in relation to the CI program. It offers

insights into individual attributes and contextual elements that impact on the development of symbolic competence and global citizenship. It highlights the complexity of identity and agency.

The findings also contribute to a deeper understanding of transnational mobile academics. They are shaped by of globalization, and at the same time, drive globalization forward by reconstructing themselves whilst creating new spaces of knowledge and understanding, for themselves and others.

This research provides support for poststructuralist perspectives (Pavlenko, 2002; Weedon, 1996) which consider identity as negotiable, shifting, multiple and relational and where identity is revealed by discourse positions (who I am) in interaction with the environment. In this view, individuals exercise agency to challenge the projected positioning (whom others think I am), through the use of discourse (Weedon, 1996) and hence to achieve desired goals (who I want to be).

The findings also highlight the agentive power of capital, resilience, and coping strategies, seeking the meaning of life, humour, and self-mockery in the process of identity construction and acculturation. Compared to the inexperienced student teachers and young study abroad students in previous studies, CICTs manifested stronger self-efficacy and adaptability to foreign environments. Their reflections also throw light on the power relationships in intercultural communication. It is noteworthy that my participants fulfilled expectations that were under their control more readily than expectations that require the support of other parties. For instance, the expectation of learning about English culture was mostly realized, while the hope of making English friends was not. Their personal growth was also seen as more notable than professional gains.

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The study points, too, to the importance of a "community of practice" in professional acculturation from two aspects: the acceptance by established members of a community of practice, which grants the newcomer legitimate access to social and material resources, guidance and opportunities for integration; and the newcomer's self-alignment as a legitimate member of the host community, which helps to overcome feelings of strangeness and exclusion, encouraging more involvement and eventually, acceptance as fully fledged members. This research suggests that the CICTs and the host institutes should share responsibility for the professional acculturation and the development of the program, a development which would also have implications for other international exchange programmes.

In the terms of methodology, this research validates the usefulness of the blog as a data collection tool with the potential to highlight many of the critical touch-points in an individual's experience, particularly in longitudinal research. By the same token, blogging provides those whose voices tend to be unheard, or who have been positioned as disprivileged, unprecedented access to authentic, self-selected and meaningful communication and self-construction (Walker, 2009, p. 35).

9.5 Limitations and direction for future research

The overarching goal of this study was to discover what promotes or hinders CICTs' acculturation in the U.K. and how the overseas experience influences their individual development. The sample was limited. Hence, their storied experiences are not meant to represent all groups teaching abroad. Parallel research conducted in the USA, Canada, or other countries, particularly in less developed countries, may contribute to the study of power relationships in educational diplomacy. It would also be valuable to conduct

follow-up research with the repatriated CICTs, to see the long-term influence on their future career and life path.

The data collected in this research consist mainly of subjective narratives. Due to the geographic constraints associated with participants distributed across the UK, I could not observe classroom teaching. Future research might consider inviting a larger pool of participants, using different research methods and data collection tools such as classroom observation and interviews with British colleagues, to increase the trustworthiness of the findings. As Miller (2003) explained, "One's self-identity is… shaped by other's appraisals of the externalization of inner concepts and beliefs through that same communication" (p. 71) . Hence the inclusion of the local associates may overcome the limitations of first-person narration in other data sources, offering a multi-perspective take on the CICTs' experiences of sojourning.

This research is based on my reinterpretation of the participants' understandings of their experience; hence my reflexivity as a researcher and sojourner, and my participants' reflexivity as professionals working abroad, might have had a subtle impact on the construction of meaning. For these reasons, the conclusions presented in this study are more suggestive than conclusive. Nonetheless, some findings echo previous research while others suggest new areas to explore.

9.6 Implications and recommendations

The findings on acculturation provide a lens through which CI program organizers and stakeholders can understand the challenges CICTs encounter in working abroad. The discussion which follows considers the implications of these findings and makes

recommendations concerning the sustainable development of the CI program and the wellbeing of CICTs.

9.6.1 The programme

Efforts to ensure the sustainability of the programme involve both the organisers in China and the host institutions in the UK.

9.6.1.1 Programme organisers

Future program organisers may wish to pay more attention to housing and visa issues at the pre-departure stage, in order to free CICTs from anxiety and worries. By the same token, numerous researchers warn about the effects of reverse culture shock on repatriates' psychological wellbeing, social readjustment and self-identification (Martin & Harrell, 1996; Szkudlarek, 2010).After returning to China, re-entry guidance should be a matter of the highest priority for programme organizers.

It worth emphasizing here that the transformative learning discussed above (see 9.3) is not simply about changes in pedagogy; first and foremost, it is about educating from a particular worldview, a particular educational philosophy (Taylor, 2008, p. 13). It "may be necessary for one to undergo some form of self-reflection and transformation in order to teach transformation" (Johnson‐Bailey & Alfred, 2006, p. 55). Therefore, the transformative perspective developed from sojourning needs to be reviewed, consolidated and summarized before it sinks into oblivion.

As demonstrated in the present study, the current CICT program focuses on Chinese language and culture but neglects the potential benefits CICTs could bring on their return. Program organizers may wish to consider including critical thinking in their pre-

departure training, and supply repatriation debriefing to help CICTs to maximize the gains achieved through their intercultural experience. Only then can CICTs act on new insights and foster education for global citizenship education, changing the dialectics between global and local, the social and personal.

In terms of length of service, it is noticeable that participants reported discernibly fewer personal and professional challenges in their second year of service. Difficulties usually decreased after the first three months, with adjustment tending to reach comfort level after six to seven months. CICTs on a one year contract, then, are returning to China just after they start to feel fit and ready to contribute. This finding suggests that longer service of at least two years would be in the best interest of both teachers' acculturation and programme development. CICTs need to have realistic expectations about their work and the overseas stay.

9.6.1.2 Host institutions

It is important that the host institutions, for their part, embrace Confucius Institutes as a positive development helping them to prepare to compete in a global economy (Stambach, 2014) rather than as something imposed from above. This requires the efforts of both organisers and host institutions in macro-policy making and micro-coordination flexibility.

The host institutions, should aim to take full advantage of the skills and education background of CICTs. For example, Su, with a master's degree in Geography, could be matched with local geography teachers. CICTs could benefit from in-service training in the UK to enhance their teaching skills at the same time as creating a community of support, to share good practices and forge a sense of commonality and belonging during their stay.

9.6.2 Language teaching and learning

Finally, this research implies for language teaching and learning. The experiences of the CICTs underline the need to embed variations of "world English" into textbook design, using a pragmatic and humanistic approach (Bhowmik, 2015) in teaching, and valuing learners' intercultural communication competency. Learners need to be aware of the power of language in shaping social reality, and learn to be astute observers of nuances in language and culture (Kinginger, 2008). As Bodycott and Walker (2000) note, without a mastery of foreign languages, we can never look into our culture from the outside.

9.7 Conclusion

As director Jing pointed out, teaching abroad is a sacrifice and success is not simply about the academic knowledge, independence, and good communication skills, but also willingness to let go of what we think we know so that we can develop new understandings (Garson, 2005). More than ever, teachers with a global mind set are needed to teach the next generation to respect, work with and learn from the people different from themselves. Teaching abroad provides real world experience and opens a door to discovery; it requires reconsideration of the culturally rooted beliefs on teaching and learning, and offers a valuable opportunity for teacher education and professional development. It is my sincere hope that this study will make a contribution to this exciting field.

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Appendix A: Data Analysis - Main Themes

Initial nodes	Sub-themes	Main themes	Research questions
drive; expectation and goal		motivation	
habit; food; transportation; housing; visa; social practice; social events; holiday and custom; environment; charities; volunteer activities; media and advertising	daily encounter	cultural shock and adjustment	Q1: What promotes and constrains acculturation?
teacher's beliefs, value, practice; inclusive education; English pedagogy; classroom management; job responsibility; work transportation; dress and behavior codes; collegial support; egalitarian working style; adjustments to new work environment; research interests; reflection on curriculum design	professional difference		
attitudes towards and knowledge of Chinese and English cultures and practices; cultural nuances; socio-cultural awareness; self and otherness	self and others	identity and agency	Q2: How does overseas work experience influence CICTs' identity, agency?
travel; life style of travel destination countries; observation and reflection on overseas Chinese and other nationalities;			
English language investment; insider / outsider; social networking; peer support; interaction and socialization	language, community and belonging		
self-awareness; critical evaluation; changes in perspective and practice; achievement; transformative learning		reflection and growth	Q3: What is the impact on intercultural development and growth?

Appendix B1: Interview Participant Information Sheet

University of Reading

Student: Wei Ye
Email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk
Project Supervisors: Prof. Viv Edwards, Dr. Daguo Li
Email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk, d.li@reading.ac.uk

Dear Professor _____,

We are writing to invite you to take part in a research project on Identity changes of Confucius Institute Chinese Teachers (CICTs) in the UK. The research is being conducted as a part of Wei Ye's PhD research, under the supervision of Professor Edwards and Dr Li.

What is the study?

This study aims to explore CICTs' working abroad experience, and how this has impacted personal growth. We hope that the study will provide suggestions for ways forward for those responsible for future international exchange programmes.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

We are particularly interested in CICTs' experience from their arrival to the UK until they return to China. Your assistance of the access to CICTs, your profound knowledge of policies and related issues are crucial to the success of our research project. Therefore, you are invited to take part in this study.

Do I have to take part?

It is totally up to you whether you would like to participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any consequence to you, by contacting Wei Ye, email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

What will happen if I take part?

With your agreement, you will be invited for an interview, sharing your thoughts and experiences of working and living as a CI director in Britain. The interview will last about thirty minutes, at a venue convenient to you. With your consent, the interview will be recorded and transcribed.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

We do not foresee any ethical issues arising from this study. All the information you provide will remain strictly confidential and only be seen by the research team. Your name and individual information will not be identified in any published report resulting from this study. The information about individuals will not be shared with CICTs or any other third party. Participating in this study will not affect your relationship with CICTs in any way.

We anticipate that the findings of this study will be used both to help second language learners to improve their autonomy and cross cultural communication competence and to help those responsible for international exchanges to improve their programs. You may have the research results if you wish when the project was accomplished.

What will happen to the data?

The results of the study will be included in Wei Ye's PhD thesis. We also hope to present the findings at conferences and in academic journals. However, any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used. The records of this study will be stored securely in a locked cabinet and on a password-protected computer. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. During the study, your identity will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to the original information. Pseudonym will be

used to protect the participants' identities. The name of the institute and the location

will be omitted from reports. All research records will be destroyed securely after five

years after the accomplishment of this research.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time and without any repercussions. If you change

your mind after data collection has ended, we will discard your data.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Professor Viv Edwards,

University of Reading; Tel: +44 (0) 118 378 2701, email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please feel free to contact Wei Ye, email:

W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

We do hope and appreciate your participation in this research. If you do, please

complete the attached consent form and return it to Wei Ye. This project has been

reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and

has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the

appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

Wei Ye

Appendix B2: Interview Participant Consent Form

Student: Wei Ye

Email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

Project Supervisors: Prof. Viv Edwards, Dr. Daguo Li

Email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk, d.li@reading.ac.uk

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand the purpose of the project and the requirement of me. All my questions

have been answered.

Name of Participant: _____

Please tick as appropriate:

I consent to take part in the interview.   ☐

I consent for the interview to be recorded.   ☐

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B3: Focus Group Participant Information Sheet

Student: Wei Ye
Email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk
Project Supervisors: Prof. Viv Edwards, Dr. Daguo Li
Email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk, d.li@reading.ac.uk

Dear Participant,

We are writing to invite you to take part in a research project on Identity changes of Confucius Institute Chinese Teachers (CICTs) in the UK. The research is being conducted as a part of Wei Ye's PhD research, under the supervision of Professor Edwards and Dr Li.

What is the study?

This study aims to explore CICTs' working abroad experience, and how this has impacted personal growth. We hope that the study will provide suggestions for ways forward for those responsible for future international exchange programmes.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

We are particularly interested in CICTs' experience from their arrival to the UK until they return to China. Therefore, we seek participants who are currently working in Britain. You are invited to take part in this study as you meet these criteria.

Do I have to take part?

It is totally up to you whether you would like to participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any consequence to you, by contacting Wei Ye, email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

What will happen if I take part?

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With your agreement, you will be invited with other three participants for group discussions, sharing your thoughts and experiences in working and living in Britain. The group discussions will last about forty-five minutes, at a venue convenient to you. With your consent, the group discussion will be recorded and transcribed.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

We do not foresee any ethical issues arising from this study. All the information you provide will remain strictly confidential and only be seen by the research team. Your name and individual information will not be identified in any published report resulting from this study. The information about individuals will not be shared with CI directors or any other third party. Participating in this study will not affect assessment of your performance in any way.

We anticipate that the findings of this study will be used both to help second language learners to improve their autonomy and cross cultural communication competence and to help those responsible for international exchanges to improve their programs. You may have the research results if you wish when the project was accomplished.

What will happen to the data?

The results of the study will be included in Wei Ye's PhD thesis. We also hope to present the findings at conferences and in academic journals. However, any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. During the study, your identity will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to the original information. Pseudonym will be used to protect the participants' identities. The name of

the institute and the location will be omitted from reports. All research records will be destroyed securely after five years after the accomplishment of this research.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time and without any repercussions. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, we will discard your data.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Professor Viv Edwards, University of Reading; Tel: +44 (0) 118 378 2701, email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please feel free to contact Wei Ye, email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

We do hope and appreciate your participation in this research. If you do, please complete the attached consent form and return it to Wei Ye. This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

Wei Ye

Appendix B4: Focus Group Participant Consent Form

Student: Wei Ye
Email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk
Project Supervisors: Prof. Viv Edwards, Dr. Daguo Li
Email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk, d.li@reading.ac.uk

University of **READING**

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand the purpose of the project and the requirement of me. All my questions

have been answered.

Name of Participant: _____

Please tick as appropriate:

I consent to take part in the group discussion.   ☐

I consent for the discussion to be recorded.   ☐

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B5: Blog Participant Information Sheet

Student: Wei Ye
Email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk
Project Supervisors: Prof. Viv Edwards, Dr. Daguo Li
Email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk, d.li@reading.ac.uk

University of Reading

Dear Participant,

We are writing to invite you to take part in a research project on Identity changes of

Confucius Institute Chinese Teachers (CICTs) in the UK. The research is being

conducted as a part of Wei Ye's PhD research, under the supervision of Professor

Edwards and Dr Li.

What is the study?

This study aims to explore CICTs' working abroad experience, and how this has

impacted personal growth. We hope that the study will provide suggestions for ways

forward for those responsible for future international exchange programmes.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

We are particularly interested in CICTs' experience from their arrival to the UK until

they return to China. Therefore, we seek participants who are currently working in

Britain. You are invited to take part in this study as you meet these criteria.

Do I have to take part?

It is totally up to you whether you would like to participate. You may also withdraw

your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any consequence to

you, by contacting Wei Ye, email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

What will happen if I take part?

With your agreement, you will be asked to keep a diary-like blog (QQ space/sina blog or such alike) during your staying in Britain. You may write your blog either in Chinese or in English, according to your preference. Ideally, you will be expected to add one entry at least every two weeks. You may choose to include or exclude photos in your blog. You will be expected to record your experiences and thoughts on daily activities, including work, housing, living and travelling; intercultural encounters, language, culture, socialization, friendships, food, clothing, habits, value, your likes and dislikes and so on. We are also interested in the events you think are important, rewarding or memorable; confusing or disturbing experiences; and any steps you take to enhance your personal development and growth. You might also be invited for a supplementary interview either by phone or instant communication tool (such as QQ or skype) on the questions raised in your accounts. With your consent, some parts of your blog narrations will be translated (if in Chinese) and used as quotations in Wei Ye's PhD thesis. If you include photos in your blog, these will not be used without your consent. Any images or symbols will identify you and link you to the study will be blurred to ensure confidentiality. If there are some parts of your blog you do not wish the researcher to view, you always can use privacy setting to limit access.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

We do not foresee any ethical issues arising from this study. All the information you provide will remain strictly confidential and only be seen by the research team. Your name and individual information will not be identified in any published report resulting from this study. The information about individuals will not be shared with CI directors

or any other third party. Participating in this study will not affect assessment of your performance in any way.

We anticipate that the findings of this study will be used both to help second language learners to improve their autonomy and cross cultural communication competence and to help those responsible for international exchanges to improve their programs. You may have the research results if you wish when the project was accomplished.

What will happen to the data?

The results of the study will be included in Wei Ye's PhD thesis. We also hope to present the findings at conferences and in academic journals. However, any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. During the study, your identity will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to the original information. Pseudonym will be used to protect the participants' identities. The name of the institute and the location will be omitted from reports. All research records will be destroyed securely after five years after the accomplishment of this research.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time and without any repercussions. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, we will discard your data.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Professor Viv Edwards, University of Reading; Tel: +44 (0) 118 378 2701, email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please feel free to contact Wei Ye, email:

W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

We do hope and appreciate your participation in this research. If you do, please complete the attached consent form and return it to Wei Ye. This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

Wei Ye

Appendix B6: Blog Participant Consent Form

Student: Wei Ye

Email: W.Ye@pgr.reading.ac.uk

Project Supervisors: Prof. Viv Edwards, Dr. Daguo Li

Email: v.k.edwards@reading.ac.uk, d.li@reading.ac.uk

University of Reading

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand the purpose of the project and the requirement of me. All my questions have been answered.

Name of Participant: _____

Please tick as appropriate:

I consent to take part in blog study.   ☐

I consent for my blog will be quoted in this research.   ☐

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C：Interview Questions for CI Director

- Would you please tell me about your job? How long have you been working as a director in this CI?

  您能说说您的工作职责吗？您担任中方孔院院长多久了？

- How did you decide to take the CI director post in the UK?

  是什么原因促使您决定来英国担任孔院院长的工作？

- Would you please tell about your experience in the UK?

  您能说说在英国工作的经历吗？

- Do you feel any difference between working in China and in Britain? What's the difference and how do you feel about it?

  您觉得在英国工作和在中国工作有什么不同之处吗？

- Did you come across any difficulty (living, working, etc.) or cultural shock? How did you handle it?

  您在英国的工作生活有没有遇到什么困难？ 是怎么解决的呢？

- Would you tell me the most unforgettable event you had experienced in the UK? Why do you feel so? Can you recall a similar case in China? What is the difference?

  您在英国有没有经历什么特别难忘的事？在国内有没有过类似情况，处理方式有没有不同？

- Do you think your previous (home and abroad) experience has any influence on your current working and living?

  您认为您之前的（国内外）经历对您现在在英国的工作生活有没有影响？

- What does a CI director mean to you?

  孔院院长一职对您意味着什么？

- Do you think you have changed during this period of staying in Britain? What is the change?

  您觉得您在英工作期间有没有发生什么变化？是怎样的变化？

- How do you define yourself now? (More Chinese, more English, global or others?)

  您现在会怎样定义自己？(传统的中国人，还是…)

- If you were a female CI director, would this make your experience in the UK different? Then How?

  您认为性别对担任孔院院长一职，有没有什么影响？

Thank you very much!

非常感谢！

Appendix D：Focus Group Protocol

- 自我简介 （可用化名）Personal background

- 简述之前在国内的工作学习状况 Previous study/work experience

- 是否有海外学习工作经历 Previous experience abroad

- 来英工作的时间，动机 Motivation and objective

- 目前在英的工作任务，住宿情况 Job responsibility and housing in Britain

- 来英之前的想法，期望和现在有何不同

  Expectations, thoughts and goals before and after arrival

- 在英国工作，生活中遇到的问题或困难，又是如何解决的？

  Difficulties and solutions in daily living

- 在英国工作，生活中遇到的有趣或者印象深刻的事情

  Unforgettable or interesting things about job

- 在英国与在中国的工作生活有什么不同？

  Differences of living and working between Britain and China

- 个人成长/转变？

  Personal change/growth

- 对中英两国语言文化，社会，传统等方面的观点有何变化？

  Changes in opinion towards Britain and China (people, language, society,

  culture, etc.)

- 最大的感悟和收获 Achievement and reflection

- 不足和遗憾,希望获得的帮助和支持

  Suggestions for future CICTs and programme organisers