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Leng Hui
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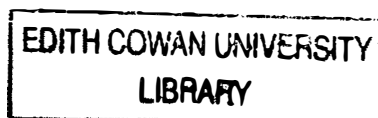
**A Study of Intercultural Discourse between
Mainland Chinese Speakers of English and Anglo-
Australians**

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BA. MA in Applied Linguistics

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Applied Linguistics

Faculty of Community Service, Education, and
Social Sciences
Edith Cowan University, Western Australia

April, 2005



To my mother

Wang Xiujuan

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

Abstract

Intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians is receiving ever-increasing attention in many fields. These fields include intercultural communication, English language teaching, education and business. This study approached the intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians from a cognitive perspective by applying the theoretical framework of cultural linguistics. The intercultural discourse produced by mainland Chinese speakers of English in the context of them interacting with Anglo-Australians was analysed. The analysis was made by employing key concepts such as schemas, cultural schemas, discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals. A body of 39 audio-taped conversations between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians, which ran about 50 hours, was collected according to the research tradition of the ethnography of communication. The data were transcribed and examined with the 'emic' and 'etic' insights provided by volunteer participants and informants. Fifty-five excerpts of these conversations were analysed in line with cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics.

Twenty Chinese discourse scenarios were found to be activated by mainland Chinese speakers of English when they interacted with Anglo-Australians. These activated discourse scenarios were identified according to the principle of saliency and recurrency. That is, salient and recurrent linguistic features that emerged from the discourse which was produced by Chinese participants were used as clues to make reference to their cognitive experience. These 20 discourse scenarios, which are the abstraction of some schematic knowledge that has been accepted by mainland Chinese speakers of English in the study, substantiate three Chinese cultural schemas, namely, the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*, the Chinese cultural schema of *Family* and the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*.

The 20 discourse scenarios were structured by seven culturally-constructed images. These are the image of 'insider', the image of 'outsider'; the image of 'flexible interpersonal boundary'; the image of 'yin-yang balance', the image of 'family hierarchy' the image of 'social hierarchy' and the image of 'mobility up the social ladder'.

These 20 activated discourse scenarios and the three identified Chinese cultural schemas were found to influence the way that Chinese participants interpreted the discourse produced by their Anglo-Australian interactants. They were also found to cause communication gaps between the two interacting parties or cause communication discomfort to one of the parties. However, in the present study, actual miscommunication between the two interacting parties was found to occur less frequently.

This study has two main implications. The first one is for the field of intercultural communication. Analysing intercultural discourse at the level of cultural schemas provides directions for effective intercultural communication and space for negotiation and renegotiation. The second implication is for the field of English language teaching both as a foreign language (EFL) in mainland China and as a second language (ESL) in Australia. Research findings suggest that an acceptance of EFL or ESL students' 'mother culture' could facilitate the development of bi-cultural and bilingual competence.

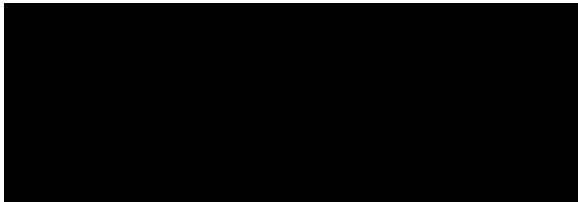
DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
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7 / 7

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my retired principal supervisor, Emeritus Professor Ian Malcolm, for his immense and constant support, understanding, correction and encouragement throughout my study at Edith Cowan University. I am also grateful to my principal supervisor Associate Professor Graham McKay for providing me with valuable suggestions and comments.

Special thanks also go to Dr Judith Rochecousete who provided me with her insights as a linguist and her expertise as a writing consultant for the first five chapters.

I also would like to extend my gratitude to the editors and the anonymous reviewers of my three accepted or published articles. These articles were out of the early version of the thesis. Constructive suggestions from the reviewers and corrections from the editors all contribute to this final version of the thesis.

I would also like to thank staff members in the Graduate School of Edith Cowan University. They gave me timely, efficient and effective instructions as far as the completion of the thesis was concerned.

Other staff members at Edith Cowan University such as Mr. Paul Halfpenny, Post Graduate Information Officer, Mr. Bill Noble, Higher Degrees Officer, Ms. Anita Kreffl, International Project Officer, Mr. Robin Trembath, Security Officer and Mr. Terry Geddes, Security Officer, all provided me with their kindness which assisted the completion of my thesis.

I would very much like to express my heart-felt gratitude to all the volunteers who participated in this research. I would also like to thank those informants who provided me with their insights. Without their generosity, this thesis would have never been written.

I also acknowledge the financial support that I received from the Commonwealth Government of Australia, through the International Students Research Scholarship (IPRS), to conduct this study. Without IPRS there is no doubt that this research would have been affected in many ways.

Finally, I am immensely indebted to my family. My dearest mother, to whom this thesis is dedicated, left me when I just started my MA in Singapore. Her love and her face motivate the beginning and the ending of my PhD thesis. My father, my sister, my sister-

in-law, my brother, my brother-in-law, my dearest boy and my soul mate sisters and brothers all deserve my deepest gratitude.

Table of Contents

<i>USE OF THESIS</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Declaration</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>ix</i>
CHAPTER ONE	1
<i>Introduction to the study</i>	1
1.1 Background of the study	1
1.2 Rationale of the study: Intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians.....	5
1.3 Objectives and research questions of the study	8
1.4 Significance of the study.....	9
1.5 Organisation of the chapters	10
CHAPTER TWO	12
<i>Review of the literature: Major approaches influencing studying Chinese ways of communication in intercultural situations</i>	12
2.1 Introduction to the chapter	12
2.2 Background of intercultural communication study.....	12
2.3 Interactional sociolinguistic approach to intercultural discourse analysis	14
2.3.1 Contextual presuppositions	15
2.3.2 Situated inferences	16
2.3.3 Contextualisation cues	16
2.3.4 Research method of interactional sociolinguistics	18
2.3.5 Applying the interactional sociolinguistic approach to the Chinese context.....	19
2.4 Cross-cultural speech-act approach.....	22
2.5 Cultural scripts - natural semantic metalanguage.....	29
2.6 A discourse approach	41
2.7 Discussion: Relevance of the four approaches to the present study.....	44
CHAPTER THREE	48
<i>Theoretical framework for the study</i>	48
3.1 Introduction to the chapter	48
3.2 Theories of schemas and cultural schemas	48
3.2.1 Genesis of schema theory	49

3.2.2 Schemas in cognitive psychology and computer science.....	50
3.2.3 Schemas in cognitive anthropology	52
3.2.4 Schemas in cognitive linguistics	56
3.2.5 Schemas in cultural linguistics.....	60
3.3 Imagery.....	62
3.4 World view.....	66
3.5 Discourse scenarios in cultural linguistics	67
3.5.1 Comparing discourse scenarios and other related concepts	72
3.5.2 The application of discourse scenarios	75
3.6 Discourse indexicals in cultural linguistics	76
3.7 Summary.....	78
CHAPTER FOUR.....	80
<i>Research Design and Methodology.....</i>	<i>80</i>
4.1 Introduction to the chapter	80
4.2 Research traditions of ethnography of communication, sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology.....	81
4.3 Research traditions of EOC and the present study	89
4.4 Identifying cultural schemas in cognitive anthropology.....	92
4.4.1 Identifying an American folk model of mind	94
4.4.2 Identifying American problem-solving models	95
4.4.3 Identifying American explanatory systems.....	96
4.4.4 Identifying American models of marriage	97
4.4.5 Identifying Ecuadorian cultural models of illness.....	98
4.5 Identifying cultural schemas in cultural linguistics.....	99
4.5.1 Identifying Australian Aboriginal cultural schemas through systematic etic-emic investigations	100
4.5.2 Identifying Australian Aboriginal cultural schemas through word association-interpretation..	102
4.5.3 Identifying agency schemas in Tagalog.....	103
4.6 Methods and procedures for identifying and analysing Chinese cultural schemas...105	
4.7 Pilot studies.....	108
4.8 Selection of participants	109
4.9 Data collection	110
4.10 Coding system.....	112
4.11 Summary.....	113
CHAPTER FIVE	115
<i>Data analysis (1): Chinese Cultural Schema of Harmony.....</i>	<i>115</i>
5.1 Introduction to the chapter	115
5.2 Emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of Harmony.....	116
5.2.1 Chinese world view of <i>tian ren he yi</i> ‘unity of Heaven and men’ and <i>he</i> ‘harmony’	117
5.2.2 <i>Yin-yang</i> balance and <i>he</i> ‘harmony’	119
5.2.3 Daoism and <i>he</i> ‘harmony’	120
5.2.4 Confucianism and <i>he</i> ‘harmony’	122

5.2.5 Chinese Buddhism Chan Sect (禅宗 ‘Zen’ and <i>he</i> ‘harmony’)	129
5.3 Linguistic instantiations of the Harmony schema in Chinese language	130
5.4 Data analysis	132
5.5 Summary and discussion	183
CHAPTER SIX	189
<i>Data Analysis (2): Chinese Cultural Schema of Family</i>	189
6.1 Introduction to the chapter	189
6.2 Emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of Family	190
6.2.1 Chinese agriculture and the Chinese <i>Family</i> schema	190
6.2.2 The Chinese tradition of joint families and the Chinese Family schema	193
6.2.3 Confucianism and the Chinese Family schema	194
6.3 Instantiations of the Family schema in Chinese language	199
6.3.1 Folk art, literature and <i>Family</i> schema instantiations	199
6.3.2 Chinese phrases, idioms, common sayings and <i>Family</i> schema instantiations	201
6.3.3 Forms of address and <i>Family</i> schema instantiations	204
6.3.4 Greetings and <i>Family</i> schema instantiations	206
6.3.5 Chinese discourse and <i>Family</i> schema instantiations	208
6.4 Data analysis	213
6.5 Summary and discussion	247
CHAPTER SEVEN	251
<i>Data analysis (3): Chinese Cultural Schema of Education</i>	251
7.1 Introduction to the chapter	251
7.2 Emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of Education	252
7.2.1 Traditional Chinese education and the Chinese cultural schema of <i>Education</i>	253
7.2.2 Teacher roles, status and the Chinese cultural schema of <i>Education</i>	260
7.2.3 Examinations and the Chinese cultural schema of <i>Education</i>	263
7.3 Instantiations of the Education schema in Chinese language	267
7.4 Data analysis	271
7.5 Summary and discussion	299
CHAPTER EIGHT	305
<i>Concluding discussion, limitations and implications</i>	305
8.1 Introduction to the chapter	305
8.2 A fundamental feature of Chinese discourse scenarios	305
8.3 Relationships between the three identified Chinese cultural schemas	308
8.4 Limitations	309
8.5 Implications for intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians	310
8.6 Implications for English language teaching as a foreign language (EFL) in mainland China and English language teaching as a second language (ESL) in Australia	313

8.7 Suggestions for further research	315
<i>References</i>	317
<i>Appendix I: Glossary of Chinese discourse scenarios.....</i>	329
<i>Appendix II: A list of excerpts and discourse scenarios.....</i>	330

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to the study

1.1 Background of the study

“Intercultural communication has since long [sic] become an everyday experience for more and more people in the world” (Knapp, Enninger and Knapp-Potthoff, 1987: v). People from different cultural backgrounds are propelled by various reasons to engage in communication of different degrees of intimacy, depending on whether their contact is fleeting or deepening. In fact, increasing heterogeneity of interacting parties and overt barriers of negotiation observed in today’s world reinforce Tannen’s (1986: 43) claim that “the fate of the earth depends on cross-cultural communication”.

Culture, in this study, is regarded as a complex knowledge system. This view is in line with Knapp and Knapp-Potthoff (1987: 4) who maintain that culture is “a more abstract shared knowledge of members of social communities, frequently on the level of the geographical and political unit of a nation”. They also relate the shared knowledge to:

the world views, value orientations, norms, manners and customs, orientations towards social and interpersonal relations, preferred styles of thinking and arguing etc. that are taken for granted by the members of a social community and that more generally explain the occurrence of and give meaning to these surface phenomena. (Knapp and Knapp-Potthoff, 1987: 4)

The view of culture as a knowledge system does not preclude the legitimacy of other views of culture. It is understood that *culture* is in itself a super-general term. The over 200 definitions observed by Kroeber and Kluckhohn in 1952 (cited in Knapp and Knapp-Potthoff, 1987: 4) might be regarded as a culture of ‘culture definitions’. The opposing view to that of culture as a knowledge system may be related to the argument that no matter how small the social community in which a culture is nurtured, different people, due to biological and cognitive differences, can never share exactly the same amount of

knowledge with the same degree of profundity. The counter-argument in this study is that individual discrepancies in knowledge, nevertheless, should not lead to cultural cynicism or cultural nihilism. As Schiffrin (1994: 139) contends, “not every aspect of culture – not every part of our cognitive ‘blue-print’ – needs to be shared (i.e. known) by all members”.

Within the cognitive study of linguistic meanings there are two trends of thought emphasising either the ‘centripetal’ or the ‘centrifugal’ properties of culture (Quinn, 1997: 137). The centripetal trend places primary attention on the ‘sharedness’ of culture, whereas the centrifugal trend emphasizes the ‘non-sharedness’ of culture. Instead of taking sides with either trend, this study, like many other research studies, acknowledges the legitimacy of both trends of thought, viewing culture as a dynamic and *more or less* shared system of conceptualisations (Strauss and Quinn, 1997: 4). Individual discrepancies are accounted for in this study as evidence of the distributed representation of cultural knowledge (Sharifian, 2003).

Acknowledging the legitimacy of discrepancies within the cultural knowledge of members of a community, this study, again like many other research studies, relies on a certain degree of abstraction and idealisation. For instance, Knapp and Knapp-Potthoff (1987: 5) observe that “the description and definition of a particular culture require abstraction and idealisation”. This indeed leads to the dilemma facing most, if not all, cultural studies. On the one hand, the purpose of analysing intercultural communication is to discuss and discover cultural differences so as to promote effective communication or mitigate communication difficulties. On the other hand, due to the generalisation inherent in any scientific research, which occurs even if controlled to the maximum degree possible, the analysis of intercultural communication is likely to lead to another generalisation, unless the analysis is judicious. This research dilemma has also been observed by Gao (1995: 35). The solution to the dilemma, as is maintained in this study, is, rather than to deny and avoid the minimum degree of idealisation necessary for conducting research, to limit the generalisation by providing detailed accounts of background variables. In this way, readers can make their own informed decisions regarding the degree of relevance of the data analysis.

Despite the diversity of opinion in cultural studies, it is maintained in this study that the distinctiveness of one culture relative to another surfaces when the lack of it, or

the breaching of it, causes intercultural difficulties of different degrees and in various forms. In this case, it seems that real life experience of in-depth intercultural communication, rather than temporary contact only, is of vital importance for the appreciation of the distinctiveness of culture. Nonetheless, it is equally misleading to think that the lack of 'sharedness' of culture is perilous. A proper range of cultural differences in intercultural communication leads to the profound understanding of varieties and supplements of cultural systems which may be negotiated on the basis of willingness when the intercultural communication difficulties appear.

It is maintained here that the culturally-bound, although not necessarily culturally-determined, conceptual systems (which are represented both explicitly and implicitly), together with different linguistic structures and paralinguistic features, are the major factors influencing effective intercultural communication. A significantly large amount of literature on intercultural communication from such fields as anthropology, psychology, sociology and social psychology bears out the argument that people, despite using the same linguistic code, often encounter communication difficulties due to the different cultural systems involved in the process of intercultural communication.

In the general field of intercultural communication, studies have revealed that Chinese cultural values and norms greatly influence the effects of intercultural communication (both spoken and written) between Chinese speakers of English and native-English speakers (e.g. Chen, 1990; Gao, 1999; Gao, 1998; Gu, 1985, 1990; Lu, 2001; Ma, 1997; Pan, 1994; Scollon and Scollon, 1995 [2001]; Shih, 1986; Spencer-Oatey, Ng, and Li, 2000; Spencer-Oatey and Xing, 2000; Wierzbicka, 1996; Xu, 1987; Young, 1982; 1994; Zhu 2000). These studies investigate Chinese speakers of English in many parts of the world. These scholars recognise that the concept of face, as well as its sub-concepts of saving face and losing face in particular, is directly responsible for the reported indirect, circular way of speaking in most speech acts such as giving/responding to compliments, making/rejecting requests and asking for/giving a favour. They also contend that the Chinese cultural knowledge that "an individual's social behaviour ought to live up to the expectations of respectfulness, modesty, attitudinal warmth and refinement" (Gu, 1990: 245) gives rise to the addressee-oriented model of Chinese politeness (Pan, 1994) when engaged in interaction. Besides, the Chinese norm of

avoiding confrontations leads to the seeking of convergence (Young, 1982; 1994) when argumentation is involved.

Moreover, culture-loaded vocabulary (Xu, 1987), culture-specific topic-comment information structure (Young, 1982; 1994), culturally-nurtured speech acts and Chinese patterns of thought (Kaplan 1966) have been claimed to cause misunderstanding and miscommunication between Chinese and native English speakers. For instance, when giving an explanation for their own points of view, Chinese are seen by native-English speakers as “inscrutable” (Young 1994:1) because they seldom reveal their thoughts at the beginning which often leads native-English listeners to confusion and perplexity. “The image of the inscrutable Chinese runs deep in Western imagination. The inscrutable Chinese, i.e. mysterious, unfathomable, inexplicable, is a powerful image because it represents the many aspects of Chinese culture which Westerners find unaccountable and difficult to understand” (Young 1994:1). To a great extent, this perceived inscrutability has a negative effect on intercultural communication.

The literature on intercultural communication has particularly documented many forms of miscommunication between Chinese and Americans, Chinese and British, and Chinese and Australians. “Cross-cultural communication between Chinese and Americans often runs into trouble. Some factors which block communication lie in culture-governed structures of language” (Lu 2001: 214). Spencer-Oatey and Xing (2002: 278) have also recorded the bitter experience of the Head of a Chinese delegation to Britain:

“According to our home customs and protocols, speech is delivered on the basis of reciprocity. He [the British chairman] has made his speech and I am expected to say something ... But he had finished his speech, and he didn’t give me the opportunity, and they each introduced themselves, wasn’t this clearly implied that they do look down upon us Chinese?”

There are at least two cultural reasons that caused the Head of the Chinese delegation feel upset. Firstly, the breaching of the Chinese politeness principle of reciprocity suggested to him that he was not treated equal to the British chairman. The Head of a delegation to a

foreign country enjoys a top social position in China. The person should be respected for their seniority according to his position in the hierarchy. However, the deprivation of his speech, which was expected by himself and by all his delegate colleagues according to Chinese culture, made the Head lose face in 'public'. His face was further endangered by the British chairman who did not make a point of introducing him to the British business partners present. The British routine of self-introduction might be interpreted by the Head as a 'cold' manner of welcoming the Chinese guests. According to Chinese cultural knowledge, leaders (such as the Head) should be introduced with titles and positions to highlight their conspicuous rank in the social hierarchy so as to stress the importance of the leader.

Briefly, when the Chinese Head was not treated as a Chinese leader by the British, his Chinese cultural knowledge led him to misinterpret the British intention and thought that he was being discriminated against by the British partners. In other words, in the context of intercultural communication, miscommunication is likely to take place when meanings are underpinned by different cultural schemas or are constructed according to different discourse scenarios. The notion of cultural schemas and the notion of discourse scenarios will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

1.2 Rationale of the study: Intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians

Intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians inside and outside the Australian continent happens frequently. Taking the communication within the Australian continent for instance, three percent of the Australian population claim Chinese ancestry and the most widely spoken foreign language in Australia today is a dialect of Chinese (Howard, 24/10/2003). Since the Chinese Reform and Open-door Policy in 1978, many mainland Chinese have taken the opportunity to come to Australia to work and study. For example, it is estimated that there are 34,000 mainland Chinese students studying in Australia (Howard, 24/10/2003).

Miscommunication between mainland Chinese and Anglo Australians occurs with contact. Chen (1990: 289 - 301) documented his own experiences as a fluent English language speaker, who, nevertheless, encountered some intercultural difficulties in Australia due to his initial lack of Australian cultural knowledge. Chen (1990: 256) holds

that lack of Australian cultural knowledge may lead Chinese speakers of English to “use Chinese norms of behaviour to interpret foreign people’s thinking, behaviour and even appearance”. This ‘short-cut’ culture transfer, however, has caused him “numerous problems” (Chen, 1990: 6).

Intercultural problems between mainland Chinese students and Anglo-Australians are not limited to Chen’s experiences. Malcolm (1995b) observed some incongruities that mainland Chinese students, like many other students of non-English speaking background, experienced with their lecturers at Edith Cowan University. A tearful Chinese student told Malcolm (1995: ii):

“My [Australian] lecturer doesn’t care if I pass or fail,” she said. “I came here from China at my own expense because I want to learn. But he treats me as a nuisance when I try to ask questions in class. He avoids me. I try to catch him after the class and he is always in a hurry... and he won’t help me!”

The student’s account reveals a number of cultural gaps between her and her Australian lecturer (Leng, in press-b). For instance, the Chinese student expected her lecturer to be more caring, helping her during and after class, whereas the Australian lecturer might have expected her to be an independent learner who should be able to find the answer herself rather than asking questions all the time. Besides, the Australian lecturer may not have necessarily been avoiding the Chinese student or treating her as a nuisance, he may just have a tight schedule. Furthermore, the ambition of passing or excelling in examinations that the Chinese student had might not be appreciated by the Australian lecturer, who might treat examination as a part of the learning process.

Miscommunication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians is not only reflected in some of the difficulties that Chinese have experienced, but also in some of the complaints that Anglo-Australians have made. Gao (1998) observed that some White Australians think that some Chinese immigrants in Australia have made them uncomfortable. “Some Chinese are perceived to be rude and [showing a] lack of manners in Australia. Not only [do] they speak louder in public, say, on buses,

among themselves, but also [they] are not used to [the] English way of being polite” (1998: 8). The underlying reason for mainland Chinese behaving as described, according to Gao (1998:1), is that Chinese students, although staying in Australia, still live in their own culture in terms of keeping the language habits, values and customs and self-identity.

As a result of the cultural gaps and miscommunications, being isolated or opting to isolate themselves from the mainstream Australian society is one of the common experiences known among many mainland Chinese immigrants. In one of her interviews with Chinese women in Australia, Ryan (2003: 150) recorded a mainland Chinese immigrant revealing her helplessness at not being accepted by the Anglo-Australian society:

I think it's due ... to ... Australians not giving people of ethnic backgrounds an opportunity to be an Australian, to be accepted as an Australian. They are still looked at differently so that we feel 'well if they are not going to look at us like an Australian, then maybe we're not Australian, and so we keep to our own [Chinese] group”.

Frequent miscommunication is prone to produce cultural stereotypes. Liu (2004: 69) conducted a content analysis of 857 articles in four Australian newspapers (*The Australian, The Age, The Daily Telegraph, and The Courier-Mail*) from January to December, 2002 to examine the social categorisation of Chinese ethnic groups in Australian and non-Australian contexts. Her results indicate that ordinary Chinese people were primarily portrayed by means of this mass medium as “illegal immigrants” and the Chinese Government as “authoritarian leaders”. To most Australian readers, the possible effects of frequent exposure to these categories are believed by Liu to create or reinforce the stereotype of the Chinese as “‘problem people’ who either have problems or cause problems for Australian society” (Liu, 2004: 76).

The above observations indicate that miscommunication and communication discomfort of various degrees in different contexts involving mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australian English speakers are not infrequent. This indication, to a large extent, is in line with that of Malcolm and McGregor (1993) who found that “communication was

often impeded by cultural factors and somewhat less often by linguistic factors” (Malcolm, 1995: ii). Their research was conducted to investigate interactions between native Australian public service officers and non-native English speaker clients.

It is acknowledged that there might have been more studies carried out by researchers with respect to the influence of Chinese culture on intercultural communication between mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australian English speakers. It is also understood that all the relevant studies are significant in raising an awareness of difficulties in intercultural communication between Chinese and native English speakers in general, therefore, these studies contribute much to the explanation of the sources of tension when miscommunication arises. Nevertheless, to the researcher’s best knowledge, as far as systematically investigating the influence of Chinese cultural knowledge on the intercultural discourse produced by mainland Chinese speakers of English with Anglo-Australians is concerned, there has not been developed a framework that sustains ethnographic research of verbal communication. The cognitive approach to intercultural communication based on cultural linguistics (Palmer, 1996) that the present study follows is viewed as enabling consistent inquiries into the intercultural discourse produced by mainland Chinese speakers of English when interacting with Anglo-Australians. This approach brings to the attention of researchers in the field conceptual factors which are inextricably involved in the process of intercultural communication.

1.3 Objectives and research questions of the study

It is recognised that intercultural communication can be studied by a myriad of approaches and from many different perspectives. This study focuses on intercultural discourse, rather than other means of intercultural communication. It is also recognised that intercultural discourse can be analysed within numerous theoretical frameworks. This study, however, aims to investigate the Chinese cultural influence on the English discourse produced by some mainland Chinese speakers of English when they interact with Anglo-Australians in Western Australia (WA). The framework applied is cultural linguistics. Cultural linguistics alludes to a cognitive perspective of intercultural discourse analysis in the sense that intercultural discourse might be processed in terms of cultural schemas.

It is useful to outline the position that the present study holds with regard to the relationship between language, culture and cognition, before introducing the research questions. This study holds that culture plays a pivotal role in the development of linguistic meanings which are mediated by cultural cognition (D'Andrade, 1989: 795) in general and by cultural categories and cultural schemas in particular (Palmer, 1996). As Dirven and Verspoor (1998: 20) observe, “[l]anguage resides, not in dictionaries, but in the minds of the speakers of that language”. The speakers of any language reside in a world where their understanding of the world is largely shaped by life experiences. These life experiences and bodily experiences give rise to the formation of image-schemas (Lakoff, 1988: 121 - 135). Research has shown that many bodily-experiences are culturally specific (e. g. Palmer, 2001a: 3, 2001b: 1; Yu, 2003a, 2003b, 2004), and that the presupposed universal image schemas “may be incorporated into cultural models” (Palmer, 2001a: 3). In other words, linguistic meanings have to be cultural meanings at the same time. That is, some culture-specific meanings are ready to be understood by people of another culture who have similar world experiences, and other culture-specific meanings might require the understanding of cultural conceptualisations before they can be fully understood by the people of another culture who do not have similar world experiences.

Due to the intimate relationship between language, culture and cognition, it is maintained in this study that studies investigating intercultural communication should tackle these three aspects equally. Without any one of them, the study might be suspected of being intellectually constrained. Therefore, this study will answer the following two research questions:

- What distinctive Chinese cultural schemas are exhibited in the English spoken by some mainland Chinese in Western Australia?
- How do these distinctive Chinese cultural schemas affect intercultural communication?

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is of significance to the fields of general intercultural communication and cultural linguistics. As far as intercultural communication is concerned, it explores

culture-related intercultural communication issues on the level of cultural schemas which may or may not be shared by Anglo-Australians and mainland Chinese English speakers. To the best knowledge of the researcher, such schemas have not been addressed adequately by other scholars in the field. Thus, the present research will contribute to an in-depth interpretation of intercultural communication from perspective different from those of sociolinguistics, pragmatics, contrastive rhetoric or communication studies. In terms of application, this study will enhance understanding of communication and negotiation processes involving mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australians. This in turn will enhance the teaching of English as a foreign language in China or of English as a second language in Australia to overseas or immigrant students. The approach could also be extended to other cultures which differ from mainstream Anglo-Australian culture in similar ways.

With regard to cultural linguistics, the present study extends the application of the theory to the intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians. To the researcher's best knowledge, key concepts of cultural linguistics such as discourse scenarios are systematically applied to intercultural communication for the first time. The integration of the research methodologies of the ethnography of communication and cognitive anthropology, which is adopted for the present study, might also be regarded as a contribution to the field of cultural linguistics since this field has not described its research methods explicitly in most work reported hitherto. Moreover, the identification of three key Chinese cultural schemas because of their significant influence on the Chinese speakers of English, namely, the Chinese *Family* schema, the Chinese *Harmony* schema and the Chinese *Education* schema, is another contribution to cultural linguistics. The identification of some instantiated Chinese discourse scenarios relative to the three key schemas facilitates the understanding of Chinese ways of English speaking. These identified Chinese discourse scenarios might be seen as a contribution to the field of discourse analysis.

1.5 Organisation of the chapters

The present study consists of eight chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction to the study, and specifies the rationale, research objectives and research questions of the study. It also points out the significance of the study. Chapter Two is a review of the four major

approaches influencing the study of Chinese ways of communication in intercultural situations. Chapter Three presents cultural linguistics as the theoretical framework of the present study. This chapter reviews three key concepts of cultural linguistics that have a bearing on the analysis of the data, namely, schemas, discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals.

Chapter Four explicates the research methodology employed in collecting and analysing the data of the study. The research methodology of the present study integrates the research traditions of ethnography of communication and cognitive anthropology. A detailed review of the origins of ethnography of communication and its closely related fields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology is also provided in this chapter. Methods of identifying cultural schemas in the fields of cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics are also examined in Chapter Four. In addition, this chapter includes a description of the procedures in data collection, selection of participants, coding system, and pilot studies.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven provide the body of data analysis and research findings. Each chapter accommodates some discourse scenarios activated by the Chinese participants and one of the three identified cultural schemas.

Finally, Chapter Eight includes the concluding discussion which summarises the fundamental feature of activated Chinese discourse scenarios and discusses the relationship between the three identified Chinese cultural schemas. It also includes limitations of the study, implications for intercultural communication and English language teaching as a foreign language in China and as a second language in Australia and suggestion for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the literature: Major approaches influencing studying Chinese ways of communication in intercultural situations

2.1 Introduction to the chapter

This chapter reviews four major approaches that have a bearing on studying Chinese ways of speaking in the context of intercultural communication as a preamble to introducing cultural linguistics as the theoretical framework for the present study in the next chapter. It starts with the background to the study of intercultural communication, and then reviews the four approaches respectively. Following each approach, studies investigating Chinese ways of speaking in intercultural situations are reviewed. Since the present study investigates the influences of Chinese cultural schemas on the intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians, the research reviewed is limited to that relating to qualitative analyses of Chinese culture. Excluded in this chapter are studies such as Chen (1993) on politeness strategies between American English and Chinese speakers and Bresnahan, Cai and Rivers (1994) on cultural similarities and differences in strategies of refusal, since such studies analyse the data quantitatively.

Following these sections there is a critical discussion leading to the rationale for opting to cultural linguistics to provide the theoretical framework for the present study.

2.2 Background of intercultural communication study

The study of intercultural communication has attracted the attention of the academics since the 1960s when large-scale intercultural communication occurred extensively in relation to international business, migration and tourism. Moreover, globalisation in the last two decades or so has accelerated interaction among people of different cultures, and English has become lingua franca or an international language, depending on the linguistic background of that speaks have.

According to Hart II (1996), intercultural communication study started with Hall in the 1950s with his book *The Silent Language* (1959). Dirven and Putz (1993: 144) note that the first peak in the study of intercultural communication took place around the 1960s to the 1970s. In the 1960s, studies of intercultural communication in the fields of anthropology, sociology and psychology began to place language in the context of society and culture. The main focus of these studies was on contrasting cultures and the effects that culture has on communication. The research interest in cultural differences, according to Dirven and Putz (1993: 144), has been attributed to the American anthropologist Franz Boas whose contribution to a number of disciplines will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

The second peak in the study of intercultural communication (including interethnic communication), according to Dirven and Putz (1993: 145), started in the late 1970s and/or 1980s and has lasted until the present. This long-lasting focus has been promoted not only by an increase in business, study, travel, and a migration across national borders, but also by many scholars and researchers who have been studying issues in intercultural communication. Some classic works are those of Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989); Brown and Levinson (1978), Clyne (1994), Goffman (1981), Gumperz, (1982a, 1982b, 1992b), Gumperz and Hymes (1972; 1986), Hellinger and Ammon (1996), Hymes (1964, 1974), Knapp, Enninger and Knapp-Potthoff (1987), Levinson (1979, 1992), Scollon and Scollon (1981, 1983, 1995), Tannen (1981a, 1985, 1993) and Wierzbicka (1985, 1991, 1992, 1994a, 1994b, 1996).

The common concern that this large body of literature has is the recognition of the diversity of cultures and subcultures. These studies also seek to find solutions to intercultural miscommunication or to communication difficulties between cultures and ethnic groups. However, apart from this common concern, different researchers in this area have discussed the issue of intercultural communication from different perspectives, and have drawn conclusions from different kinds of data that they could have access to. The following four sections review four major approaches which have been applied to studying Chinese ways of speaking in intercultural situations involving Chinese speakers of English (including overseas Chinese people) and Anglo-English native speakers.

Included in each section are also studies conducted with that particular approach as the framework.

2.3 Interactional sociolinguistic approach to intercultural discourse analysis

Interactional sociolinguistics is an interpretive approach to discourse analyse that is embedded in the general discipline of sociolinguistics. A review of sociolinguistics in terms of its research traditions will be provided in Chapter Four. Interactional linguistics developed from the disciplines of anthropology, sociology and linguistics (Schiffrin, 1994: 97). The early development of interactional sociolinguistics was informed largely by the work of anthropologist Gumperz (e.g. 1971, 1972, 1982a) and sociologist Goffman (e.g.1963, 1967, 1981). Much published in the area of interactional sociolinguistics is concerned with the possibility that people, although sharing the grammatical knowledge of a language, may frequently contextualise and interpret messages differently (Schiffrin, 1994: 97).

Like sociolinguistics, interactional sociolinguistics also features the concept of speech community which leads to the recognition that language and meaning are socially and culturally relative (Schiffrin, 1994: 97). Gumperz defines a speech community as “any human aggregate characterised by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage” (Gumperz, 1971: 114). Interactional sociolinguistics deems it necessary for conversation analysts as well as conversation participants to have the knowledge of the context. Context, in this sense, is what is called by Levinson (2003: 31) the “macro” context of language, culture, society and social identity (e.g. Gumperz, 1971; 1982b). Gumperz’s interest in the macro-context is derived from his research on code-switching, inter-ethnic communication and the influence of social networks on language use. This research interest is in parallel with, if not overridden by, his interest in the micro-context of contextualisation cues.

Related to the macro-context of language use, Gumperz is observed by Dil (1971: xiii – xiv) to be “interested less in language per se than in language as it is used by people belonging to different social groups through particular networks of relationships, and above all with how these relationships are reflected in verbal behaviour”. As a linguistic anthropologist and sociolinguist, Gumperz has also been interested in linguistic varieties,

language functions and communicative competence, which are key concepts in sociolinguistics.

The seminal ideas in interactional sociolinguistics are informed by the understanding that “verbal interaction is a social process in which utterances are selected in accordance with socially recognised norms and expectations” (Gumperz, 1971: 114), and that “the effect of interaction on language structure is ... valid” (Gumperz, 1972: 4). The concern with socially-constructed interaction and its effect on language has led Gumperz to appeal for a theory of interactional sociolinguistics. He states that:

There is a need for a sociolinguistic theory which accounts for the communicative functions of linguistic variability and for its relation to speakers' goals without reference to untestable functionalist assumptions about conformity or nonconformance to closed systems of norms. Since speaking is interacting, such a theory must ultimately draw its basic postulates from what we know about interaction.
(Gumperz, 1982a: 29)

Briefly, interactional sociolinguistics provides a theory of verbal communication which “integrates what we know about grammar, cultural and interaction conventions into a single overall framework of concepts and analytical procedure” (Gumperz, 1982a: 4). In order to deal with “the participants' ongoing process of interpretation in conversation and on what it is that enables them to perceive and interpret particular constellations of cues in reacting to others and pursuing their communicative ends”, besides the shared knowledge of linguistic codes (Gumperz, 1982a: 4), interactional sociolinguistics makes use of three key concepts, namely, contextual presuppositions, situated inferences and contextualisation cues. However, roughly speaking, contextual presuppositions and situated inferences are both included in contextualisation cues (Schiffrin, 1994: 100).

2.3.1 Contextual presuppositions

Contextual presuppositions “are a type of assumed background knowledge that allows the inferencing of two levels of meaning” (Schiffrin, 1994: 100). The first level of meaning is related to the type of communicative activity, and the second type of meaning is related

to the intended illocutionary act by the speaker. These two types of meaning, according to Schiffrin (1994), are themselves related. Regarding “the activity type”, Gumperz (1982a: 131) provides a cognitive understanding of it. He uses the term to mean “a dynamic process ... [which] simply constrains interpretations by channelling inferences so as to *foreground* or make relevant certain aspects of background knowledge and to underplay others” (italics original. 1982a: 131). To a certain extent, activity types are related to schemas (Gumperz, 1992c: 42 - 44) whose multilayer meanings are reviewed in Chapter Three. However, Gumperz mainly makes use of activity types for interpretation channelling and maintains that “activity frames basically reflect conventionalised or stereotypical notions of interpersonal relationship” (1992c: 45).

2.3.2 Situated inferences

Situated inferences are “the situated or context-bound process of interpretation, by means of which participants in an exchange access other’s intentions, and on which they base their responses” (Gumperz, 1982a: 153). Gumperz makes explicit the means of accessing situated inferences. The means is by “retriev[ing] relevant background knowledge” (1992b: 306). The objective of situated inference is to seek “the subtle and often unnoticed ways in which linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge interact in verbal encounters to bring about communicative outcomes...” (1992b: 302).

Gumperz (1996: 374 - 406) also holds that situated inferences are relative to language and culture, since “all understanding is framed understanding, [which] rests on contingent inferences made with respect to presuppositions” (Gumperz, 1992c: 43). Presuppositions are culturally-constructed (Palmer, 1996). During the process of inference-based interpreting, conversation participants not only rely on propositional content and grammar for meaning inferences, but also on verbal signs and non-verbal signs, culturally specific background knowledge and generalised world knowledge. Thus, to a large extent, the elements that contribute to meaning inferences are culturally-bound.

2.3.3 Contextualisation cues

Contextualisation cues are central to Gumperz’s current research program (Levinson, 2003: 31). During the interaction process, the speaker projects and signals contextual presuppositions to engage the listener in the conversation and to imply the speaker’s

intended meanings. The signs or cues that the listener ‘picks up’ in the interaction, such as prosody or paralinguistic features, are what Gumperz (1984) calls contextualisation cues.

Contextualisation cues, according to Gumperz (1982a: 131), are “constellations of surface features of message form [by which] speakers signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is to be understood and *how* each sentence relates to what precedes or follows” (*italics original*). Gumperz’s ideas on contextualisation cues have been applied by Auer (1992: 29 - 35), among others, who summarises five properties of semiotic contextualisation cues:

- Redundancy of coding and co-occurrence of cues,
- Non-referential character of contextualisation cues,
- Contrastive and inherent meaning potentials of cues,
- Non-arbitrariness and conventionalisation of cues, and
- Double-indexing of contexts via a single cue.

Gumperz (1996: 379) argues that contextualisation cues, as verbal signalling mechanisms, typically operate at the levels of

- 1) prosody, which includes accent and intonation,
- 2) tempo, rhythm, pausing, overlapping and latching,
- 3) pitch shifting, and
- 4) code-switching.

Gumperz (1982a: 131) maintains that contextualisation cues are context-dependent, since “the meanings of contextualisation cues are implicit. They are not usually talked about out of context”. In this sense, contextualisation cues are similar to discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1987).

Levinson (2003: 3) has recently provided some contexts for understanding contextualisation cues. One of the contexts is the “utterances [which] can carry their contexts with them”. Relating to the utterance-context, Levinson includes both formal

properties and content properties of the cues in the categorisation of Gumperz's contextualisation cues. The formal properties of the contextualisation cue in Levinson's categories are compatible with those in Gumperz's (1996) list, however, the content properties of contextualisation cues, which are only referred to by Gumperz sporadically, are given equal emphasis by Levinson. With respect to the content properties of contextualisation cues, Levinson (2003: 4-7) distinguishes between propositional and non-propositional contextualisation cues. The propositional cues are schematic cues such as 1) " 'out of awareness' background features, [which] are context- invocative", 2) "the tendency to invoke holistic bodies of assumptions (contextual 'frames' which then play a role in the interpretation of the utterance", and 3) " 'cued' [contents, which are a] large dose of inferential reconstruction". In addition, the non-propositional cues are "affective, rhetorical, social or metalinguistic" (2003: 5). The content properties of Levinson's contextualisation cues might be regarded as parallel to what Gumperz (1996: 379) calls "non-verbal meta-linguistic signs" in contextualisation cues.

Notably, contextualisation cues occur either consciously or less consciously, as "habitually used" means of expression (Gumperz, 1982a: 131). It merits mentioning that if unintended contextualisation cues are perceived and inferred by the listener, the listener is likely to (mis)perceive and (mis)interpret the speaker, and miscommunication occurs.

2.3.4 Research method of interactional sociolinguistics

The research method employed by interactional sociolinguistics seeks to specify "indexically grounded interpretations of communicative intent" (Gumperz, 1996: 375) which can be regarded as integral to the broader framework of ethnographic investigations. In particular, there are three procedures for analysing discourse in the interactional sociolinguistic approach. These three procedures are all rooted in the research tradition that Gumperz introduced as a linguistic anthropologist. Firstly, the data are collected ethnographically (Gumperz, 1982a: 134). Secondly, the audio-recorded data are played to different groups of "judges" (Gumperz, 1982a: 138), among whom some share and others do not share the participants' background (Gumperz, 1982a: 136). For this procedure, each piece of recorded data is listened to by judges (Gumperz, 1982a: 138) twice. The first time it is heard in its entirety and the second time more slowly with frequent pauses. The judges answer questions relating to the speakers' intentions and to

the interpretation processes of the listeners. More questions are asked to induce judges to relate their judgements to the data. The aim of the procedure, according to Gumperz (1982a: 137), is to “test the analyst’s hypotheses”. The third procedure involves a series of elicitation questions, aiming to “recover native speakers’ perceptual and inferential processes” (Gumperz, 1982a: 137). The responses resulting from these elicitation questions are used as the foundations for making “hypotheses about the actual cues processed and the paradigmatic range of alternatives” (Gumperz, 1982a: 137).

The above research procedures are designed to avoid pre-constructed analysis by the researcher. The overall goal of the three research procedures is to “relate interpretations to identifiable features of message form, to identify chains of inferences, not to judge the absolute truth value of particular assessments” (Gumperz, 1982a: 137).

2.3.5 Applying the interactional sociolinguistic approach to the Chinese context

The interactional sociolinguistic approach to discourse analysis has been significant and influential. It shifts the attention of conversational analysis away from turn-by-turn examination on the sequential order of speech exchanges towards situated discursive practice. Secondly, as a sub-discipline of sociolinguistics, the interactional sociolinguistic approach does not take data from linguistically homogeneous groups as the objects of the research, since such data do not reflect the modern industrial society where heterogeneity, both linguistically and culturally, is the norm. Thus, the interactional sociolinguistic approach recognises contextualisation of interaction, and stresses that conversations are governed by social norms which specify participant roles, rights and duties to speak, appropriate topics, appropriate ways of speaking and appropriate ways of introducing information. Accordingly, a successful interaction is a matter of speaker-listener co-ordination involving the rhythmic interchange of both verbal and non-verbal contextualisation cues and conversational inferences, which Gumperz (1982a) calls collectively *discourse strategies*. To a large extent, Gumperz attributes conversation break-down to the breaking of conversation rhythm, shift of content and cues, or a mismatch between content and cues. He also assumes that interpreting a speaker’s intention rests on socially constructed knowledge of the content and goal of the encounter (1992b).

Interactional sociolinguistics provides profound insights leading to the understanding that one of the reasons for miscommunication between intercultural/interethnic participants is the different inferential processes of contextualisation cues, since they are related to different cultural background knowledge. Cultural specific meta-communicative strategies and contextualisation cues, if misinterpreted or not treated with tolerance by different cultures, may lead to stereotypes of certain language groups and ethnic groups, which may in turn lead to social and ethnic discrimination (Gumperz, 1982a).

Among the many scholars who have conducted research in line with interactional sociolinguistics, Linda Young is most related to the present research. Young (1982) employs “culture-specific notions of acceptable discourse strategies” (1982: 73) to analyse some recorded discussions by a group of Chinese businessmen who manage divisions of a Hong Kong business corporation. Her data (1982) also include talks given by Chinese from mainland China visiting America. The Chinese culturally acceptable discourse strategies that Young (1982) refers to are the recurrent and systematic patterns of information organisation. These patterns of information organisation illustrate “a Chinese preference for the steady unravelling and building-up of information before arriving at the important message” (Young, 1982: 77).

According to Young (1982, 1994), these Chinese culturally acceptable discourse strategies are related to the sentence type of topic-comment grammatical relationship (Chao, 1968; Li & Thompson, 1976). Half of the Chinese utterances are observed by Chao (1968: 83, cited in Young, 1982: 73) as the topic-comment type. For instance, Li and Thompson (1976: 479 cited in Young, 1982: 73) analyse the following sentence as:

Huang se de tu-di dafen zui heshi
Yellow color rel.[relational] clause marker soil manure most suitable
THE YELLOW SOIL (topic), manure is most suitable

In the above sentence, the topic (the yellow soil) is regarded by Young, after Chao (1968, cited in Young, 1982: 74), as the old information, whereas the comment (manure is most suitable) as the new or significant information (Young, 1982: 74). Young, in line with Li

and Thompson (1976), maintains that in the topic-comment grammatical relationship, “the topic is definite, selectionally independent of the verb, sets the framework for the predication and occurs in sentence-initial position” (Young, 1982: 74; 1994: 69).

Most Chinese topic-comment sentences are complex clauses. That is, “Chinese ... has subordinate clauses that set the evaluative framework for the main clause. The appearance of these subordinate clauses is in the order prescribed for the topic of the topic-comment utterance” (Young, 1982: 74). Some paired Chinese connectives, such as *because ... so/therefore; although ... but; if ... then*, construct complex clauses with the subordinate clause preceding the main clause. Semantically, these complex clauses resemble the topic-comment sentence type in the sense that both complex clauses and topic-comment sentences are structured by the pattern of information organisation where old information precedes new or significant information.

According to Young (1982: 75), Chinese discourse is the extension of Chinese complex clauses. In Chinese discourse, information is organised with the semantic structure of supporting ideas first followed by main ideas in the rest of the discourse. In particular, the Chinese explaining, justifying and persuading discourses are patterned after the causal (such as ‘*because*’, ‘*since*’ and ‘*so*’, ‘*therefore*’), the conditional (such as ‘*if*’ and ‘*then*’) and the concessive (such as ‘*although*’, ‘*though*’ and ‘*but*’, ‘*yet*’) clauses (Young, 1982: 75). Young provides the following example of the English discourse produced by a Chinese businessman. Small capitals are the mark of the subordinate clause/topic, and italics are of the main clause/comment:

BECAUSE MOST OF OUR RAW MATERIALS ARE COMING FROM JAPAN AND ()
THIS YEAR IS GOING UP AND UP AND UH IT’S NOT REALLY I THINK AN
INCREASE IN PRICE BUT UH WE LOSE A LOT IN EXCHANGE RATE AND
SECONDLY I UNDERSTAND WE’VE SPENT A LOT OF MONEY IN TV AD LAST
YEAR. *So, in that case I would like to suggest here: chop half of the budget
in TV ads and spend a little money on Mad magazine.* (Young, 1982: 76)

Young maintains that the topic-comment relationship embedded in such discourse as above “form[s]one distinguishing characteristic of Chinese that contrasts it with English”

(Young, 1994: 67 – 68). This Chinese discursal phenomenon is “systematic and conventional Chinese ways of generating information rather than bad English or idiosyncratic examples” (Young, 1994: 67).

In terms of research methods, Young (1982) is also congruent with interactional sociolinguistics. Like Gumperz (1982a: 136), Young uses judges who may or may not share the cultural background of the participants. The strikingly different reactions from the two groups of judges to the same data demonstrate that the contextualisation cues of the Chinese topic-comment format can be interpreted differently or cross-culturally. While a Chinese judge holds that “[t]his Chinese speech style is more open-minded, less biased, not constrictive as the American style” (Young, 1982: 83), the native-English judges expressed the view that “[t]he main point was initially lost on them because it lay buried in a mass of information” (Young, 1982: 79). The native-English judges were also confused because of “a lack of understanding of how the important information was highlighted” (Young, 1982: 79).

Young (1994), in her later work, extends her analysis of Chinese discourse strategies from the topic-comment information organisation structure to “indepth cultural analysis (supplemented with philosophical insights)” (Young, 1994:19). Chinese world views, beliefs and value systems are applied to the Chinese communicative behaviours of “deceptive causes” (p. 28), “missing links” (p. 66), “backwardly speaking” (p. 88), “effacing talk” (p.137) and “mistaking turns” (p. 168). Young (1994) provides thorough analyses of her collected data to illuminate the meaning of these intriguing descriptive terms. Roughly speaking, all these terms are used by Young to mean that Chinese speakers often have their ways of saying which are not understood by Westerners. In other words, Young’s studies (1982, 1994) reveal that Chinese culture in general, the principles of Chinese speech patterns, Chinese discourse expectations and Chinese modes of interpretation survive in the English discourse produced by Chinese speakers of English.

2.4 Cross-cultural speech-act approach

Since a number of studies on comparing Chinese speech acts with English speech acts make reference to the cross-cultural speech act realisation project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989), a review of CCSARP is provided first in this section.

Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) attempted to determine whether or not, and in what degree, speech acts are universal in nature or whether they are culture- and language-specific. They investigated the realisation of the two speech acts of request and apology among 1946 informants across seven languages (i.e., American English, Australian English, British English, Canadian French, Danish, German and Hebrew). These two speech acts are face-threatening speech acts (Brown and Levinson, 1978) which embody different practices with respect to language and culture. The studies conducted within CCSARP were regarded as the first studies in cross-cultural pragmatics (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989).

The method used in this project was to administer questionnaires, using a discourse-completion test (DCT) which was a set of 16 semi-controlled questions eliciting eight requests and eight apologies from informants in 16 situations. All the situations were designed to represent every day encounters which were familiar to the student informants. Among these were requesting a room-mate to clean up the mess in the kitchen that he/she had made the night before, and a professor apologising for not finishing reading a paper and returning it as promised.

With respect to the speech act of request, CCSARP revealed that, firstly, the majority of informants use conventionally *indirect strategies* for making requests, but there were cross-cultural and cross-language differences in achieving this pragmatic function. Secondly, culturally specific influences were revealed on levels of request *directness* or the amount and type of request modification; and thirdly, situational factors were found to interact strongly with cultural factors. That is, informants varied their strategies in making the request according to situations (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989). Thus it showed that although a strategy regarding the two speech acts may be available across languages, it may not be pragmatically equivalent. In other words, as Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989: 150) conclude:

...the cross-cultural differences that emerged represent a gradient phenomenon rather than categorical differences. All the languages make full use of the requestive repertoire consisting of direct and

indirect strategies, but they do so with varying frequency, subject to intervening contextual variables.

With respect to the speech act of making an apology, CCSARP found a higher degree of agreement across languages and cultures at the global level. That is, at the global level it “did not exhibit significant differences in strategy selection” (Olshtain 1989: 171). However, the situational variables of offence severity, the social distance and social power between interlocutors were found to affect apology strategies.

CCSARP warned against a generalised model that would account for the complexity of the variables of culture, language context and speech act situations. Rather, they recognised the need to test the notion that speech act strategies carry culturally specific meanings for members of different cultures.

In the context of comparing the Chinese speech act of making requests with the same English speech act, a number of Chinese and non-Chinese scholars have conducted studies exploring the speech act both in oral and written forms. In terms of oral requests, Zhang (1995) adapted the method used by CCARSP, and administered a DCT questionnaire to 30 native Mandarin Chinese speakers studying in America. Zhang extended the number of situations to 12 and the data were analysed according to the CCARSP coding system.

Zhang provides a catalogue of Chinese requestive strategies which can be used as a reference for contrastive analysis between Chinese learners of English and English learners of Chinese. Zhang also points out that “[a]lthough imperative/Want statement + tag is structurally similar between English and Chinese, it encodes different tones, force, and politeness values. In Chinese, it is soft, tentative, and polite, while in English, it is quite direct and less polite” (Zhang, 1995: 67).

Another study of the Chinese speech act of oral requests has been conducted by Gao (1999). Gao used the same scale of requests classified by CCARSP (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper 1989: 275) to analyse the linguistic features of the speech act realisation in Chinese utterances. Gao found that Chinese apply an array of strategies for making requests, and among them “Chinese finds imperatives the most proper and efficient way of making a request” (Gao, 1999: 85-86). Gao’s finding indicates that “Chinese does not fit into the universal category of conventionally indirect requests

claimed by CCSARP” (1999: 86). For instance, regarding the use of ‘hedged performatives’, Gao maintains that “[i]n English, hedged performatives are used to soften the bare requests with performative verbs used in order to show politeness. However, in Chinese, this practice has more the effect of showing uncertainty and necessity than politeness” (Gao, 1999: 77). Thus Gao’s study reinforces the finding of Zhang (1995) that many of the same linguistic structures for the realisation of the same speech act of request may convey different implicatures and different degrees of imposition between Chinese and English.

Gao (1999) also points out the inadequacy of CCSARP due to its “distinct Western bias” (Gao, 1999: 73). All the seven languages under investigation (except for Hebrew) are either Germanic or Romance, and all the informants involved in the study are either from Western culture or from a culture heavily influenced by Western culture.

Gao’s contrastive study is significant by pointing out that the universal grid of directness and indirectness might be subject to generalisation and stereotypes. However, there is no information given about the Chinese data that she used for the study and the utterances in the data do not show the context in which the requests are made.

The cross-cultural study of the speech act of request also investigates written requests. Kirkpatrick (1991) finds that Mandarin Chinese speakers, when writing letters to the China Section of Radio Australia to make requests, “prefer to preface a request with the reasons ... [and] preface the reasons for request with a preamble that functions as facework” (1991: 183). The underlying sequence in the Chinese letters of request follows the pattern of BECAUSE-THEREFORE, which is underpinned by the request-letter schema of salutation, preamble (facework), reasons, and then the request.

In terms of the linguistic form of the Chinese request *per se*, Kirkpatrick (1991: 197) finds that “the requests are generally direct; few downtoners or softeners are used”. This finding confirms Gao (1999) and the criterion of the judgement in Kirkpatrick is along the same polar dichotomy of ‘directness’ or ‘indirectness’ as also applied by CCSARP. However, in terms of the Chinese request-letter schema, Kirkpatrick (1991) finds that it is not the direct linguistic form that makes some letters impolite (according to his native Chinese speaker consultants’ evaluation). It is the breach of the Chinese request-letter schema that contributes to the impoliteness. In other words, placing

requests clearly at the beginning of the letter is generally regarded by Chinese letter writers and his Chinese consultants as impolite. Kirkpatrick (1991: 188) thus holds that, for the purpose of studying the speech act of request, “[i]t is not enough to try to elicit what a speaker would say in response to some cue, as in Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989)”.

Zhu also studies the Chinese speech act of making requests in the written form, but in Chinese sales letters (1997, 2003-4) and Chinese *tong zhi* (通知 ‘circulars’) (1999). Based on her study of the structural moves of Chinese sales letters, Zhu (2000: 473) finds that the well-known patterns of text organisation of linearity and circularity identified by Kaplan (1966) “may not be sufficient to reflect the overall features of the genres involved”. Zhu (2003-4: 6) makes a distinction between three types of written request genres. These are: *xiaxing* (下行 ‘superior writing to subordinate’), *pingxing* (平行 ‘equals writing to each other’) and *shangxing* (上行 ‘subordinate writing to superior’). Zhu thus maintains that the Chinese request-letter genre which is appropriate for the *shangxing* ‘subordinate writing to superior’ category may not be appropriate for the *pingxing* ‘equals writing to each other’ and for the *xiaxing* ‘superior writing to subordinate’ categories. According to Zhu (2003-4: 6), the written requests in Kirkpatrick’s (1991) data belong to *shangxing* ‘subordinate writing to superior’ category. The written requests in her sales letters belong to *pingxing* ‘equals writing to each other’ category. Requests in *tong zhi* ‘circulars’ which are like orders made by superior to subordinate are *xiaxing* ‘superior writing to subordinate’ category.

Zhu’s three types of written request genres is significant in restraining overgeneralisation in the analysis of the speech act of making requests and the distinction could also be applied to the similar studies in the oral form. It merits mentioning, however, that since the distinction is made on the basis of social hierarchical orders of the superior, the equal and the inferior, the distinction might have been interpreted in its narrow sense. It is maintained in this study that the hierarchical orders should be conceptualised with flexibility, since the hierarchical orders can be affected by other factors, due to the multiple roles that speakers play in their communities.

Of note is the fact that among the four studies by Zhang (1995), Gao (1999), Kirkpatrick (1991) and Zhu (2003-4), only Kirkpatrick’s study addresses intercultural

communication. It involves Chinese communicating with the staff members of Radio Australia. However, it is not known whether the Chinese letter writers regarded the staff members as Australians who speak Mandarin Chinese (like the researcher Kirkpatrick) or as ethnic Chinese who work for the China Section of Radio Australia.

Zhang (1995), Gao (1999) and Zhu (2003-4) are relevant to the present study. Although the speech acts of making requests are realised between members of the same culture (i.e. Chinese), the researchers conduct the study with the research purpose of comparison between the realisation of the Chinese speech act and the realisation of the English speech act.

A study by Kasper and Zhang (1995) on cross-cultural pragmatics was conducted in the context of intercultural communication. Their study involved 21 American advanced learners of Chinese at the University of Hawaii. Participants recalled their experiences of interacting with Chinese speakers in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan or elsewhere as a foreigner during a 30 – 50 minute interview. Kasper and Zhang mainly investigated five speech acts: making requests, refusing requests, responding to compliments, refusing invitations or offers, and thanking or expressing appreciation, and other themes such as terms of address and topics for conversation.

With respect to the Chinese speech act of making requests, Kasper and Zhang's (1995: 8) participants noted that "Chinese requests can be both direct and indirect". As far as the direct requests are concerned, direct requests made by some Chinese to the American learners for exchanging money made the American learners "wonder if they [the Chinese and the American learners] became friends simply because the Chinese saw this [as a] potential benefit for themselves". Some American learners also found it fruitless to make direct requests in Chinese bureaucratic settings or in public. With regard to indirect requests made by Chinese speakers, some American learners found it hard to work out what the Chinese speaker actually wanted. The American learners also found that, when they make a request in Chinese, it was more efficient "to be self-effacing and act in a calculated way to get what you want" (Kasper and Zhang, 1995: 9).

With respect to the Chinese speech act of refusing requests, which normally requires the recipient to say "yes" when they really mean "no" (Kasper and Zhang, 1995: 6), some American learners of Chinese either took the response literally, which made

Chinese speakers appear “surprised and puzzled” (p. 7). Misunderstandings also occurred to some American learners of Chinese who refused requests. For example, requests made to the American learners such as to give a lecture, are “an invitation, a compliment and an honour” (p. 7) by Chinese criteria. An American learner in the study reported that “[t]he more he declined ... the more escalated became the request” (p. 7). “Eventually, the [American] student became upset and remembered the experience with an uneasy feeling” (p. 7).

With regard to the Chinese speech act of responding to compliments, which normally requires the recipient to deny the praise and denigrate him/herself, many American learners reported feeling uncomfortable with denigrating themselves in a compliment situation (Kasper and Zhang, 1995: 5). Other misunderstandings relating to responding to compliments also occurred. For instance, the Chinese self-denigration as a commonplace response to an American learner puzzled the American learner, since her honest praise was always flatly turned down by the Chinese recipient.

The Chinese speech act of refusing invitations or offers is normally related to the Chinese cultural principle of balance (Gu, 1990: 255) and the cultural knowledge of attitudinal warmth (Gu, 1990: 239). Many American learners of Chinese in Kasper and Zhang’s study reported difficulties with using this speech act appropriately, since “the result of their ritual refusals was sometimes less successful than expected” (Kasper and Zhang, 1995: 5). The American learners also found that it was “almost impossible to refuse offers” (p. 6) and one student reported that “no one would take his ‘no’ for an answer” (p. 6).

Misunderstandings also occurred when the American learners used the Chinese speech act of thanking or expressing gratitude which normally does not require the explicit verbal expression of ‘thank you’ in Chinese. In fact, a ‘thank you’ is regarded by Chinese speakers as a distance maker among Chinese family members or friends (Kasper and Zhang, 1995: 8; Ye, 2003). Some American learners found that whilst “Chinese people always scold their foreign friends for saying ‘thank you’ and ‘sorry’ too often” (Kasper and Zhang, 1995: 8), they feel that “it was psychologically frustrating not to say ‘thank you’, when they really wanted to” (p. 8).

Briefly, the above five studies conducted under the general approach of cross-cultural speech acts illustrate that Chinese speech acts, which are underpinned by the Chinese value systems and Chinese politeness principles, diverge from their English counterparts. These studies are insightful in revealing the sources of miscommunication between Chinese speakers of English and Anglo English native speakers, and also between American speakers of Chinese and Mandarin speakers.

2.5 Cultural scripts - natural semantic metalanguage

Chinese speech acts are also investigated by Wierzbicka (1996). Wierzbicka employs the notion of cultural scripts, which will also be cross-reviewed in Section 3.3.1, with natural semantic metalanguage (NSM) to explore cross-cultural pragmatics. NSM has been developed by Wierzbicka and her colleagues for about three decades (e.g. Goddard, 1989a, 1989b; Wierzbicka, 1972, 1980, 1985, 1988, 1991, 1992). It is a system which uses “simple and intuitively understandable sentences in natural language” (Wierzbicka, 1991: 7) to code a small number of core, basic or universal meanings which are known as semantic primes.

One of the reasons that Wierzbicka developed NSM was her objection to the ethnocentrism which she sees as connected to cross-cultural pragmatics (1985: 145 - 146). She claims that “[a]s long as it is widely assumed that English conventional routines reflect what is ‘ordinary’, ‘normal’, ‘natural’ and ‘logical’, the prospects for cultural understanding between immigrants and the Anglo-Celtic population are not particularly bright” (1985: 176).

The study of pragmatics in NSM is intimately related to semantics, as suggested by the title of the book *Cross-cultural pragmatics: The semantics of human interaction* (1991). This position is also revealed in Wierzbicka’s proposal that semantics is the key to cross-cultural pragmatics (1991: 453). Wierzbicka reiterates that NSM “is a method for revealing and stating ... meanings in a clear, simple, and rigorous way” (1991: 453), and “allows us to portray and compare culture-specific attitudes, assumptions, and norms from a neutral, culture-independent point of view” (1996: 313 – 314). Therefore, Wierzbicka flouts the classic ‘direct’-‘indirect’ polarisation or degrees of directness for the evaluation of speech acts. She claims that “[t]he terms ‘directness’ and ‘indirectness’

are unhelpful, because they prevent the detection of the different cultural scripts involved and obscure the values associated with them” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 318 – 319)

As far as comparing the Chinese and English speech acts are concerned, Wierzbicka bases her analysis of the comparison on Shih’s study (1986) of conversational politeness. Shih analyses the data of Taiwan Chinese and Anglo-American English while Wierzbicka (1996: 326) “sharpens these observations” with NSM. She analyses the speech act of request in depth by distinguishing four types of speech act of request, which are making positive and negative requests, asking for a big favour and refusing requests. She also touches upon the speech acts of offering and the speech act of complimenting in her contrastive study.

With regard to the comparison of the speech act of making a request, like other studies of Chinese speech acts, Wierzbicka also focuses on the use of imperatives in the two languages. She draws on cultural scripts and NSM to elucidate the different degrees of readiness that are embodied in the use of imperatives in the two languages. In Chinese, according to Wierzbicka’s interpretation of Shih’s study (1986), the cultural script is that “in close personal relationships an imperative (perhaps with some additional ‘courtesy’ phrase comparable to *please*) is regarded as more appropriate” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 320). By contrast, in English, the cultural script for requests “encourages speakers to ensure that the addressee will not feel his or her personal autonomy threatened, and to emphasise that the addressee’s future actions are unpredictable and are not being taken for granted” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 319). In NSM, the Chinese speech act of requests is coded as

(Script 1) [Numbering and underlining added for the sake of comparison]

- 1 when I want someone to do something for me
- 2 I can’t always say something like this to this person:
- 3 “I want you to do something for me
- 4 I think you will do it because of this”
- 5 I can say this
- 6 if I think something like this about this person:
- 7 “I feel something good towards this person,

8 this person knows this,
9 this person feels something good towards me,
10 I know this” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 320)

In NSM, the Anglo-American English speech act of requests is coded by Wierzbicka as

(Script 2)

1 when I want someone to do something for me
2 I can’t always say something like this to this person:
3 “I want you to do something for me
4 I think you will do it because of this”
5 It is always good to say something like this:
6 “I want you to do something for me
7 I don’t know whether you will do it” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 320)

The difference between the two realisations of the speech act, according to the two cultural scripts, is that Chinese speakers take an addressee-focused approach. This approach is evident in some parts of Script 1 such as “if I think something like this about this person” (Line 6), “I feel something good towards this person” (Line 7), “this person knows this” (Line 8), and “this person feels something good towards me” (Line 9), whereas the Anglo-American approach involves “the absolute, generalised nature of [the] ... link [between the ‘requestive’ and the ‘ignorative’ components, which are illustrated in] ‘It is *always* good to say something like this’ ... [I don’t know whether you will do it]” (italics original. Wierzbicka, 1996: 320). Such a link in Chinese is “more restricted” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 320), that is, Chinese speakers seldom associate ‘requestive’ with ‘ignorative’. Thus imperatives are more readily accepted by Chinese speakers.

Based on Shih again, Wierzbicka uses the following NSM to elucidate the general Chinese cultural script which underlies the cultural knowledge that “the primary

strategies used to make a difficult request in Mandarin are off-record strategies” (Shih, 1986: 150, cited in Wierzbicka, 1996: 321).

(Script 3)

1 when I think something like this:
2 “this person is doing something (X)
3 this is bad for me
4 I don’t want this person to do this”
5 it is good not to say this to this person
6 if I say this to this person
7 this person will feel something bad because of this
8 I can say something else
9 if I say something else, this person will not feel something bad (Wierzbicka, 1996:
 322 – 323)

The Anglo-American cultural script that underlies the American “indirect on-record strategies” (Shih, 1986: 150, cited in Wierzbicka, 1996: 321) when making a negative request is the cultural knowledge that “the important thing is to ‘assert oneself’ by expressing, clearly and unambiguously, one’s thoughts and one’s wants, while at the same time showing respect for the addressee’s autonomy” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 323). This cultural script is coded by (Wierzbicka) as

(Script 4)

1 when I think something like this of a person:
2 “this person is doing something (X)
3 this is bad for me
4 I don’t want this person to do this”
5 I can’t say something like this to this person:
6 “I don’t want you to do it

7 I think that you will not do it because of this”
8 I can say something like this:
9 “when you do this, it is bad for me
10 if you can not do it, I want you not to do it”
11 it is good to say something like this at the same time:
12 “I don’t want you to feel something bad because of this
13 I want to know whether you can not do it” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 325)

Comparing the two scripts, the Chinese cultural script underlying the indirect off-record strategies that Chinese employ to deal with negative requests also includes an addressee-focused approach. This is traced in some parts of Script 3, such as “It is good not to say this to this person” (Line 5), “if I say this to this person” (Line 6), “this person will feel something bad because of this” (Line 7) and “if I say something else, this person will not feel something bad” (Line 9).

Script 4 indicates that the Anglo-Americans take an ‘autonomy-observation’ approach, respecting for one’s own rights and the other person’s rights. The self-autonomy is shown in “when you do this, it is bad for me (Line 9) and “if you can not do it, I want you not to do it (Line 10), and the other-autonomy is shown in “if you can not do it, I want you not to do it” (Line 10), “I don’t want you to feel something bad because of this (Line 12), and “I want to know whether you can not do it” (Line 13).

Regarding the speech act of requesting a big favour, such as borrowing a large amount of money, based on Shih (1986), Wierzbicka’s NSM illustrates that the Chinese cultural script underlies “the frequent use in Chinese of the phrase *bu hao yi-sz* ‘feel embarrassed to (say or do something)’” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 334). The script is coded as

(Script 5)

1 when I want to say something like this to someone:
2 “I want you to do something for me”
3 it is often good to say something like this at the same time:
4 “I don’t know whether you will do it”

5 if I think that this person may not want to do it
6 it is good to say something like this at the same time:
7 “I feel something bad because I say this” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 334)

By this cultural script, Wierzbicka attempts to demonstrate that such a negative request makes the Chinese speaker feel bad because of “the awareness that once a request is made it may not be easy for the addressee to refuse it (no matter how reluctant he or she may be to comply with it)” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 335). Notably, in Script 5 Wierzbicka uses the semantic prime “often” (Line 3) to indicate that the obligation of saying *bu hao yi-sz* ‘feel embarrassed to [say or do something]’ is not absolute, leaving the flexibility of variations depending on some specific contexts.

The cultural script for Anglo-Americans asking for a big favour represents the cultural knowledge that “the important thing is to make sure that the addressee’s autonomy (including the freedom to say ‘no’ is properly acknowledged” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 335). Below is the script.

(Script 6)

1 when I want to say something like this to someone:
2 “I want you to do something for me”
3 it is always good to say something like this at the same time:
4 “I don’t know whether you will do it”
5 if I think that this person may not want to do it
6 it is good to say something like this at the same time:
7 “I don’t know whether you can do it
8 I don’t want you to feel something bad because I say this” (Wierzbicka,
1996: 334)

In the American English script, ‘other-autonomy’ is evident from “I don’t know whether you can do it” (Line 7) and “I don’t want you to feel something bad because I say this”

(Line 8). The obligation to say these is absolute as in the use of the semantic prime “always” in Line 3.

The Chinese script shows that the Chinese speaker is prescribed to feel bad or embarrassed, which is shown in “I feel something bad because I say this” (Line 7, Script 5), whereas the Anglo-Americans are not self-critical or worried for the other person. However, in the Anglo-American script, concern is for the addressee, e.g. “I don’t want you to feel something bad because I say this” (Line 8, Script 6). Thus, Anglo-Americans take an addressee-focused approach, so that ‘self-autonomy’ and ‘other-autonomy’ can both be well-observed.

Regarding the speech act of rejecting requests in the two languages, Shih (1986: 158) observes that Chinese speakers frequently have difficulties in rejecting requests, because “[a] person in Chinese society always has to take other people’s feelings into account in social interaction. Comparatively speaking, Chinese have much less freedom to say ‘No’ to a request than Americans” (cited in Wierzbicka, 1996: 329). The obligation to say ‘yes’ in Chinese is nearly absolute even if the person cannot, or will not carry out the request. In NSM, this Chinese cultural knowledge is coded as

(Script 7)

- 1 when someone says something like this to me:
- 2 “I want you to do something for me”
- 3 if I don’t want to do it
- 4 I can’t say something like this to this person: “I don’t want to do it”
- 5 I can’t say something like this: “I will not do it”
- 6 sometimes it is good to say something like this: “I will do it”
- 7 I can say this as if I wanted to say:
- 8 “I don’t want to do it”
- 9 if I say it like this, this person will know
- 10 that I don’t want to do it (Wierzbicka, 1996: 327 - 328)

This script is adapted from Wierzbicka (1996: 327 - 328), where she provides a ‘head’ script and a host of possible ‘tail’ scripts to accommodate all 11 strategies that Shih includes in her discussion. The composed Script 7 translates a strategy that most Chinese speakers use, that is, to say ‘yes’ although it means ‘no’.

By contrast, Shih observes that “the American way of rejecting a request “generally follows polite on-record strategies” (cited in Wierzbicka, 1996: 326). Shih also notes that excuses are often provided by Americans to accompany these strategies to diminish the effect of hurting the other’s feelings. In NSM, the Anglo-American cultural script is coded by Wierzbicka as

(Script 8)

- 1 when someone says something like this to me:
- 2 “I want you to do something for me”
- 3 if I don’t want to do it
- 4 I can’t say something like this to this person: “I don’t want to do it”
- 5 I can say something like this: “I can’t do it”
- 6 It is good to say something like this at the same time:
- 7 “I want you to know why I can’t do it
- 8 I feel something bad because I can’t do it
- 9 I would feel something good if I could do it” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 326)

Line 4 in Script 8 draws a contrast with Line 5, that is, the contrast between “I don’t want to do it” and “I can’t do it”. According to Script 8, Anglo-Americans may find it more acceptable to say “I can’t do it” than “I don’t want to do it”, since ‘self-autonomy’ is justified due to the lack of the ability. Meanwhile ‘other-autonomy’ is also carefully protected with a reason (as coded in Line 7), with an apology (Line 8) and with a regret (Line 9).

Comparing Script 7 and Script 8, it is found that the divergence of the two cultures lies in that the Chinese script highlights “I can’t say something like this: “I will not do it” (Line 5, Script 7), whereas the Anglo-American script highlights “I can say

something like this: “I can’t do it” (Line 5, Script 8). According to Wierzbicka (1996: 329), the point of departure lies in the different “notion of ‘face’, not in the notion of feelings”, since both cultures protect other persons’ feelings. The Chinese notion of face, according to Wierzbicka (1996: 330) is more in line with the image in other people’s eye¹. If a person’s image is endangered or damaged in other people’s eye (not necessarily in public), from a Chinese perspective, his or her ‘face’ is threatened. The different conceptualisations of the damage in the others’ eyes in the two cultures are the core difference. In Chinese culture, a rejection phrase is added not only with a hostility message, but also with a message that “Well, I don’t think anything good about you, and I don’t mind showing this openly, even in front other people, because I don’t care if other people know that I don’t think anything good about you” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 330).

With respect to the speech act of offering food or drink to one’s guest, Shih (1986) observes that different cultural norms underlie the different realisations of the speech act in Chinese and Anglo-American English. Basically, her observation centres on whether the host should take the liberty of giving or offering what he or she regards as something good to the guest. Most Chinese hosts, according to Shih, makes the decision for the guest, according to his or her Chinese norm of ‘sincerity’, and the Chinese guest is ready to abide by the host’s prescription. On the other hand, the Anglo-Americans follow the norm that “it is important to give options to the addressee, not to pressure, and to try to find out what the addressee wants rather than to ‘impose’ one’s own well-intentioned will upon the addressee” (Wierzbicka, 1996: 332). The Chinese cultural script is coded by Wierzbicka as

(Script 9)

- 1 when I want someone to do something
- 2 because I want to do something good for this person
- 3 it is good to say something like this to this person:
- 4 “I want you to do this
- 5 I think you will do it because of this”

¹ My discussion about the Chinese concept of ‘face’ will be in Section 5.5.

6 it is not good to say something like this to this person:
7 "I want you to do it whether you want to do it"
8 "I want to know whether you want to do it" (Wierzbicka, 1996: 332)

Script 9 draws a contrast between what the Chinese host should say and should not say in the context of offering food or drinks to the guest. Line 4 indicates the acceptable norm of 'imposing' on the guest with the host's will, whereas Line 8 shows that it is not acceptable if the Chinese host would leave the guest to make an option. That is, Script 9 represents the Chinese norm that the guest should allow the host to making a decision for him or her as far as the speech act of offering drink or food is concerned.

The Anglo-American cultural script is coded by Wierzbicka as

(Script 10)

1 when I want someone to do something
2 because I want to do something good for this person
3 I can't say something like this to this person:
4 "I want you to do this
5 I think you will do it because of this"
6 I can say something like this:
7 "I want you to do it whether you want to do it"
8 it is good to say something like this at the same time:
9 "I want to know whether you want to do it" (Wierzbicka, 1996: 332)

Script 10 also draws a contrast between what the Anglo-American host should say and should not say in the context of offering food or drinks to the guest. Line 4 indicates the unacceptable norm of 'imposing' on the guest with the host's will, whereas Line 9 shows that the acceptable norm is to respect the choice that the guest makes. Conversely, the Anglo-American norm in hosting a guest is to respect the autonomy of the guest.

Scripts 9 and 10 make it clear that Chinese and Anglo-Americans follow different cultural norms when receiving their guests. Chinese hosts and guests are ready to accept

the tacit cultural norm of prescription-compliance, which to a large extent, reflects the *Harmony* schema in Chinese culture (Leng, in press), whereas the Anglo-American host is consistent with the American cultural norm of ‘other-autonomy’.

Wierzbicka (1996) also compares the speech act of compliment-responding in the two languages by means of two cultural scripts. According to Wierzbicka (1996: 335), “[r]oughly speaking, in Chinese ... the prevalent norm is that ‘compliments’ should be ‘rejected’, whereas the prevalent Anglo norm is that they should be ‘accepted’”. These two positions are translated into the following two cultural scripts (Wierzbicka). In Chinese:

(Script 11)

- 1 when someone says to me something good about me
- 2 it is good to say something like this to this person:
- 3 “I can’t think the same” (or: “I don’t think the same”) (Wierzbicka, 1996: 336)

And in Anglo-American English:

(Script 12)

- 1 when someone says to me something good about me
- 2 it is good to say something like this to this person:
- 3 “I think: you say this
- 4 because you want me to feel something good
- 5 I feel something good towards you because of this (Wierzbicka, 1996: 336)

Script 11 and Script 12 clearly show the different norms applying to compliment-responding by Chinese and Anglo-Americans. Line 3 in Script 11 indicates the assertive rejection in the Chinese norm, and Lines 3, 4 and 5 in Script 12 explicate why Anglo-Americans are willing to accept compliments. Wierzbicka also links the two scripts to

their relevant scripts respectively. In Chinese compliment-rejecting is related to the ‘modesty’ script, which is described by Wierzbicka as

(Script 13)

- 1 I can’t say something like this to other people:
- 2 “I did something good”
- 3 “I think something good about me”
- 4 it is good if people think that I don’t think good things about me (Wierzbicka, 1996: 337)

Script 13 represents the Chinese speaker who receives the compliment and then rejects it (Lines 1 and 4). The cultural knowledge that a Chinese person follows is ‘other-directedness’ (Chapter 6). That is, Chinese speakers direct their responses to the compliment according to their would-be negative image in the conceptualisation of ‘others’. It is the significance of the ‘other’ in Chinese culture and the concern about one’s own image (i.e. one’s face) in other’s mind that regulates the speech act of compliment-responding.

Anglo-American compliment-responding verbal behaviour is based on the cultural knowledge of giving people “positive feedback” for praise (Wierzbicka, 1996: 337). This cultural knowledge is coded as

(Script 14)

- 1 it is good to often say something like this to other people:
- 2 “you did something good”
- 3 “I think something good about you”
- 4 this person will feel something good because of this
- 5 this is good (Wierzbicka, 1996: 337)

Script 14 represents the American who receives the compliment and then accepts it (Lines 1, 4 and 5). The cultural knowledge that the American follows is also ‘other-directedness’, that is, to answer the compliment according to the positive experience of the other person. In the American ‘other-directedness’, ‘self’ is not refracted as much as in the Chinese ‘other-directedness’. There is no concern about image or ‘face’ in the Anglo-American compliment-responding speech act. This is seen by comparing Line 4 in Script 13 and Lines 4 and 5 in Script 14.

To sum up, Chinese and Anglo-American speech acts of requests, offering food or drinks to guests and compliment-responding have been analysed by means of the cultural script using Wierzbicka’s NSM approach. As Wierzbicka reiterates, this approach enables us to “model cultural attitudes much more accurately and at the same time much more clearly than it can be done using binary labels such as ‘direct/indirect’, ‘confrontational/non-confrontational’, ‘assertive/non-assertive’” (1996: 337). As “a new approach to the study of cross-cultural communication” (Wierzbicka 1994: 69), the theory of cultural scripts has been mainly applied to describing and comparing speech acts of different cultures and over 10 different languages. The theory of cultural scripts is considered to provide an innovative and rigorous framework (Wierzbicka, 1996).

2.6 A discourse approach

Scollon and Scollon (1995, 2001) propose a discourse approach to intercultural professional communication, which they call “interdiscourse communication” (1995: vi). According to Scollon and Scollon (1995: 4), the interdiscourse aspects of professional communication should be regarded as the key to intercultural professional communication, since interdiscourse communication is a concept which is more specific than that of intercultural communication. As culture itself is a multi-dimensional concept and “it is difficult to draw very direct connections between aspects of culture and actual situations of discourse” (1995: 162), Scollon and Scollon (1995, 2001) maintain that it is effective to narrow the focus of intercultural communication to discourse systems, “which are sub-cultural systems where contrasts between one system and another are somewhat more strongly made” (p. 163). According to Scollon and Scollon (1995, 2001), intercultural communication, to a large extent, is the communication which frequently takes place among people with different discourse systems.

Discourse in the discourse approach to intercultural communication (or interdiscourse communication) is viewed by Scollon and Scollon broadly as “the study of whole systems of communication” (p. 95). They introduce the concept of a discourse system as follows:

“a kind of self-contained system of communication with a shared language or jargon, with particular ways in which people learn what they need to know to become members, with a particular ideological position, and with quite specific forms of interpersonal relationships among members of these groups”. (Scollon and Scollon, 1995: 95)

Scollon and Scollon (1995: 96 – 97) point out that there are four basic elements to most discourse systems. These are ‘forms of discourse’, ‘socialisation’, ‘ideology’ and ‘face systems’. Forms of discourse are “[a] set of preferred forms of discourse [which] serves as banners or symbols of membership and identity” (p. 165). Miscommunication may occur when people with different discourse systems adhere to their preferred or familiar discourse forms as a code of their preferred identity or membership. They maintain that “one of the major functions of a discourse system is to give a sense of identity to its members” (Scollon and Scollon, 1995: 246).

Socialisation in the discourse approach refers to “both explicit processes of training and education and implicit processes of learning which take place as part of the ongoing activities within a discourse system” (p. 247). Ideology is “the worldview or governing philosophy of a group or a discourse system” (p. 96). Using Scollon and Scollon’s approach, face systems are interpersonal relationships (p. 96), which might also be called politeness systems (p. 42). Depending on power, distance and the weight of imposition of the interpersonal relationship, a distinction could be made between symmetrical face systems and asymmetrical or hierarchical face system.

Following the framework of discourse systems in the study of intercultural professional communication, Scollon and Scollon (1995), on the basis of their two-decade research in the ethnography of communication (also known as ethnography of speaking), pragmatics, interactional sociolinguistics, professional communication and the

study of culture, investigate the discourse systems of multiple group memberships including that of Westerner and East Asian, especially Chinese, corporate discourse, professional discourse, generational discourse and the discourse of gender. Scollon and Scollon maintain that much miscommunication between people of different cultures is indeed derived from “communication across the lines of different discourse systems” (2001: 266). Success in intercultural communication, thus, depends on learning to move across lines of discourse systems with increasing shared knowledge and the awareness of dealing with and the capabilities to deal with miscommunication.

In their analysis of an intercultural discourse between a Hong Kong Chinese businessman and an American businessman (p. 122), Scollon and Scollon (1995) maintain that the miscommunication between the two businessmen is grounded in the different face systems inherent in the discourse systems that each of them belongs to. As far as the linguistic form is concerned, the conversation is still well-phrased with correct grammatical forms. Despite the fact that the two businessmen possess the common goal of the import-export business, they employ different discourse strategies in compliance with their embedded face systems. The American businessman relied on a symmetrical solidarity of the face system, preferring “close, friendly, egalitarian relationships in business engagements” (p. 123) and making use of the strategy of calling the Hong Kong Chinese businessman by his given name. The Hong Kong Chinese businessman, however, preferred “an initial business relationship of symmetrical deference” (p. 123) and felt “quite uncomfortable with Mr Richardson [the American businessman]... [and] particularly bothered that Mr Richardson used his given name” (pp 122 – 123).

It is worth mentioning that, according to Scollon and Scollon (1995), differences in discourse systems do not have to be intercultural or cross-cultural. Interdiscourse miscommunication can also happen to people who belong to the same cultural group, but who operate their discourse systems on a different ideology, different politeness strategies and discourse forms. Generational discourse and gender discourse are two examples of this position. Participants of these two discourse systems may approach a discourse event “with a different interpretative framework, and that leads to false conversational inferences and ultimately to an incapacity to develop the kind of cooperation both sides of the problem are seeking” (Scollon and Scollon, 1995: 225).

It seems therefore that Scollon and Scollon (1995) hold a broad view of intercultural communication to include intergender discourse and communication between generations of the same culture under the overall theme of intercultural communication. Their broad view of intercultural communication is in agreement with Tannen (1985: 203) who claims that “the notion of ‘cross-cultural’ encompasses more than just speakers of different languages or from different countries; it includes speakers from the same country of different classes, region, age and even gender”.

2.7 Discussion: Relevance of the four approaches to the present study

The literature reviewed in this chapter shows that each approach has contributed to an understanding of Chinese ways of speaking in intercultural situations. In this section, the relevance of each of the four approaches to the present study is discussed.

The interactional sociolinguistic approach to intercultural and interethnic communication is heuristic to the present research, since Gumperz views language as “an index to the background cultural understandings that provide hidden ... knowledge about how to make inferences about what is meant through an utterance” (Schiffrin, 1994: 105). The interactional sociolinguistic approach frequently leads to social issues, that is, when misinterpreted contextualisation cues in intercultural interaction lead to negative stereotypes of non-native speakers of English in institutional contexts such as gate-keeping at job interviews. The present study, however, analyses the data of audio-recorded interaction taking place between two participants meeting for social purposes (which is elaborated on in detail in Chapter Four), and thus in the present study there does not exist the issue of “accepting the ideology of the domination group” which interactional sociolinguistics is criticised for by Singh, Lele and Martohardjono (1988, cited in Sarangi, 1994: 166).

The cultural influences on intercultural communication, more or less, equate the influence of culture with other types of contextualisation cues. However, it is maintained in this study that since cultural knowledge provides clues to interpreting most types of contextualisation cues, cultural knowledge should be foregrounded due to its pervasiveness in contextual presuppositions and situated inferences. Besides, although contextualisation cues are helpful with signalling contextual presuppositions and with facilitating conversational inferences, they alone can not provide an in-depth account of

discourse structures (Scollon and Scollon, 1995: 92). This is better achieved with a framework of cultural schemas (which will be reviewed in detail in Chapter Three).

In terms of providing a cognitive interpretation of intercultural communication, the interactional sociolinguistic approach ‘unintentionally’ sheds some light on the cognitive aspects of the study of intercultural communication. The concept of ‘activity’ or ‘activity type’ proposed by both Levinson (1978) and Gumperz (1982) touches upon the schematic knowledge that is often identified from and contributes to utterance-making and utterance-interpreting (Gumperz, 1982: 130). As mentioned earlier, an activity type channels inferences; this resembles one of the functions that schemas play in discourse (which is explicated in Chapter 3). However, Gumperz diverges from cognitive linguists by referring to activity types in interaction as “socially significant” only (1982: 130 – 131). He contends that the activity type “does not determine meaning” (p. 131). In other words, interactional sociolinguistics does not take a cognitive perspective, although these linguists do acknowledge the cognitive element of intercultural communication study.

Moreover, the distance between interactional sociolinguistics and the cognitive approach to intercultural communication is manifested by the position that Gumperz holds on the nature of contextualisation cues. Gumperz (e.g. 1995: 8 & 12) reiterates that contextualisation cues are “pure indexicals” for retrieving the contextual presuppositions, and these cues do not have propositional content. This view of contextualisation cues is in dissonance with Palmer (1996) who maintains that indexicals are discourse indexicals which have meta-discourse functions, because they are involved in such cognitive processes as the schematisation and symbolization of aspects of discourse. Therefore, as far as a cognitive interpretation of cultural influences on intercultural communication is concerned, interactional sociolinguistics is only marginally related to the present research.

The cross-cultural speech act approach is significant in the area of cross-cultural studies. However, as the term suggests, it aims at drawing contrasts between speech acts in two languages. Speech acts are not the focus of the present study, although greetings in Chinese and Anglo-Australian English are analysed in Chapter Five, as they emerge from the data. The cross-cultural speech act approach to intercultural communication is heuristic to the present study, but its relevance is not direct.

To a large extent, the NSM or cultural script approach to intercultural communication is a cognitive approach to discourse analysis, since it is informed by a high level of abstraction of cultural knowledge in the form of culture scripts. Given its relevance to the present study and its efforts to protest against cultural bias, the metalanguage and the unified formula in cultural scripts largely simplify the complicated process of intercultural communication, leaving some subtle, but nevertheless critical, issues undiscussed. For instance, Chang (1999: 535) has shown that there exists an indeterminate linguistic space in Chinese conversations which reflects a complex of Chinese cultural knowledge, and which is purposefully manipulated to redefine existing role-relationships between interlocutors. It is difficult, if not impossible, for the ready-made scripts, which are inclined to be static, to capture the indeterminacy and the dynamism produced by Chinese speakers. Thus the NSM approach to intercultural communication is relevant to the present study in the sense that it draws on cultural knowledge to interpret data, however, the analysis of the naturally produced data emerged from the discourse of Chinese speakers of English in this study should not be limited to a unified formula. The subtle and dynamic experiences that Chinese participants have expressed in their intercultural discourse also need to be incorporated in the analysis.

Finally, the discourse approach to intercultural communication provides a comprehensive theoretical framework to study interdiscoursal communication, particularly in professional contexts. Its four essential constituents accommodate many aspects of culture such as beliefs, values, religion, kinship and the concept of self (Scollon and Scollon, 1995: 127 - 128). Therefore, its relevance to the present study is embodied in its cultural content. However, the orientation of the approach is about “professional communication” and it is “an essay in applied sociolinguistics” (Trudgill, 1995: x). Thus the present study will refer to it only for its rich cultural content as instantiations of cultural schemas.

Briefly, the four approaches have an important bearing on the study of Chinese ways of speaking in intercultural situations. Nonetheless, it is maintained in this study that a theoretically adequate approach to intercultural communication should not simply compare patterns of speech acts in different languages, but also deal with “those

properties of discourse that are accounted for in terms of cognitive concepts, such as various types of mental representation” (van Dijk, 2000: 5). This is because, frequently, it is language users’ cultural knowledge systems that underpin discourse production and comprehension. The validity of the cognitive approach to intercultural discourse is borne out by Nishida (1999) who explicates sojourners’ cross-cultural adaptation on the basis of schema theory. Van Dijk also holds that “a study of the cognitive aspects of communication is highly relevant” to discourse analysis.

The next chapter will elaborate on a theoretical framework which is informed by a cognitive approach to intercultural discourse.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical framework for the study

3.1 Introduction to the chapter

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework on which the present study is constructed. The framework is derived from concepts established in *cultural linguistics* (Palmer, 1996) which is the synthesis of three traditions in linguistic anthropology and cognitive linguistics. The three traditions in linguistic anthropology, namely Boasian linguistics, ethnosemantics and the ethnography of speaking have established a “linguistic relativity” stance (Palmer, 1996: 10) for cultural linguistics. In addition, cognitive linguistics lends many essential analytical tools to cultural linguistics. Cultural linguistics, thus, is based on the assumption that language, culture and cognition are fundamentally related, and “[t]o study language is to hear the clamor of culture grappling with raw experience” (Palmer, 1996: 6). This assumption forms the basis for the principles of cultural linguistics (p. 290) which embraces such key concepts as world view, imagery, cognitive models, schemas, cultural schemas, proposition-schemas, discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals. These and many other cognitive concepts are seen to be interrelated and are all culturally constructed.

As a preamble to the framework of the present study, this chapter firstly reviews the core theories of schemas and cultural schemas which exert a strong influence on cognitive linguistics and thus on cultural linguistics. The notion of schema has proved to be a highly explanatory tool in cognitive studies for over half a century (Sharifian, 2001a), and it has been applied in such disciplines as cognitive psychology, computer science (i.e. artificial intelligence), cognitive anthropology, cognitive linguistics and cultural linguistics. However, due to the different areas of focus of these disciplines, there appear in the literature a variety of interpretations of the basic notion of schemas.

3.2 Theories of schemas and cultural schemas

Traditionally, schemas are viewed by many cognitive scientists as conceptual structures where human beings store, interpret and predict their experiences of the world (Casson, 1983). Closely related alternative terms used by a number of writers are *frames*, *scripts*,

plans and so on (cf. Casson, 1983: 429; Rumelhart, 1980: 33). Schemas, in the connectionist models of cognition, are viewed as a coalition of strongly connected units in which information is processed in a psychological mechanism known as parallel distributed processing (Rumelhart, Smolensky, McClelland & Hinton, 1986). This section will, therefore, also provide a review of changes in the way in which schemas have been viewed in cognitive science under the influence of connectionism. Concepts of schemas and cultural schemas, both in their traditional and connectionist views, are drawn on in the present study.

3.2.1 Genesis of schema theory

Malcolm and Sharifian (2002) give an account of the historical development of the concept of the schema. They, like many other writers who review schemas, go back to Plato who first established the concept of the schema as an *ideal type that exists in the mind*. Over two hundred years ago, Kant (1787/1963) introduced the term *schema* to modern philosophy by which he meant “general rule(s) or procedure(s) of imagination by which an image is procured for a concept” (Malcolm and Sharifian, 2002: 170). However, it was Sir Frederick Charles Bartlett (1886 – 1969) who was credited as the first psychologist studying long-term memory in the 1920s who used the term in its cognitive sense (Brewer, 2000), although he owed the term to Head, the neurologist, who posited a ‘postural schema’ to account for body disorder (cited in Brewer, 2000: 71-72). According to Head and Homes (1911 – 1912: 186 – 189), a postural schema is one of the “principal aspects of the ‘body schema’ based on a neurological understanding of the dissociations in bodily sensibility” (cited in Holmes and Spence, 2004: 94).

However, the study of schema theory was eclipsed by behaviourist psychology until the 1970s (Brewer, 2000). It was in the 1970s and the 1980s that schema theory exerted its major influence on cognitive psychology and the cognitive science, when there appeared a revival of interest in schema theory. To a large extent, the emergence of artificial intelligence promoted this revival of interest.

Minsky (1975), a computer scientist, argued that machines, when modelling human brains, needed to have knowledge of the world installed when engaged in such tasks as perception, reading and understanding. This knowledge was called a *frame* by Minsky, which, in Brewer’s opinion, is another name for a schema (Brewer, 2000).

In the past 20 years, schema theory has been extensively used in explicating the intimate relationship between language, conceptualisation and culture in such fields as cognitive linguistics (e.g. Chafe, 1994; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Langacker 1987, 1991); cognitive anthropology (e.g. D'Andrade, 1995; Holland and Quinn, 1987; D'Andrade and Strauss, 1992); and cultural linguistics (e.g. Malcolm and Sharifian, 2002; Palmer, 1996).

Bartlett used the term schema when conducting studies of human memory (Brewer, 2000). A schema, according to Bartlett, was a mental entity for recalling, summarizing, transforming, inferencing and remembering human knowledge (Brewer, 2000).

Before embarking on an account of the historical development of schema theories in different disciplines, it must be made clear that the demarcation of the following disciplines is not as neat as it might be assumed. The demarcation is made for the sake of structuring the description. Many writers reviewed below have cross-disciplinary knowledge, and are also referred to by scholars of other disciplines for their research foci. Therefore, the delineation of the following disciplines should be viewed with a degree of flexibility.

3.2.2 Schemas in cognitive psychology and computer science

Since Bartlett first introduced the schema construct in the 1920s, the notion of schema has been given numerous names for different research focuses. For example, the term *frame* was used by Minsky as a framework for representing knowledge (1975). The term frame meant knowledge structures represented in machines that included *slots* (or “variables” in Casson, 1983: 432) which contained *default values* (or “expectations or ‘best guesses’ determined by the typical or normal values associated with variables” in Casson, 1983: 432), and which allowed for a range of variables. In fact, Minsky’s research is considered to be the basis of modern schema theory (Brewer, 2000).

Meanwhile, cognitive psychologists Schank and Abelson (1977) adopted Minsky’s construct and developed the notion *script* as a kind of knowledge representation. According to Schank and Abelson, scripts are stereotyped chains of events that fill in our understanding of frequently recurring experiences. As basic building blocks of daily knowledge recorded in the brain, scripts are episodically organised around personal

experiences which allow us to make inferences when information is incomplete. The classic example of a script provided by Schank and Abelson is the restaurant script which consists of conceptual primitives of *getting seated, ordering, eating, and paying*.

Rumelhart (1980) in his influential paper *Schemata: The building blocks of cognition* presented a systematic account of schema in terms of its nature, the activation sources and its major functions. He explained that schemas are the building blocks of cognition into which knowledge is packaged. He also maintained that the framework constructed by schemas as well as their related concepts such as frames and scripts forms the basis for human information processing. Analogically, he described schemas as plays, theories, procedures, and parsers representing our knowledge about objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions and sequences of actions.

Mental models as used by the psychologist, Johnson-Laird (1983), may be considered as another alternative term to schemas (Ungerer and Schmid, 1996). To Johnson-Laird, a model is a direct representation of state of affairs. "Its structure mirrors the relevant aspects of the corresponding states of affairs in the world" (1980: 98). A mental model can be constructed from perception, imagination, or from the comprehension of discourse. Johnson-Laird (1983) proposes mental models as the basic structure of cognition. "It is now plausible to suppose that mental models play a central and unifying role in representing objects, states of affairs, sequences of events, the way the world is, and the social and psychological actions of daily life" (p. 397). Brewer (2000) maintains that a mental model is one of the forms of mental representation.

Computer science also experienced a paradigm shift in simulating human cognition. By the mid 1980s, the information processing function of schemas in computer sciences was mainly modelled with symbols which gave rise to the school of *classicism*, alternatively called *symbolic processing models* or *symbolism* in artificial intelligence. In symbolism, knowledge is represented with symbols or "language of the thought" (Fodor, 1975, cited in Strauss and Quinn, 1997: 51), and symbols are strung together in sequences. Schemas viewed in symbolism are "not only data structures, they are also data processors" (Casson, 1983: 438). Moreover, the structuring and processing properties of schemas go through a "monolithic" (Iran-Nejad, 1989: 128) and a "hierarchical" (Casson, 1983: 437) input-output process.

Later in 1986, Rumelhart and his colleagues went beyond the theory of schemas as the building blocks of cognition in modelling human cognition after the computer. They adopted a model of human cognition based on the networks of neurons in human brains. In this approach, it is the tightly interconnected state of layers of neurons that gives rise to knowledge representation, and schemas are built through the recurring activation of interrelated cognitive elements that represent the generic concepts stored in the memory (Strauss and Quinn, 1997: 6). The emphasis on the interconnected mechanism of neurons in human brains gives this school of thought the name *connectionism*. According to connectionism, new information or a concept to be learned is represented in a parallel and distributed fashion through the activation of a multitude of simple neurons simultaneously. Hence connectionism is also known as the *parallel distributed processing* (PDP) approach (Rumelhart, Smolensky, McClelland & Hinton, 1986).

The connectionist approach to modelling human cognition provides an alternative to the classical theory of the mind. However, it would be a mistake to think that the classical symbolic processing models have been entirely replaced by the new connectionist models, since each school has its own advantages in modelling information processing depending on the nature of information. For instance, D'Andrade (1995: 144) maintains that “serial symbolic processing learning is typically *quicker* than connectionist based learning ... [which] is typically much more automatic and rapid in execution than rule based behavior” (italics original). Thus, it is held in this study that the two models should not be taken in terms of either-or, but rather, provide an integrative account of human cognition. The notion of schema understood in both classicism and connectionism is compatible with the view of Palmer (1996: 219) who maintains that “[l]anguage resonates in distributed conceptual structure that may be activated in parallel or sequentially”.

3.2.3 Schemas in cognitive anthropology

Cognitive anthropology is a sister discipline of cognitive psychology (Rice, 1980: 152). As Casson (1983: 440) observes, whereas cognitive psychologists are concerned with “how the brain deals with all sorts of information, including cultural information, cognitive anthropologists focus on how systems of cultural knowledge are restrained and shaped by

the machinery of the brain". In other words, knowledge representation, conceptual systems or schema theories studied in the contexts of cognitive psychology or other cognitive sciences do not take into consideration differences across cultures very much, assuming instead that the mechanisms of experience-representing processes are universal and are operating on a high level of abstraction. Anthropologists, in contrast, use schema theory as a framework to study how cultural knowledge and meaning systems are organised so that they can pursue the question raised by Goodenough (1957) of "what one needs to know in order to behave as a functioning member of one's society" (Quinn and Holland 1987: 4).

Casson (1983) provides a detailed review of schemas in cognitive anthropology. Casson holds that "schemata are conceptual abstractions that mediate between stimuli received by the sense organs and behavioural responses" (p. 430). He maintains that, in terms of individual cognition, schemas occur at different levels of abstraction. The relatively lower levels of abstraction are responsible for "perceiving geometrical figure, colours, faces, etc", whereas the higher levels of abstraction are used for "comprehending complex activities and events" (p. 430). Casson (1983: 436) also elucidates that "[a] schema generally includes a number of embedded subschemata as constituent parts". An event is more deeply comprehended in terms of embedded subschemas than by a single schema. Casson explains that "schemata are organised as hierarchical structures" (p. 437), and schemas are interlinked with one another to form "still larger structures" (p. 437). The interlinked schemas may produce alternative meanings to a given vocabulary.

The study of the effect of cultural schemas on the comprehension and recall of narratives has been investigated by Rice (1980). In demonstrating the usefulness of cultural knowledge, Rice (1980: 153) exploits the concept of schemas. According to Rice (1980: 153), a schema can be thought of "as an abstracted pattern into or onto which information can be organised". The levels of abstraction vary along a continuum of scope of distribution in terms of population. Accordingly, Rice (1980: 153-154) distinguishes three types of schemas. On the one side of the continuum exist *universal schemas* such as the cognitive schemas which are developed for the universal human cognitive capabilities in Piaget's work (e.g. 1952, cited in Rice), and on the other end of the continuum are the *idiosyncratic schemas* which represent personal experience. In the middle between the two ends lie *cultural schemas*, which are derived from cultural experiences (Rice, 1980).

It is maintained here that Rice (1978; 1980) has made a significant contribution to schema theories in the field of cognitive anthropology. Rice was the first scholar to bring the ‘distribution of population’ to the attention of scholars in the field. She states that “[l]ike the idiosyncratic ones, they [cultural schemas] are experientially developed. But they have in common with universal schemata a wider distribution”. In other words, Rice might have laid a seminal foundation for the later notion of ‘culturally distributed cognition’ or ‘culturally distributed conceptualisation’.

Other cognitive anthropologists also make use of schema theory and establish *cultural models* (D’Andrade, 1987; Holland and Quinn, 1987). D’Andrade (1987) defines cultural model along the same lines as Rice (1980) in terms of population distribution, but emphasising the sharedness among the population of a society. “A cultural model is a cognitive schema that is intersubjectively shared by a social group” (D’Andrade, 1987: 112; 1990: 99). Quinn and Holland (1987: 4) provide an elaboration on the basis of D’Andrade’s definition, in that they hold that “cultural models are presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared by the members of a society and that play an enormous role in their understanding of that world and their behavior in it”. Quinn and Holland maintain that cultural models “bear an intriguing resemblance to Schank and Abelson’s scripts” (p. 19), with Schank and Abelson making inquiries into the nature of knowledge that is needed to understand the world and the natural language, while Quinn and Holland focus on how knowledge is organised in culturally standardised and familiar event sequences.

By employing cultural models, Holland and Quinn (1987: 4) provide “a cognitive approach to the question of how cultural knowledge is organised”. Culture, in this approach is not viewed ontologically, but epistemologically as “shared knowledge – not a people’s customs and artefacts and oral traditions, but what they must know in order to act as they do, make the things they make and interpret their experience in the distinctive way they do” (p. 4).

Under the influence of connectionism in artificial intelligence, D’Andrade (1992, 1995) and Strauss and Quinn (1997) define schemas and cultural schemas according to the model of Parallel Distributed Processing (PDP) (Rumelhart, Smolensky, McClelland & Hinton, 1986). As such, D’Andrade (1992: 29; also quoted in 1995: 142) states that

“[t]o say that something is a ‘schema’ is a shorthand way of saying that a distinct and strongly interconnected pattern of interpretative elements can be activated by minimal inputs”.

D’Andrade (1992: 29) also explains that schemas have three properties which are relevant to the study of motivation. One property is the strongly interconnected pattern of interpretive elements which can be activated by minimal inputs. The second property is that schemas have the potential of being goals and instigating actions. The third property is the hierarchical nature of schemas. In accordance with his analysis of the properties of schema, D’Andrade argues that one must understand the hierarchical relationship of schemas so as to understand how their interpretive systems determine one’s goals, motivation, and actions.

Strauss and Quinn take a connectionist view of schema theory when discussing cultural meaning with a cognitive theory. Strauss and Quinn (1997: 50) claim that “[c]urrent connectionist models of cognition give us a much less rigid way of understanding schemas” and “[i]n this framework a schema ... is not a set of sentences but rather a pattern of interaction among strongly interconnected units” (p. 52). Strauss and Quinn (1997: 49) call cultural models *cultural schemas* and “a great many schemas are cultural schemas – you share them with people who have had some experiences like you, but not with everybody”.

In the cognitive theory proposed by Strauss and Quinn (1997: 7), culture is distributed and more or less shared, and “consists of regular occurrences in the humanly created world, in the schemas people share as a result of these, and in the interactions between these schemas and this world”. Similarly, a cultural meaning is “the typical (frequently recurring and widely shared aspects of the) interpretation of some type of object or event evoked in people as a result of their similar life experiences” (p. 6).

The notion of cultural models is regarded by Shore (1996) as a significant way to reconceptualise the concept of culture in anthropology. Shore in his book *Culture in mind: cognition, culture and the problem of meaning* (1996) outlines a theory of culture by using ethnographic case studies that link the anthropologist’s concern with social action and conventions with the psychologist’s concept of mental models. As such, he maintains that culture should be approached through models and “a culture is best conceived as a

very large and heterogeneous collection of models or what psychologists sometimes call schemas” (1996: 44). In Shore’s opinion, cultural models establish an understanding of culture that mediates anthropology with cognitive science.

The cognitive view of culture and cultural meanings is also the view taken in the present study. It is maintained in this study that the cognitive view of culture and cultural meanings in the form of cultural schemas may largely solve some problems raised in the review of major approaches influencing the study of Chinese ways of speaking in intercultural communication in Chapter Two.

3.2.4 Schemas in cognitive linguistics

The notion of schema is also extensively used in cognitive linguistics. However, as in the fields of cognitive psychology or other cognitive sciences, many cognitive linguists refer to schema-type notions by alternative terms which better accommodate their research focus. Thus, schema may be compared to *frame* (Fillmore, 1977) in *frame semantics* established by Fillmore in the 1970s. Frame semantics is a conceptual approach to describing and understanding word meanings and text meanings. It is assumed that words are defined only relative to frames, thus semantic frames provide the background knowledge for the understanding of the meanings of a word.

Fillmore (1977: 127) makes a distinction between scene, schema, frame and model and between an array of other notions such as description, template, prototype and module. He postulates that scene can be used to “refer to real-world experiences, actions, objects, perceptions and personal memories of these”, while schemas are abstract frameworks that “are linked together in the categorisation of actions, institutions, and objects ...” Frame is referred to as “the specific lexico-grammatical provisions in a given language for naming and describing the categories and relations found in schemata”. A model is “either somebody’s view of the world or the view of the world that an interpreter builds up in the process of interpreting a text” (p. 127).

Fillmore defines a schema as “a set of conditions, or as a conceptual framework that characterises ideal or prototypical instances of some categories” (p. 127). In terms of the function of schemas, he recognises that schemas can be used as “tools or building blocks for assembling ... a text model – i.e., a model of the world that is compatible with the text”.

Another cognitive linguist, Chafe (1990) also refers to schema theory in his study of narratives. Schemas are described by Chafe as “ready made models” and “prepackaged expectations and ways of interpreting” (Chafe, 1990: 80 - 81, cited in Palmer, 1996: 63). Moreover, Chafe’s (1994) information flow theory is also compatible with the cognitive linguistic paradigm, because it investigates the relationship between language and consciousness in the mental processes of consciousness flow and displacement. Conscious experiences have both the properties of being verbal and nonverbal, that is, consciousness takes both forms of mental imagery and language. Mental imagery is likely to be associated with schemas and categories, through which, according to Chafe (1994), we ‘make sense of’ ideas of particular referents, events, states, and topics by treating them as instances of familiar things, relating them to each other and providing us with relevant expectations (Chafe, 1996: 35).

Ungerer and Schmid (1996: 50) suggest that “[c]ognitive models ... represent a cognitive, basically psychological, view of the stored knowledge about a certain field”. They also recognise the legitimacy of a degree of idealisation in describing cognitive models. They maintain that “[s]ince psychological states are always private and individual experience, descriptions of such cognitive models necessarily involve a considerable degree of idealization” (1996: 50 – 51). Despite that they accept a certain degree of idealisation in describing cognitive models, they uphold a culture-specific view of cognitive models. That is, they maintain that “cognitive models for particular domains ultimately depend on so-called **cultural models** ... [which] can be seen as cognitive models that are shared by people belonging to a social group or subgroup” (bold text original. 1996: 51). Moreover, cognitive models and cultural models are viewed by Ungerer and Schmid as “just two sides of the same coin” (p. 51), and they maintain that researchers from cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics should all be aware of both cognitive and cultural dimensions of their research object. Obviously, the cognitive models and cultural models in Ungerer and Schmid’s explanation are in line with schemas and cultural schemas used by other researchers.

In the area of cognitive semantics, schemas are roughly referred to as “experiential gestalts” by Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 81) who both (see Lakoff, 1987,

1988; Johnson, 1987; 1992 and Lakoff and Johnson, 1999) emphasise the experience-based knowledge (bodily experience in particular) in such cognitive processes as categorising and reasoning. Experiential gestalts are “ways of organising experiences into structured wholes” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 81).

Lakoff (1987) points out that there are two forms of preconceptual structure organising the bodily experience from which meaningfulness is derived. They are “basic-level structure and image-schematic structure” (Lakoff, 1987: 302). The basic-level structure is related to basic-level categories (Rosch, 1978) which enable people to function “most efficiently and successfully in dealing with discontinuities in the natural environment” (Lakoff, 1987: 269). The image-schematic structures are the “basic experiential structures” (p. 271) that make our experience meaningful. The image-schematic structure is also called image-schema by Lakoff and by Johnson (1987: xiv) who defines the image-schema “as a recurring, dynamic pattern of our perceptual interactions and motor programs that gives coherence and structure to our experience”. In other words, image-schemas are “simple and basic cognitive structures which are derived from our everyday interaction with the world” (Ungerer and Schmid, 1996: 160). Examples of such image-schemas are the – CONTAINER– schema, – SOURCE-PATH-GOAL– schema, – FIGURE/GROUND– schema and – BALANCE– schema.

The notion of image-schemas gives rise to the proposal of conceptual metaphors. Conceptual metaphors are different from metaphors used in rhetoric. Conceptual metaphors according to Lakoff (1987) and Johnson (1987; 1992) facilitate our thinking through source-target mapping. “Metaphors provide us with a means for comprehending domains of experience that do not have a preconceptual structure of their own” (Lakoff, 1987: 303). Johnson states that metaphor and metonymy are the means by which we can “ground our conceptual systems experientially and to reason in a constrained but creative fashion” (Johnson, 1992: 351). In other words, our newly acquired and abstract concepts can be comprehended by various conceptual metaphors and we can reason with metaphors. Conceptual metaphors are based on image-schemas.

Complex gestalts are developed into Idealised Cognitive Models (ICMs) by Lakoff (1987). According to Lakoff, ICMs are meant to structure our experiences as coherent background knowledge for the categorisation and the interpretation of the world.

ICMs play the role of schemas and each category is defined relative to such a schema which provides an account for our understanding of the world from concrete concepts to abstract concepts and language. In Lakoff's words (1987: 68), an ICM is "a complex structured whole, a gestalt, which uses four kinds of structuring principles". The four principles are 1) propositional structure; 2) image-schematic structure; 3) metaphoric mappings, and 4) metonymic mappings.

In the cognitive approach to grammar, which is recognised as another main area of cognitive linguistics, Langacker (e.g. 1987, 1990, 1994) describes language grammar on the basis of human conceptual systems and in a "cognitively realistic fashion" (1990: 15). The cognitive approach to language enjoins that, firstly, language is treated as "an integral facet of cognition" (Langacker, 1994: 33) and secondly "meaning resides in conceptualisation" (1990: ix). Thirdly, cognitive grammar is "an accurate characterisation of the structure and organisation of linguistic knowledge as an integral part of human cognition" (Langacker, 1990: 102).

To a large extent, the conceptual characterisation of grammatical structures is abstract, symbolic and schematic. As Palmer (1996: 64) observes, in Langacker's sense, being schematic seems to be equivalent to abstraction. Throughout cognitive grammar, Langacker exploits the notion of schema and the degree of schematicity. A schema is defined by Langacker as "an abstract template representing the commonality of the structures in categories, which thus elaborate or instantiate it" (1990: 59). Being schematic therefore is to be abstract in the first place, and the schematic symbolic structures will be characterised at varying degrees of abstraction (Langacker, 1990: 61). Thus 'content units' (corresponding to particular statements) can evolve to be 'schemas' (corresponding to general statements) depending on schematic hierarchies. Accordingly, a speaker has the ability to master a content unit and at the same time to get access to "more abstract structures such as schemas" (Langacker, 1990: 103).

By and large, Langacker refers to being symbolic as being schematic. Langacker (1990: 1) states that grammatical structures are "inherently symbolic, providing for the structuring and conventional symbolisation of conceptual content". Conversely, language grammar is a system of symbols, representing schematically the integration of the phonological and semantic units (Taylor, 2002: 22). In this regard, grammatical structures

are regarded as “providing the speaker with an inventory of symbolic resources” (Langacker, 1990: 16). Major symbolic resources are “schematic templates representing established patterns in the assembly of complex symbolic structures” (Langacker, 1990: 16), which are employed by language users as “standards of comparison in assessing the conventionality of novel expressions and usages” (Langacker, 1990: 16).

3.2.5 Schemas in cultural linguistics

Cultural linguistics also draws upon schema theories for the analysis of culturally defined language. According to Palmer (1996: 63), “[i]t is likely that all native knowledge of language and culture belongs to cultural schemas and the living of culture and the speaking of language consist of schemas in action”. Moreover, Palmer (2001a: 1) maintains that cultural linguistics “foregrounds cultural schemata in explanations of grammar and semantic patterns”.

Palmer regards schemas as “organic ... abstractions that subsume conceptualisations that are more specific and more readily imagined as projections into consciousness (whatever that effable entity may ultimately prove to be)” (p. 66). Following Casson (1983: 431), Palmer refers to the organic property of schemas as “organic wholes comprised of parts that are oriented both to the whole and to other parts”. In other words, schemas are not viewed by Palmer as direct or mechanical representations of the external world. Rather, schemas are taken by Palmer to be abstractions of different levels. Palmer (1996: 66) points out that between the relatively lower and higher levels of abstraction (in Casson’s sense) exist schemas of “intermediate abstraction that are readily imagined, perhaps as iconic images, and clearly related to physical (embodied) or social experiences” and he calls these image-schemas.

Cultural schemas are viewed by Palmer using a perspective which is different from D’Andrade (1987), Holland and Quinn (1987) and Strauss and Quinn (1997). Rather than emphasizing the distribution of culture among a population in a community or society and its related property of sharedness, Palmer stresses culture-specific, culturally-defined, or culturally-constructed features of cultural schemas or cultural models. Palmer (2001b: 1) advances the view that “[c]ognitive models that are culturally specific may be termed *cultural models*” (italics original). Cultural models, according to Palmer, are closely related to cultural experience of daily life. Examples of cultural

models include “the conventional knowledge systems governing kinship, ways of preparing food, navigation, rituals, myths, ceremonies, games, and speech events such as conversations” (Palmer, 2001b, p. 3) (Palmer, 2001a: 3). Thus it is the cultural constraints on language or other activities that are foregrounded by cultural linguistics.

Regarding cultural schemas, Sharifian holds that “[h]uman conceptualisation is as much a cultural as it is an individual phenomenon” (2003: 187), and that “cognition also needs to be regarded as a property of cultural groups, and not just individuals (2003: 204)”. By providing a distributed model of cultural schemas (2003: 189-193), Sharifian illustrates that “[c]ultural schemas are ... an emergent property of cognition at the level of cultural group rather than at the individual” (p. 192). Conversely, “a cultural schema is viewed as emerging from the interactions between the minds that constitute the cultural group” (Sharifian, 2003:192).

Therefore, Sharifian’s view of cultural schemas is consistent with Rice (1980) in the sense that a cultural schema is distributed among a cultural group, and it also draws upon the connectionist view of cognition reviewed above. The notions ‘distributed representation’ as opposed to “localised representation” (Sharifian, 2003: 189) is in line with connectionism.

The merit of Sharifian’s distributed model of cultural schemas (alternatively and interchangeably called ‘cultural conceptualisations’ or ‘cultural cognition’ by Sharifian (2003 & in press)) lies in the explanations it provides of why culture is not necessarily equally shared knowledge. The model allows for discrepancies and disparities found within a cultural group. Sharifian (2003: 192) reiterates that “[t]his pattern of knowledge representation clearly accounts for ‘fuzzy’ understandings that characterize the reality of our communications. In reality people draw *more or less* on a schema; they do not exactly share the same schema” (italics original). That is, not every single member of a cultural group is expected to represent cultural knowledge using the same schemas. Age, gender, personality and personal life experiences etc. may account for the differences in cultural schemas.

Given the merit of the distributed model of cultural schemas, Sharifian (2003) might have overlooked that culture knowledge representation does not merely emerge “in a distributed fashion across the minds in a cultural group” (2003: 191), but also from a

top-down process in certain cultures. Take for instance Chinese cultural knowledge representation. There is no doubt that some folk knowledge (such as some Chinese cooking or medicine knowledge) is largely represented by Chinese people in a distributed fashion through interactions over generations. Nonetheless, China as a hierarchical society for about 5,000 years has controlled, explicitly or implicitly, what knowledge will be available for representation, due to the political utilitarianism of education as observed by Zhu (1992: 4). Besides, as far as the top-down fashion of Chinese cultural representation is concerned, regulations also come from the hierarchy of cultural groups. No matter how small the groups into which Chinese cultural groups might be divided, the pervasive hierarchical order observed by mainland Chinese people in various familial and social groups (Davis, 2001: 210), can affect the parallel distribution of knowledge representation. That is, a certain degree of cultural knowledge control exercised by the seniority of the hierarchy gives rise to the top-down knowledge representation. The argument here is that Chinese knowledge representation abstracted by various top-down processes also leads to the development of Chinese cultural schemas. Moreover, it is maintained in the present study that, as far as modelling Chinese cultural schemas is concerned, an integration of both the parallel distributed representation and the top-down representation may give a more comprehensive account of Chinese cultural schemas.

To sum up thus far, Section 3.2 has reviewed the historical development of schema theories before and since the mid 1980s, with connectionism setting the demarcation of different ways of schema modelling and hence schema understanding. It has been shown that schemas and cultural schemas are employed extensively in cognitive psychology, computer science, cognitive anthropology, cognitive linguistics and cultural linguistics for the study of knowledge representation, meaning construction and cultural knowledge distribution. The notion of schema, a fundamental cognitive concept, “is now a permanent addition to the anthropology and cognitive science lexicons” in addition to philosophy and rhetoric (Oatley, 2004: 4). This has a bearing on such conceptions as imagery, world view, discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals.

3.3 Imagery

Palmer holds that images “begin as conceptual analogs of immediate, perceptual experience from the peripheral sensory organs” (1996: 47). Once registered by the mind,

images undergo the cognitive processes of “gestalt formation, abstraction, framing, comparison, amplification or suppression, and analysis” (p. 47) to become imagery of various kinds. In other words, “[i]magery arises from construing models at different levels of abstraction, from different points of view, or at different stages in a process, and from admitting various features of models within the scope of attention” (Palmer, 2001a: 3). Similarly, Oatley explains that “[i]n Cognitive Linguistics, the term image implicates perception in all acts of conceptualization ... [and] has been defined as a representation of specific patterns capable of being rendered schematically” (Oatley, 2004: 5).

Palmer (1996) gives primacy to imagery and explicates a close relationship between language and imagery. He (1996: 46) claims that “[c]ultural linguistics and cognitive linguistics are fundamentally theories of mental imagery”. He maintains that “language is the play of verbal symbols that are based in imagery” (Palmer, 1996: 3). A theory of mental imagery is thus a theory of linguistic meaning (Palmer, 1996:4). “Imagery does not explain everything about language, but an examination of its role illuminates many usages and domains of language of abiding interest to anthropologists” (Palmer, 1996: 4). Palmer (1996) also holds that discourse and imagery are mutually constitutive and explains that “discourse invokes conventional imagery and provokes the construction of new imagery. At the same time, imagery structures discourse” (p. 6).

All in all, the notion of imagery in language can be applied to examine linguistic topics of different levels of language, such as narratives, figurative language, semantics, grammatical construction and phonology. According to Palmer, it is the theory of mental imagery that unites the disparate and inconsistent branches of linguistic study. To quote Palmer:

In this *cultural linguistics*, phonemes are heard as verbal images arranged in complex categories; words acquire meanings that are relative to image-schemas, scenes, and scenarios; clauses are image-based constructions; discourse emerges as a process governed by reflective imagery of itself; and world view subsumes it all. ([italics original] Palmer, 1996: 4)

Palmer integrates imagery with schemas and holds that “[s]chemas in general are units of relatively abstract imagery” (p.66). Imagery is viewed by Palmer as having the prototypic function of representation (p. 66). The common feature shared by imagery, cognitive models and schemas is that all of them are conceptual, abstract, adaptive, have prototypic functions, representing bodily experiences and reality, and are structured by culture and personal history. In fact, Palmer (1996) recognises that imagery, cognitive models and schemas overlap one another. In Palmer’s own words, “When two or more images are resolved into a single more comprehensive imagistic entity, the result is a model” (p. 59), and “we probably form a concrete model ... prior to abstracting a schema...” (p 59) and “schemas in general are units of relatively abstract imagery” (p. 66).

Imagery also has a crucial position in Langacker’s cognitive grammar, therefore being imagistic in Langacker’s sense is pertinent to being conceptual or schematic. Imagery is referred to by Langacker as “our manifest capacity to structure or construe the content of a domain in alternative ways” (Langacker, 1990: 5). The alternative ways are conceptual, rather than sensory, achieved through different figure-ground and profile-base organisations, with different levels of specificity from different vantage points. In particular, Langacker (1990: 5-12) elaborates on five dimensions of imagery. The first dimension of imagery is “the imposition of a ‘profile’ on a ‘base’” (p. 5) which is applied to every linguistic predication. Predications are correspondent to semantic structures (Langacker, 1990: 3). The second dimension of imagery is “the ‘level of specificity’ at which a situation is construed” (p. 7). The level of specificity is applied to grammatical structures as well as vocabulary hierarchies. The third dimension pertains to “the ‘scale’ and ‘scope’ of predication” (p. 7). The scope of a predication is defined as “the extent of its coverage in relevant domains” and the scale is the felicitous size implied by the predications. The fourth dimension of imagery is the “relative salience of a predicate’s structures” (p.9). The relative salience pertains to such factors as profiling, asymmetrical relational predications. Enhanced salience results from explicit linguistic mention. The last dimension of imagery is perspective, which subsumes “orientation, assumed vantage point, directionality, and how objectively an entity is construed” (p. 12).

It is worthy of note that the term ‘imagery’ as used by Palmer (1996) and Langacker (1990) does not evoke exactly the same ‘images (or schemas)’, despite some

commonalities shared by both of them. They both reiterate imagery as conceptual and not confined to the images of objective reality (Langacker, 1990: 61; Palmer, 1996: 47). However, while Palmer (1996: 46) contends that the definition of imagery “should allow for imagery that arises from all of the sensory modes”, such as the visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and olfactory senses, Langacker (1990: 5) holds that “[b]y imagery, I do not mean sensory images ... though sensory images – as one type of conceptualisation – are quite important for semantic analysis”. Langacker discusses images as the nature of grammatical structure and claims that “grammatical structures impose specific images on the conceptual content supplied by lexical items” (Langacker, 1990: ix - x). In the words of Palmer (1996: 51), “Langacker proposed a much narrower technical definition of *image*” (italics original).

While Langacker (1990: 12) insists on the intimate relatedness between grammar and imagery, Palmer extends the notion of imagery beyond the confines of linguistic structures and applies it to the study of discourse, narratives and world view. As far as Palmer is concerned, there is a close relationship between imagery, culture and world view (as will be elaborated in next section), as well as between imagery and other levels of language. The intimate relationship between imagery and culture observed by Palmer is revealed by the statement that “*virtually all imagery is structured by culture and personal history*” (italics original. Palmer, 1996: 49). Imagery is culturally constructed, and a study of linguistics based on the study of culturally constructed imagery is cultural linguistics (Palmer, 1996: 4).

Palmer and Langacker differ in their emphasis. The different emphasis lies in the relationship between language, culture and cognition, and the roles that culture and cognition play in grammar. Firstly, Langacker (1994: 27-28) insists that language and culture are facets of cognition, and “individual minds are the primary locus of linguistic and cultural knowledge” (p. 26). Secondly, although he acknowledges that lexical elements are more dependent on culture-specific knowledge, Langacker also holds that “a typical grammatical element invokes a conceptual base that is quite schematic and seemingly devoid of culture-specific notions” (Langacker, 1994: 35). Langacker certainly does not take a position of excluding the influence of culture on language (1994: 31; 1999: 16). However, he views cultural influence as “distributional” in the sense that a specific

cultural practice or belief facilitates the understanding of “unexpected membership of some entity in a conceptually grounded category of grammatical significance” (1994: 39).

In terms of the relationship between language, culture and cognition, Palmer foregrounds culture. When discussing the origination of meaning, which involves the three aspects of (a) biologically driven cognitive processes, (b) embodied categories of physical and social experience and (c) cultural traditions, Palmer (2001b: 1) holds that “[c]ulture takes on even more significance ... when we consider that even embodied categories may be shaped by the architecture of dwellings and other material products of culture”. Palmer (2001a: 2) also posits that cognition and culture should not be separate entities, regarding them as “two views on the process whereby people with minds ... communicate, learn, think and pursue social goals”.

In terms of the roles that culture plays in language, Palmer holds that “[m]any lexical domains and grammatical constructions link directly or indirectly to significant cultural models” (Palmer, 2001a: 29). In particular, Palmer explains that “many grammatical phenomena are best understood as governed by cultural schemata rather than universal innate or emergent cognitive schemata” (Palmer, 2001a: 1). Palmer perceives a transition of cognitive linguistics to cultural linguistics, “[w]hen a class of linguistic expressions is seen as relative to one or more semantic domains of relatively extensive scope with complex category structures and rich details” (Palmer, 2001a: 2).

Briefly, images are formed on the basis of immediate perception, and by nature, they are abstract mental representations. In cognitive linguistics, imagery is seen as a way of construing a situation such as through figure-ground organisation. In cultural linguistics, imagery is seen as culturally constructed.

3.4 World view

World view is a translation of the German concept of ‘Weltanschauung’. “[T]he German romantics in a tradition leading to Humboldt in the nineteenth century found a unique *Weltanschauung*, ‘world view’, in each language” (Gumperz and Levinson, 1996: 1-2). Basically, the world view ‘thesis’ posits that there is a close relationship between language and thought in that “the semantic structures of different languages might be fundamentally incommensurable, with consequences for the way in which speakers of specific languages might think and act” (Gumperz and Levinson, 1996: 2). *Linguistic*

relativity, which claims that “culture, *through* language, affects the way we think” (Gumperz and Levinson, 1996: 1) might be regarded as a manifestation of world view.

The understandings of world view and linguistic relativity can be achieved through different frameworks of thoughts such as in philosophy, linguistics, cognitive sciences and anthropology. Palmer (1996) takes a cognitive approach to world view, by which he means that there is a cognitive model that underlies world view. That is, “world view is the fundamental cognitive orientation of a society, a subgroup, or even an individual” (p. 113 – 114). The cognitive approach to world view entails that world view “subsumes the schematic imagery of linguistic semantics” (p. 114). Since schematic imagery is culturally constructed, Palmer views world view as “culturally defined imagery” (Palmer, 1996: 116).

Regarding the role of world view, Palmer holds that although a partially shared world view among cultural groups is subject to criticism of varying degrees, “[i]t would still provide us with an approach to understanding language and culture” (1996: 122) and “it is the culturally constructed, conventional and mutually presupposed imagery of world view that provides the stable points of reference for the interpretation of discourse” (p. 6). Moreover, Palmer (1996: 114) holds that “world view can be seen as an important determinant of grammar; and the study of grammar can be regarded as the study of world view constrained to linguistic symbols”.

Cultural schemas operate to produce a recognizable world view (Rice, 1980: 154). The Australian Aboriginal world view of the Dreaming is an example of world view. It “is characterised by an eternity in which time is not sharply partitioned into ‘past’, ‘present’, etc”. (Sharifian, Rochecouste and Malcolm, in press). The thesis of world view therefore relates to the present study and is used to analyse some of the data produced by the Chinese participants.

3.5 Discourse scenarios in cultural linguistics

As an originator of cultural linguistics, Palmer lays stress on the study of discourse. Palmer (2001a: 5) asserts that “[a] linguistic theory is suspect unless it contributes to our understanding of discourse”. Cultural linguistics undertakes the study of discourse with two principles (Palmer, 2001a: 5). The first principle emphasizes the role of discourse *per se* in generating the meaning of lexemes and constructions. In this regard, Palmer claims

that “part of the meaning of every lexeme and construction is its habitually situated use in discourse” (p. 5). The second principle stresses the role of verbal and social interaction scenarios in constructing discourse, that is, in Palmer’s words, “discourse is governed by scenarios of verbal and social interaction” (p. 5). In other words, besides the culture-specific patterns and sequences of discourse, the scenarios of verbal and social interaction, according to Palmer, play a complementary function in supporting the understanding of discourse.

The notion of *discourse scenarios* (Palmer, 1996, 2001a, 2001b) seems to embrace the cultural and schematic principles of cultural linguistics. A scenario is established on the basis of ‘cognitive models’ or ‘schemas’. A scenario is thus defined as “a culturally defined sequence of actions, a story-schema” (Palmer, 1996: 75). Action, imagery, contingencies and emotional values are inherent in scenarios (Palmer, 1996: 76). Alternatively, Palmer (2001a: 4) also states that “[t]hose [schemas] involving actions and sequences are scenarios” or scenarios as “schematic cultural models of social action” (2001b: 2). Therefore, what is inherent in scenarios is being culturally defined, being schematic and involving a sequence of actions. The culturally defined nature of scenarios is recognized by Palmer (2001a: 4) to be related to the strong influence of history and socio-cultural context.

Like other cognitive models, scenarios are conceptually constructed and imagistic. The concept of scenarios foregrounds “the imagery of social action and discourse” (Palmer, 2001a: 4). The imagistic property of scenarios may be seen to be compatible with the idea of Lakoff (1987: 285-286) who claims that “the scenario is structured by a SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema in the time domain”. The SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image-schema resembles the sequential nature of scenarios despite the fact that scenarios may accommodate a variety of sequences when employed to study discourse. The conceptual relationship between a scenario and its ontological entities of the initial state, the final state and the events is that the scenario is regarded by Lakoff (1987: 286) as the relationship between WHOLE and PART. The scenario is a WHOLE and the each of the ontological entities is a PART.

Palmer gives prominence to discourse scenarios in discourse study. He proposes that culturally defined scenarios should be employed “to investigate the way in which

discourse itself is represented” (Palmer, 1996: 170). He suggests several uses of discourse scenarios. These are “to discover why discourse is coherent or incoherent, to determine how talk about discourse can make sense, and to investigate how various cultures and subcultures may define discourse scenarios differently” (Palmer, 1996: 170).

Discourse scenarios are “cognitive models of verbal interaction consisting of sequences of pragmatic speech act schemas” (Palmer, 1996: 292). They “consist of abstract imagery of speakers and listeners. They are complex images of people speaking, listening, and replying, or otherwise responding and reacting as they play roles in social scenes” (Palmer, 1996: 170). Discourse scenarios integrate five essential schemas, namely, participation schemas, speech act scenarios (which might also be called speech act schemas: cf. Palmer, 1996: 172), sequencing schemas, perspective schemas and ideational schemas (Palmer, 1996: 173-185). The five schemas are not exhaustive and should be treated as an “etic’ framework of analytical categories” (Palmer, 1996: 172).

According to Palmer (1996: 173), “[p]articipation schemas define who speaks to whom”. Palmer stresses the interdependent and intersubjectively defined roles that participants play in the discourse. Palmer maintains that the roles that participants play influence grammar. His argument is exemplified by the Japanese use of honorific terms of address.

Speech act scenarios, according to Palmer (1996: 176), “represent the minimal units in the sequential structures of discourse events” and also imply a participation schema. Speech act scenarios as models for “understanding the nature of participation in interaction” are regarded by Field (1998: 124) as useful. Field analyses the participation structures of Navajo preschool students with their teachers (both non-Navajo and Navajo teachers) using these speech act scenarios.

Palmer takes issue with Searle’s five basic functions of propositions in relation to speech acts, namely, the assertive, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative functions, because they are imposed by an external observer-analyst who overlooks the participants’ cognitive worlds. Thus Palmer redefines the five functions with a cognitive approach so that they become “minimal and highly schematic discourse scenarios in which interlocutors with various intentions interact to produce various cognitive and behavioral outcomes” (176 – 177). The redefined versions are as following:

Assertives predicate that speaker is thinking of something that speaker intends for listener to believe.

Directives predicate that speaker intends for listener to do something.

Commissives predicate speaker's intention to behave in a certain way under circumstances that are specified or presupposed.

Expressives predicate feeling state of speaker.

Declarations predicate that speaker intends for a particular ideational world-model or world-construal to be consensual. (Palmer, 1996: 177)

In Palmer's view, since interlocutors are not culture-free and the intentions and feelings inherent in speech acts are culturally constructed and interpreted, speech act scenarios are not universal, but subjective and culturally defined. Searle's classification of speech acts, according to Palmer, does not incorporate a variety of native languages, because it is culture-bound.

Sequencing schemas, according to Palmer (1996: 178) involve directionality, which is compatible with Lakoff's understanding of scenarios. Sequencing schemas might also be regarded as a kind of image-schema, as they "may contain imagery of non-verbal behaviour interspersed with or concurrent with verbal imagery" (p. 178). The verbal imagery and non-verbal imagery inherent in the sequencing schemas of discourse scenarios are related to 'action structures' and 'exchange structures' of discourse proposed by Schiffrin (1987: 24 cited in Palmer, 1996: 178). However, Palmer approaches the two structures from an explicit cognitive perspective, whereas Schiffrin approaches the structures from the perspective of language use.

Perspective schemas are constructed in relation to the notion of *subjectification* proposed by Langacker. Langacker (1990: 161) describes subjectification as a process which involves "an originally objective notion ... transferred to the subjective axis of the construal relation itself". Subjectification, according to Langacker (1990: 324), "represents a common type of semantic change".

Palmer maintains that perspective schemas are frequently activated by speakers and listeners for intelligible communication about discourse. In particular, perspective

schemas facilitate the understanding of the effects of quotations and pseudoquotations (1996: 184).

Palmer relates ideational schemas to the notion of discourse coherence, proposed by Redeker (1991, cited in Palmer, 1996: 185). In this respect, ideation, according to Palmer (1996: 185), “pertains to expected temporal sequences, elaborations, causes, reasons, and consequences, all more or less mutually understood by speakers and listeners”.

Note that the ideational schemas of discourse resemble the ideational function of language proposed by Halliday (1978: 112), however, the application in Palmer (1996) is confined to the scope of discourse coherence. Halliday maintains that the ideational function of language represents the meaning potential of a speaker or a writer. Through the ideational functional of language, “the language encodes the cultural experience, and the speaker encodes his own individual experience as a member of a culture” (Halliday, 1978: 112).

Like many other cognitive models, discourse scenarios may also incorporate the cognitive construal processes of figure-ground, profile-base, scope, perspective and specificity (Palmer, 1996: 185). Figure-ground construal may facilitate a clear understanding of the relationship between participants and between speech acts in the discourse. The ability to control and construe scope in discourse facilitates the understanding of the intended meaning of the discourse. The profile-base cognitive ability subsumed in discourse scenarios reinforces and justifies the claim in cultural linguistics that the meaning, either lexical meaning or discourse meaning, should be decided against the cultural schemas.

Specificity in a discourse scenario is achieved by the amount of detail included in the discourse representation. A high degree of specificity, such as providing pseudoquotations which instantiate the perspective schema, can shed light on the degree of engagement that the interlocutors create for their interactant.

In sum, by instantiating the constitutive schemas of discourse scenarios, interlocutors establish conceptual relationships with the on-going discourse (Palmer, 1996: 292).

3.5.1 Comparing discourse scenarios and other related concepts

Palmer (1996) discusses discourse scenarios in relation to some concepts that other scholars have used for discourse analysis. Despite some resemblances, discourse scenarios are observed here to have some properties that other concepts might not have.

The first property is that discourse scenarios are schematic and imagistic. Inherent in a discourse scenario is abstract imagery which is defined in the field of cognitive linguistics as “our manifest capacity to structure or construe the content of a domain in alternate ways” (Langacker, 1990: 5). A domain is a cognitive concept which is defined as “any knowledge configuration which provides the context for the conceptualisation of a semantic unit” (Taylor, 2002: 196). The schematic property of discourse scenarios is reiterated by Palmer who holds that discourse scenarios are “cognitive (and cultural) models of discourse events” (Palmer, 1996: 171).

The schematic and imagistic property of discourse scenarios marks the difference between discourse scenarios and *discourse schemas*. Discourse schemas which are used by Longacre (1996: 54) are “templates on which entire discourses are built and reflect a larger organisation”. Discourse schemas in Longacre’s sense, thus, are constrained to the organisational property of schemas, not necessarily embracing (though, perhaps not excluding) the property of being imagistic.

The second property of discourse scenarios is that they are interactive and communicative, as the “social scenes” frequently entail. It is maintained here that it is this property of discourse scenarios that sets them apart from schemas *per se*. Certainly discourse scenarios and schemas overlap in terms of properties, however, they have different functions. As emergent conceptual structures, the primary function of schemas is representation through some cognitive processes such as abstraction, comparison and analysis. While schemas “represent discourse events” (Palmer, 1996: 170), discourse scenarios accommodate the interactive and communicative aspect of social scenes embodied in language or in discourse in particular (even if sometimes the interaction and communication are achieved internally). The social scene here may equate the social context, which is reinforced when Palmer puts discourse scenarios in the context of situation models. He asserts that “[d]iscourse scenarios reside within *situation models*, which are more inclusive representations of social context” (1996: 171).

The third property of discourse scenarios is that they are dynamic, incorporating the adaptive nature of schemas. This property of discourse scenarios sets them apart from “cultural scripts” (Wierzbicka, 1994a; 1994b). Schemas in the connectionist model of Parallel Distributed Processing (PDP) (Rumelhart, Smolensky, McClelland & Hinton, 1986) have the property of being “well-learned but flexibly adaptive rather than rigidly repetitive. They can adapt to new or ambiguous situations with ‘regulated improvisation’, to use Bourdieu’s term” (Strauss and Quinn, 1997: 53).

In the context of studying cross-cultural communication (c.f. Section 2.5), Wierzbicka chooses to take the cultural script approach with the assistance of the metalanguage of universal semantic primes (1985a: 145). This is because Wierzbicka aims at minimizing the ethnocentric bias embedded in any live language when used to describe another culture (1985a). However, a cultural script, which is “a universal grid which would make it possible to describe patterns of communication from a neutral, ‘culture-free’ perspective” (Wierzbicka, 1994b: 70), might be subject to simplifying complicated life experiences embodied in discourse. Moreover, since accuracy in spelling out different native conventions of discourse is the primary concern of the cultural script approach, the approach thus does not allow much room for adaptation.

The dynamic aspect of discourse scenarios is also suggested by the term ‘scenarios’. A scenario is defined as “a culturally defined sequence of actions, a story-schema” (Palmer, 1996: 75). The sequence of actions provides “a temporal dimension” to scenarios which “come with action imagery, contingencies, and intrinsic emotional values” (Palmer, 1996: 76). The imagery and contingencies, which are inherent in scenarios, do not appear to be highlighted by cultural scripts.

Palmer also holds that although “cultural scripts are something like scenarios” (2001a: 4), he does not “reduce scenarios to statements composed of a small set of semantic primes” (p. 4) and he takes “scenarios to be gestalts or constructions built up from lower-level scenarios and event-schemas” (p. 4).

It is worth mentioning that although the notion *discourse scenarios* is similar to the notion of “interactive frames” (Tannen and Wallat, 1993: 59 – 60), there is a difference between the two notions. Basically, whilst discourse scenarios are defined as a cognitive term, interactive frames are defined by Tannen and Wallat (1993) more as a

sociolinguistic term than a cognitive term. Despite the fact that they acknowledge that interactive frames are in line with cognitive notions such ‘frame’, ‘schema’, ‘script’, ‘prototype’, ‘speech activity’, ‘template’, and ‘module’ (1993: 59), Tannen and Wallat (1993) define the notion of interactive frames in its sociolinguistic sense. For instance, they refer to the interactive notion of frame as “a definition of what is going on in interaction, without which no utterance (or movement or gesture) could be *interpreted*” (italics added. Tannen and Wallat, 1993: 59 – 60), or alternatively, as “a *sense* of what activity is being engaged in, how speakers mean what they say” (italics added. Tannen and Wallat, 1993: 60). Words such as ‘interpreted’ and ‘sense’ in their above definitions of interactive frames, together with ‘expectation’ in “the notion of expectations” (Tannen, 1993: 15), which Tannen believes “underlies talk about frames, scripts, and schemata in the fields of linguistics, artificial intelligence, cognitive psychology, social psychology, sociology, and anthropology at least” (1993: 15), suggest on-line or spontaneous *interpretations* or an instantaneous *awareness* (or sense) of the interaction activity as a result of being conscious of the interaction context. Moreover, both interpretations and expectations have an attribute of being changeable relative to external factors: they are situation-specific. This attribute of expectations is explained by Tannen (1993: 15) as “[a]s soon as we measure a new perception against what we know of the world from prior experience, we are dealing with expectations”. In other words, expectations understood this way are more in line with their meaning in the sociolinguistic sense, since schemas, although subject to ongoing modification, need to be stable and consistent on the whole.

As a result of using ‘expectations’ in their sociolinguistic sense, the notion of knowledge schema as proposed by Tannen and Wallat (1993: 60) is different from the notion of discourse scenarios. Tannen and Wallat asserts that “[w]e use the term ‘knowledge schema’ to refer to participants’ expectations about people, objects, events and settings in the world, as distinguished from alignments being negotiated in a particular interaction” (1993: 60). As Palmer (1996: 172) finds that “Tannen and Wallat’s distinction between interactive frame and knowledge schema seems to hinge on particular interactions versus general knowledge of interaction and situation’. In other words, Tannen and Wallat tend to equate the highly abstract cognitive properties of schemas with specific participants’ expectations, in line with their sociological rather than

cognitive basis for the understanding of the term *schemas*. Furthermore, participants' expectations are heavily susceptible to psychological and social influences, as well as cultural (and cognitive) influences.

In sum, the analytical categories of discourse scenarios provide an alternative to discourse analysis. The cognitive approach to discourse brings attention to people who are interested in discourse analysis. According to van Dijk (2000), “[a] *cognitive analysis, thus, is an analysis of those properties of discourse that are accounted for in terms of cognitive concepts, such as various types of mental representation*” (italics original, unpublished manuscript in the English version).

3.5.2 The application of discourse scenarios

In the interest of brevity, this section selectively reviews two studies applying discourse scenarios. Palmer (1996) analyses the use of Japanese formal and honorific expressions in a transaction discourse using the concept of discourse scenarios. The transaction discourse occurred between a salesman in his forties and a housewife, mother of two, at the door of the housewife in Tokyo. At least three basic kinds of imagery were found by Palmer to structure the transaction discourse. The first set of imagery is “the constructed scene, situation, or text world” (Palmer, 1996: 204). The imagery of conceptual scene is construed on the basis of background knowledge regarding the housewife-customer being able to afford a new sewing machine. The second set of imagery is “the temporarily invoked relative social ranking of the participants” (Palmer, 1996: 204). The imagery of ranking is construed according to participation schemas, which, in the context of this Japanese transaction, are culturally-constructed “schemas of social ranking and distance [that] underlie most Japanese discourse” (Palmer, 1996: 200). The invoked schema of social ranking governs the formal and the honorific expression in the transaction discourse, which, as far as the salesman is concerned, may arouse the sympathy of the customer as does a senior interlocutor to a junior one.

The third set of imagery that impinges on the use of Japanese honorific language is “the sequence of speech acts” (Palmer, 1996: 204). The overall speech act inherent in the transactional discourse is selling a product. However, the sequence schema for minor speech acts involved in the overall speech act is also culturally-constructed. For instance, the sequence schema predicates that the speech act which (in Palmer's sense [1996: 204],

is a small act encompassed by a clause or a phrase of asking questions following another speech act of questioning should be conducted with honorific expressions by the Japanese salesman.

Palmer (2001a) has also investigated voice and emotional expressions in Tagalog discourse by applying the notion of scenarios. In this research, Palmer demonstrates that “the highly abstract scenarios underlying voice are instantiated in the emotional discourse ... and provide the key to understanding that discourse” (Palmer, 2001a: 2). Personal agency is found to be a major element in the repertoire of Tagalog (2001a: 22). The notion of agency is related to the schema of social interaction in which the focal participant performs an action. By definition, “[a]gency is the capacity of an intentional being or social group to make choices, to perform actions that have predictable consequences, to effect results, or to control situations” (Palmer, 2001b: 14). The scenario of social interaction is found by Palmer to govern discourse (2001a: 5).

Palmer makes use of the melodrama entitled *I Hope It Will Be Repeated Again* for the analysis of Tagalog voice and emotion expressions. The melodrama instantiates a conceptual scenario that the protagonists, unless in the case of crisis, often present themselves and one another as grammatical experiencers or patients, rather than the agency of actions. The use of different forms of voice in Tagalog discourse communicates “agency or lack of agency on the part of the central participants” (Palmer, 2001a: 14). The scenarios of loss and recapture of personal agency in Tagalog underlie the use of Tagalog voice and emotional expressions, and facilitate our understanding of the schema of social interaction among Tagalog people. In other words, the forms of voice and the scenarios are mutually supportive. On the one hand, the study of construction of voice in Tagalog can “reveal much about the construal of discourse situations by the participants” (2001b: 19), and on the other hand, the constructions can be best understood by “examining their uses in discourses where agency is at issue”.

3.6 Discourse indexicals in cultural linguistics

Cultural linguistics also makes use of discourse indexicals. Discourse indexicals (or discursives) are “[t]erms whose main function is to predicate some aspect of on-going discourse in which the speaker is engaged” (Palmer, 2001a: 5). These terms might also be known as ‘fillers’, ‘non-referential indexicals’ (Silverstein, 1976) or discourse markers

(Schiffrin, 1987) among some discourse analysts, since in linguistic forms, discourse indexicals are also discourse particles, conjunctions, connectives, such as ‘well’, ‘so’, ‘um’, ‘uh huh’, ‘right’, ‘yes’, tag questions, or the particle ‘like’ in English (Palmer, 1996 and 2001a).

The differences between discourse indexicals and fillers, non-referential indexicals and discourse markers lie in the functions that they are assumed to play in discourse. Non-referential indexicals are regarded as lacking conventional referential meaning (Silverstein, 1976 cited in Palmer, 1996: 206) and only function as ‘pointers’ external to the meaning of discourse. Fillers do not alter the propositional content of the discourse as the main function that they perform is pause-filling. Discourse indexicals, on the other hand, are treated by Palmer (1996 and 2001a) with the same importance as with other linguistic expressions. Discourse indexicals “predicate conventional meanings and derive meaning from context, much as do other linguistic expressions” (Palmer, 1996: 207), and they are “verbal symbols whose semantic domain happens to be the on-going and ambient discourse itself” (Palmer, 2001a: 6)

Discourse indexicals resemble “discourse markers” (Schiffrin, 1987) in terms of linguistic form. However, discourse indexicals and discourse markers have different discourse functions. Discourse markers are defined by Schiffrin as “**sequentially dependent** elements which bracket units of talk” (bold text original. Schiffrin, 1987: 31). By bracketing, Schiffrin (1987: 31) means providing with “devices which are both cataphoric and anaphoric whether they are in initial or terminal position”. The functions of discourse markers are thus seen to be referential by Schiffrin (1987: 63) who also maintains that the referential meaning of discourse markers “may influence discourse function by contributing to expressive and/or social meaning”.

Discourse indexicals are considered by cultural linguistics to have a function different from discourse markers. Discourse indexicals have meta-discourse functions, because they are involved in such cognitive processes as schematization and symbolization of aspects of discourse. Depending on the conceptualized features of discourse that discourse indexicals predicate, they can be characterized as pragmatic, intentional, situational, phonological and ideological (Palmer, 1996: 207 and 2001a: 6).

The characterisation of the meta-discourse functions of discourse indexicals bears on the present study.

The meta-discourse function of discourse indexicals can be regarded as “symbolizing abstract imagery of discourse itself” (Palmer, 1996: 212). Since each language has its own discourse imagery (Palmer, 2001a: 6), the meaning of discourse indexicals, which are related to discourse imagery, may be culture-specific. *Yo* as a Japanese discourse indexical is studied by Cook (1991, cited in Palmer, 1996) to have both direct meanings and indirect meanings in discourse. The direct meaning of *Yo* is the stable and abstract meaning which schematically points to the speaker’s utterance. The indirect meaning of *Yo* is situated in the discourse context, where it “takes on the characters of speech acts” (Palmer, 1996: 211), and instantiates social status, since it predicates the evoked various elements of the discourse. In other words, Japanese *Yo* has both the schematic and emergent meanings.

3.7 Summary

Cultural linguistics is the theoretical framework on which the present study is built. As the synthesis of anthropological linguistics and cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics holds that language, cognition and culture are mutually related. More often than not, culture shapes cognition, language structure and linguistic meaning. Despite the fact that some meanings might be derived from innate experience or pre-conceptualisation, most meanings are culture-specific. Culture is an intrinsic component of human cognition and plays a significant role in meaning formation. Cognitive models or schemas, which are the sources for meanings to be derived from, are largely culture-specific and thus become *cultural models* or *cultural schemas*. Culture-constructed imagery underlies the construction of cultural schemas. World view can be regarded as an example of culturally defined imagery.

At the level of discourse, cultural schemas take the form of discourse scenarios. Discourse scenarios, which are conceptual or abstract imagery embodied in discourse, are all culturally construed. Different cultures may have developed different imagery to underpin its discourse construction. Discourse scenarios combine five discourse related schemas, namely, participation schemas, speech acts schemas, sequence schemas, perspective schemas and ideational schemas. In particular, speech acts are regarded as

minimal discourse scenarios, and they entail participants' intentions and emotions. Participants of different cultures may attempt to perform similar speech acts with different intentions and emotion, but this can lead them to produce different speech acts.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction to the chapter

The present study was designed to explore the influence, and the extent of the influence, that Chinese culture exerts on the discourse produced by mainland Chinese speakers of English when they interact with Anglo-Australians. Research methods adopted by the present study were geared towards the objective of identifying distinctive and persistent Chinese cultural schemas and discourse scenarios that structure the Chinese ways of speaking in intercultural situations.

The present study observed some key principles of the ethnography of communication (EOC) and integrated it with cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics for identifying Chinese cultural schemas. Despite the overlap of the three disciplines of EOC, cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics, all having similar research interests and all being rooted in anthropology, their distinctive emphases enable them to be set apart. EOC (Gumperz and Hymes, 1972; Hymes, 1962, 1974; Saville-Troike, 1989), also called the ethnography of speaking (EOS) (Bauman and Sherzer, 1974), is mainly concerned with language use situated in social-cultural contexts. Cognitive anthropology, on the other hand, investigates cultural knowledge by focusing on how thought works in different cultural settings. Cultural linguistics then stresses the influence of culturally constructed imagery, schemas and scenarios on language structures and language use.

This chapter firstly provides an outline of the research traditions of EOC² and its related disciplines. Then it reviews a number of methods for identifying cultural schemas in the fields of cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics. Thirdly, a rationale for integrating EOC with cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics for the present study is also provided. Fourthly, methods and procedures for identifying and analysing Chinese

² For the convenience of writing, EOC in this thesis stands for both EOC and EOS unless the original quotes code it differently.

cultural schemas are also discussed. Lastly, specific information on pilot studies, participant selection, data collection and coding systems is also presented.

4.2 Research traditions of ethnography of communication, sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology

EOC is interwoven with sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics, according to Duranti (1997: 13), is the field closest to linguistic anthropology. A thorough review of EOC, thus, requires a preliminary review of linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics.

Linguistic anthropology is one of the subfields of anthropology. It is “*the study of language within the context of anthropology*” (italics original. Hymes, 1964: xxiii). Duranti (1997: 2) defines the field of linguistic anthropology as “*the study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice*” (italics original). Linguistic anthropology approaches language “from the point of view of *man*” (italics original. Hymes, 1964: xxiii), since anthropology means the study of mankind. Earlier American linguistic anthropologists, who were often ethnologists, were mainly concerned with describing and understanding indigenous Indian languages before they became extinct or were affected by western language systems. The founders of linguistic anthropology, such as Franz Boas (1858 – 1942) and his first Ph. D. student Alfred Kroeber (1876 – 1960), studied indigenous languages by drawing on the traditions of ethnology. Boas (1964 [1911]: 15 – 17) claimed that there were practical and theoretical needs for integrating ethnology and linguistics. Kroeber (1964: xvii) held the view that language and culture are so interrelated that the relationship should be called “language in culture”. Edward Sapir (1884 – 1939) and his student Benjamin Whorf (1897 – 1941) expanded the research interests in indigenous languages in America and developed the hypothesis of linguistic relativity (see Section 3.4), also known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. Basically, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis deals with the relationship between language, categorisation and culture, and claims that people who speak different languages perceive and categorise the world differently. One of Sapir’s assertions which illustrates the key content of the hypothesis states that “[h]uman beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of

expression for their society” (Sapir, 1958 [1929]: 69) Similarly, Whorf claimed that “[w]e dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages” (Whorf, 1940: 213).

The close concern with the relationship between language and culture yields a subsequent interdisciplinary field, known as sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics has developed mainly as a critical reaction or a corrective to formal linguistics which was seen to be concerned primarily with generative grammar and an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogenous or simplified speech community (Chomsky, 1965). Hymes (1972b) drew attention to the disadvantage of studying language without drawing on social and cultural contexts. Hymes asserted that models in formal linguistics “leave out much, not only of context, but also of features and patterns of speech itself” (Hymes, 1972b: xix). He thus stressed the importance of studying language in social and cultural contexts, and maintained that the understanding of the structure of language and its communicative functions should be based on the relationship between language and society. Consequently, Hymes focuses on communicative competence rather than the linguistic competence as proposed by Chomsky (1965). Communicative competence, according to Hymes, enables a child of the language “to participate in its society as not only a speaking, but also a communicating member” (Hymes, 1974: 75). Communicative competence, thus, requires not only knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in Chomsky’s sense, but also knowledge of rules of speaking (such as how to begin and end conversations, turn-taking etc.), knowledge of using language appropriately in different social settings, with persons of different social status and social distance, and knowledge of accomplishing and recognising speech acts (Richards, Platt and Platt, 1992: 65). Appropriateness is at the heart of communicative competence.

Communicative competence is instantiated by communicative conduct or communicative performances in various social situations, which, in turn, give rise to different linguistic means suitable to social systems. Thus one of the major goals of sociolinguistics, according to Gumperz (1972: 11), is to study language distribution so as to “compare social systems in terms of what languages are spoken, by how many people in what contexts, and in terms of what the local attitudes to these languages are”. It follows that sociolinguistics, as the name of the field suggests, entails the

interdependence between social systems and language, which is best expressed by Hymes (1974):

“Sociolinguistics” could be taken to refer to use of linguistic data and analyses in other disciplines, concerned with social life, and, conversely, to use social data and analyses in linguistics. The word could also be taken to refer to correlation between languages and societies, and between particular linguistic and social phenomena. (Hymes, 1974: vii)

In particular, the focus on the interactions of language and social life leads sociolinguists to studying language diversity and speech variation, that is, how linguistic means vary with different contextual factors, such as ethnicity, social class, gender, geography and age. In other words, language varieties, such as dialects, pidgins, creoles across communities are of primary interest in sociolinguistics.

To achieve the outcomes of describing and analysing language use in society, it is necessary for sociolinguists to distinguish some “social units” (Hymes, 1972a: 53) such as speech communities, speech situations, speech events and speech acts. Speech, first of all, according to Hymes (1972a: 53), is not limited to oral language form. Rather, it is a general term for all forms of language “including writing, song and speech-derived whistling, drumming, and the like”. Since speech prevails in communities, speech communities are a primary concept for sociolinguistics. Speech community studies are essential for studying ongoing language use and language change (Gumperz, 1972: 13).

A speech community is defined as “a community sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic variety” (Hymes, 1972a: 54). For the purpose of description, Hymes postulates that a speech community is “a social, rather than linguistic, entity” (Hymes, 1972a: 54; 1974: 47 & 51). Speech communities may, but not necessarily, coincide with other social groupings such as countries, tribes, religious or ethnic groups (Gumperz, 1972: 16).

Speech situations are embedded in a speech community. They are the contexts in which speech normally plays a significant role. Speech situations enter into speech by

labelling some rules of speaking, although they are not governed by these rules of speaking. Speech situations normally prescribe speech setting, that is, its time and place. The influence of speech situations on ways of speaking is indispensable.

Speech events are “activities, or aspects of activities, that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech (Hymes, 1972a: 56). A speech event is “[t]he basic unit for the analysis of verbal interaction in speech communities” (Gumperz, 1972: 16). The indispensable function of speech events for the analysis of verbal interaction parallels the primary function of the sentence for the analysis of grammar (Gumperz, 1972: 17). The speech event is coterminous with communicative event (Saville-Troike, 1989). Saville-Troike provides us with a detailed account of the components of a speech event:

The *communicative event* is the basic unit for descriptive purposes. A single event is defined by the unified set of components throughout, beginning with the same general purpose of communication, the same general topic, and involving the same participants, generally using the same language variety, maintaining the same tone or key and the same rules for interaction, in the same setting. (Italics original. Saville-Troike, 1989: 27)

Speech acts are not identifiable in models of formal linguistic theory. However, in sociolinguistics, they can be analysed by extending syntactic and semantic structures to cover the knowledge that speakers share and the way speech contexts shape external linguistic forms. Speech acts refer to the functions that utterances are expected to achieve. Speech acts are the smallest communicative unit of speech communities, speech situations and speech events. Hymes (1972a: 56) gives an illumination of the three units: a party is a speech situation; a conversation during the party is a speech event; and a joke within the conversation is a speech act.

As an interdisciplinary field, sociolinguistics does not exclude cultural knowledge, cultural norms, cultural identity, value systems and expectations that speakers of the language often draw upon when communicating (Malcolm, personal communication).

Culture-related knowledge, norms, values and expectations in sociolinguistics are regarded as important contextual factors leading to or influencing language varieties or speech variations. Thus, culture in sociolinguistics is a starting point which is revealed in Hymes (1964) and Gumperz and Hymes (1972). Many works by Hymes and Gumperz, either individually or collaboratively, illustrate the cultural foundation in sociolinguistics. Culture in sociolinguistics is also a point of reference for those scholars who approach sociolinguistics from anthropological traditions (eg. Bauman and Sherzer, 1974; Keenan, 1974; Philips, 1974; Reisman, 1974). However, it must be pointed out that scholars with such perspectives from sociology (Fishman, 1972) and psychology (eg. Ervin-Tripp, 1969) might background culture in their framework of enquiry.

An ethnographic approach to sociolinguistics (and in anthropological traditions) purports to investigate language use in a variety of situations and dedicates itself to detailed descriptions of various social relationships which are closely associated with language use. Such an approach is known as the Ethnography of Communication (EOC). EOC, as developed by Hymes in a series of publications in the 1960s and 1970s, is a multi-disciplinary model of enquiry that investigates communication within the overall framework of communicative competence. EOC was driven by a motivation to bring linguists with intensive interests in linguistic forms and linguistic competence to interests in the semantics and functions of language. “[T]he point of departure” of EOC from abstract linguistic studies is the speech community (Bauman and Sherzer, 1974: 6) *vis-à-vis* the simplified, homogeneous world where the idealised speaker/listener is studied for linguistic competence. Speech communities in EOC, according to Bauman and Sherzer (1974: 6-7), are defined along the lines of ethnography which stresses knowledge and ability distribution as the cause of linguistic diversity. The following quote illustrates Bauman and Sherzer’s profile of shared knowledge and ability in determining a speech community:

“[T]he speech community ... [is] defined in terms of the shared or mutually complementary knowledge and ability (competence) of its members for the production and interpretation of socially appropriate speech. Such a community is an organization of diversity, insofar as

this knowledge and ability ... are differentially distributed among its member. (Bauman and Sherzer, 1974: 6)

Bauman and Sherzer's (1974) emphasis on shared knowledge resembles Hymes' emphasis on shared rules, if rules are regarded as knowledge. Bauman and Sherzer (1974: 7), then, elucidate that the ground rules for speaking in a particular speech community are composed of "the set of community norms, operating principles, strategies, and values which guide the production and interpretation of speech". Norms of interpretation and conventional understandings also have a bearing on interpreting speech in a community. Within the speech community, according to Bauman and Sherzer, meaningful speaking is located in the native or "culture-specific" contexts of speech activities and carried on by the socially defined members. Thus, one of the aims of EOC is to construct "a descriptive theory of speaking as a cultural system in a particular society" (Bauman and Sherzer, 1974: 7).

EOC parallels sociolinguistics in many ways. Thus, much that has been said about sociolinguistics can be applied to EOC. EOC, as Bauman and Sherzer (1974: 3) observe, integrates "themes and perspectives from a range of anthropological, literary, and linguistic scholarship". EOC has a bearing "on *speaking* as a theoretically and practically crucial aspect of human social life ... and on ethnography as the means of elucidating the patterns and functions of speaking in societies" (italics original). In other words, EOC is "[c]onsistent with current views of the nature and purpose of ethnography" and "may be conceived of as research directed towards the formulation of descriptive theories of speaking as a *cultural* system or as part of *cultural* systems" (italics added. Bauman and Sherzer, 1974: 6).

Like Hymes (1972), Bauman and Sherzer, who bring to the fore culture as an important element of social life, also address (1974) the issues of linguistic variety and speech diversity in a speech community and introduce salient paralinguistic aspects of language such as social ranking, gender and politeness norms. In conclusion, EOC "attempts to provide a basis for a fully inclusive description of the ways in which communicative behaviours operate within a given society and for a wider theory of speech use" (Malcolm, 1998: 5).

The foregoing review of sociolinguistics and EOC shows that, in both sociolinguistics and EOC, systems of culture and society are intrinsic factors to language and constitute the resources of communication (Bauman and Sherzer, 1974). While social systems are highlighted in the majority of publications on EOC, cultural systems are not ignored by ethnographers of communication. The concept of ways of speaking is particularly constructed by Hymes to remind linguists that speaking “shows cultural patterning” (Hymes, 1974: 446). Furthermore, according to Bauman and Sherzer (1974: 89), “sets of general cultural themes and social-interactional organizing principles” are equally crucial in giving shape to a community’s speech situations and events and the underlying dynamics of its communicative activity. Similarly, Saville-Troike (1989) also observes the importance of culture in EOC. She (1989: 1) maintains that EOC “focuses on the patterning of communicative behavior as it constitutes one of the systems of *culture*, as it functions within the holistic context of *culture*, and as it relates to pattern in other component systems” (italics added).

EOC not only studies the norms of communicative conduct in different communities, but also deals with research methods for studying these norms (Trudgill, 1989: ix). By integrating the traditions of anthropology and linguistics, EOC develops its own research designs and research methods for collecting and analysing descriptive data. For example, an EOC research design “must allow an openness to categories and modes of thought and behavior which may not have been anticipated by the investigator” (Saville-Troike, 1989: 4). In order to understand and provide holistic explanations of meaning and communicative behaviours, EOC involves first and foremost various forms of field work such as participant-observation, non-participant-observation, introspection, interviewing and seeking emic verification from native speakers as a means for data collection and data analysis. In this way, subjectivity should be minimised.

Participant-observation, which requires a lengthened immersion in the culture, can assist the ethnographer to develop a thorough understanding of the culture under study. Participant-observation can also enable ethnographers to get access to first-hand information. However, participant-observation has at least one drawback which is the renowned “observer’s paradox”, that is, “the observer cannot observe what would have happened if he or she had not been present” (Saville-Troike, 1989: 113). In other words,

participant-observation might lead to the potential slip of data as much as other research techniques may do.

To identify the constituents of a communicative event or a speech event, Hymes (1974) provides an etic grid of components for data collection, description and analysis. The classificatory grid consists of the mnemonic code word of SPEAKING. Hymes illustrates that a competent member of a speech community has the knowledge of such communication components as the setting and scene (S), participants including speaker/sender/addressor and hearer/receiver/addressee (P), ends as speech goals and ends as speech outcomes (E), message forms and message content, which are dubbed jointly as components of act sequence (A), the tone, manner or spirit as the key of speech (K), channels and forms of the speech as instrumentalities (I), norms of interaction and norms of interpretation (N) and genres (G) (Hymes, 1974: 55-62). The etic and heuristic input for ethnographers as identified by Hymes is mainly used as “one type of *frame* ...within which meaningful differences can be discovered and described [among different speech communities]” (italics original. Saville-Troike, 1989: 157).

Thus far, it can be summarised that EOS integrates both the emic and the etic insights for data collection, description and analysis. The concepts of emic and etic originated with Kenneth Lee Pike (1912 – 2000), an American anthropologist and linguist, who coined the words from phonemic and phonetic respectively (Pike, [1954, 1955, 1960], 1962 & 1964). Pike (1964) explains that emes (or emic units) occur not only in speech, but also in all kinds of non-verbal activities. “[T]he emic analysis of the emic units of human behaviour must analyse the behaviour in reference to the manner in which native participants in that behaviour react to their own behaviour and to the behaviour of their colleagues” (Pike, 1964: 55). In other words, it is the native’s or insider’s account that underpins the emic analysis. The etic view, on the other hand, is drawn from non-native evaluative standards. The etic analysis can be done by scholars in the same way as phonetic analysis can be done by linguists. “Scientists are the sole judges of the validity of an etic account, just as linguists are the sole judges of the accuracy of a phonetic transcription” (Lett, 1996: 382). Pertaining to the present study, the citation from Pike below is illustrative:

The *etic* view is cross-cultural in that its units are derived by comparing many systems and by abstracting from them units which are synthesized into a single scheme which is then analytically applied as a single system. The *emic* view is mono-cultural with its units derived from the internal functional relations of only one individual or culture at a time. (Pike, 1962: 32)

Pike's distinction of emic and etic has a bearing on ethnography of communication and thus on the present research. What is worthy of mention is that doing ethnography of any kind does not necessarily require the linear, chronological processes of data collection, description and analysis. The processes or procedures can and should be conducted simultaneously during the field work. As long as objectivity is maximised, the emic and etic insights should be drawn on during the whole process of the research.

4.3 Research traditions of EOC and the present study

EOC has a strong bearing on the research reported in this thesis. Firstly, this study draws on the concept of speech community which is employed by EOC and sociolinguistics to identify a group of tertiary-level educated adult mainland Chinese speakers of English who have the English competence to interact with Anglo-Australians for social purposes. The identification of the speech community marks the boundaries of the data to be collected. The data hence do not include discourse provided by overseas Chinese (such as from Singapore, Malaysia or Indonesia), or by Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan speakers of Chinese, who are geographically outside the mainland.

Secondly, following EOC, the researcher made an effort to take a non-interventionist position. It was understood by the researcher that her might augment the potential for subjectivity and the participants might also have found the presence of the Chinese researcher an imposed constraint on their free conversations. Thus, the researcher chose not to influence in any way the intercultural conversations in terms of time, venue, content and pace. Specific procedures for data collection will be presented in Section 4.8.

In addition, it was designed that data were collected with audio-recording merely. The concern was that video-recording might have unnecessarily increased anxiety among

the participants who were not used to 'being exposed to public', besides the effect of limiting the number of volunteer participants.

Maximal objectivity in data analysis was achieved by researcher keeping a maximum emotional distance from the data. The emotional distance facilitated the researcher to develop the awareness of an 'outsider' and relied on participants and informants for their emic views. Specific procedures for seeking emic insights from interview participants will also be presented in Section 4.8.

It must be made explicit that the researcher, as a mainland Chinese speaker of English, is a member of the speech community studied. Despite the fact that one of the downsides of studying one's own culture is the possibility of being subjective, which has been controlled as much as possible as far as the present study was concerned, there was at least one advantage. Regarding studying one's own culture, Saville-Troike (1989:110) recognises that "[c]ombining observation and self-knowledge, the ethnographer can plumb the depths and explore the subtle interconnections of meaning in ways that outsider could attain only with great difficulty, if at all". Besides the advantage of belonging to the speech community under investigation, the researcher was able to access a large body of data written in Chinese on Chinese worldview, philosophies, religions, common sayings to enhance the reliability of her insights. These documents substantiate Chinese culture in line as Wang (1999: 285) who contends that "[f]rom the most remote times, historical writing was already an indispensable basis of Chinese culture".

Researchers' accessibility to native cultural models is recommended by Palmer (1996) who maintains that:

[A] researcher should ideally become a participant in the culture, because learning to interpret nuances and to speak with the understanding of a native requires empathy that implies a deep and thorough understanding of native cultural models and competence in native patterns of discourse. The more similar our experiences to those of native speakers, the more likely we are to develop the imagery and conceptual bases needed to use and understand languages appropriately.

Where possible, we should try to learn the same things in the same perceptual modes as they are learned by natives (Palmer, 1996: 294).

Evidently, EOC has a bearing on the present study. However, the present study is not limited by EOC. The major task of EOC, as is laid out by Saville-Troike (1989: 110), is “the discovery and explication of the rules for contextually appropriate behaviour in a community or a group”. The present study was designed to study the intrinsic connections between discourse and cultural schemas, and to explore to what extent culture influences the discourse produced by mainland Chinese speakers of English. Speech community members under study have often been observed by many scholars (eg. Gao, 1991) to draw on the deeply rooted cultural knowledge that they grow up with and are familiar with. In the current situation, a methodology was required for identifying cultural schemas, which is commonly available to cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics.

Before reviewing the methods and procedures that cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics employ to identify cultural schemas, it is necessary to articulate the position that the present study takes regarding the relationship between culture and society. It is obvious that anthropology and its subfields of sociolinguistics, EOC and cognitive anthropology all deal with culture and society. It also seems that from the perspective of anthropology, society, to a large extent, converges with culture when ethnographies have been conducted in various indigenous societies such as the native peoples of the Americas, the Pacific and the far Orient, as documented by D’Andrade (1995:1). These studies began by reconstructing the prehistory of the indigenous peoples, exploring archaeological evidence by recording their unwritten languages in the late 19th century. Anthropologists of the time would have been exposed to societies whose cultural knowledge remained relatively intact and embodied in kinship organisation. It is maintained there that, to a large extent, social structures and social organisation in those societies might not have undergone dynamic changes such as those which occurred in French Revolution (1789 – 1799) or the founding of the People’s Republic of China (1949), although they are also likely to have gone through considerable changes over time. These social structures and social organisation could still reflect the stable cultural

knowledge of thousands of years. Studying the social organisation, social systems, and social structures of such indigenous people, which an ethnographer can get access to as a cultural outsider, provides relatively direct access to the cultural knowledge held by the group being studied.

As far as the present study is concerned, society and culture in Chinese history are not necessarily convergent. Society is commonly viewed as “a body of individuals living as members of a community” (Item 1. p. 1660 *The Macquarie Dictionary*), but in mainland China the word ‘society’ includes the concept of an over-riding hierarchical institution of people organised by dynasties in the past and by governments in the present times. While revolutions and political campaigns have driven the dynamics of Chinese society and they have had roots in the culture, no Chinese social or political system has been sustained as long as or as fully as the Chinese traditional culture. In other words, in most cases, Chinese society and Chinese culture are two disparate notions. While the notion of society may reflect the social changes that mainland China has gone through for the past 5000 years, the notion of culture may better reflect the lasting characteristics of cultural knowledge. As far as the reliability of the present study is concerned, it is the relatively more stable cultural knowledge that has survived the changes of Chinese dynasties and governments, rather than the unpredictable politically-manipulated society, that is the focus of the study, although the study does acknowledge the influences of social changes on Chinese mainland speakers of English.

4.4 Identifying cultural schemas in cognitive anthropology

As mentioned above, linguistic anthropology, which might be regarded as aligned with sociolinguistics and EOC, developed as a subfield of anthropology. Like linguistic anthropology, cognitive anthropology is also a subfield of anthropology, having emerged in the late 1950s (D’Andrade, 1995: 1) “concurrently with cognitive studies in psychology” (Colby, 1996: 209). D’Andrade (1995: 1) defines cognitive anthropology as “*the study of the relations between human society and human thought*” (italics original). Colby (1996: 209) also contends that the emphasis of cognitive anthropology throughout most of its history has been on “its intellectual, rational side”. This is similar to D’Andrade (1995: 1) who reiterates that cognitive anthropology studies how social

people conceive of and think about objects that exist in both the natural world and the social world.

Like linguistic anthropology, cognitive anthropology is an interdisciplinary field. It may also be traced back to Franz Boas with his and his disciples' and his colleagues' who were concerned with indigenous customs and cultural knowledge and the recording of unwritten languages (Colby, 1996: 210; D'Andrade, 1995: 14). However, unlike linguistic anthropology which focuses on language use from the perspective of its native speakers, cognitive anthropology is more linked to psychology due to the overlapping research interests in the categorisation and reasoning by native peoples. Moreover, cognitive anthropology is closely connected to linguistics, as “[c]ognitive anthropology investigates cultural knowledge, knowledge which is embedded in words, stories, and in artifacts, and which is learned from and shared with other humans” (D'Andrade, 1995: xiv). There are at least two reasons for cognitive anthropology to be associated with language (D'Andrade, 1995: 3). The first one is that the oral language itself in indigenous communities is as much evidence of cultural heritage as any archaeological evidence. Thus language is a worthy source of data meriting close investigation by anthropologists. Secondly, learning the indigenous language in order to observe and participate in the community activities is a basic research tool for anthropologists. Without the tool of language, anthropologists are unable to obtain reliable data.

From the 1950s to the 1960s, cognitive anthropology mainly focused on kin terms and plant taxonomies embodied in ethnoscience (alternatively called ‘ethnosemantics’, or ‘the new ethnography’). Kessing (1987: 369) points out the limitations of ethnoscience and criticises the field for producing “cultural grammar”, which in Kessing’s view, is both untenable and naïve. Several anthropologists in the 1970s and the 1980s then went beyond the limits of taxonomy and explored culturally-specific knowledge structures which were alternatively called folk models (D'Andrade, 1987), cultural models or cultural schemas by Holland and Quinn (1987). The search for cultural models or cultural schemas was partly instigated by the zeal for the significance of mental structures in cognitive sciences. By the 1970s, cognitive anthropologists had been influenced by research in artificial intelligence which demonstrated with computer programs that “much of human discourse makes reference to unstated schemas and cannot be understood

without knowledge of these schemas” (D’Andrade, 1995: 125). Models and schemas, together with categorisations, metaphors and conceptual blends are the main content of human conceptualisation (Sharifian, 2003: 188).

As a multi-disciplinary field, since the 1980s cognitive anthropology has included inquiry into emotion, memory and motivation. The study of these mental processes reveals how they might affect knowledge structures and are not directly related to the present research. Thus this section limits itself to the reviewing of research methods employed to identify cultural schemas from natural linguistic data as practised in cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics.

Holland and Quinn (1987: 16) outline two major methodological strategies by which cognitive anthropologists obtain data and reconstruct cultural models. The first is the systematic use of native speakers’ intuitions. The second method is an eclectic kind of natural discourse analysis, which was inspired by linguists such as Linde (1978, cited in Holland and Quinn, 1987: 17) and anthropologists such as Hutchins (1980). Linde’s work on discourse types such as *explanation* and *narrative* bears on revealing cultural models and reconstructing cultural understandings. As commonplace discourse types, explanations and narratives can be employed to reveal the models that underlie speakers’ cognitive processes such as reasoning and reconstructing cultural understandings.

The recorded and transcribed data in Hutchins’s work (1980) demonstrate that natural discourse can be employed to investigate and analyse “the cultural code as a model of folk understanding” underlying the propositions that arguments are based on (Hutchins, 1980: 15). Hutchins’s work on culture and inference is an ethnography of a court case that involves two men from the Trobriand Islands of Papua New Guinea. The two native Trobriand islanders appealed to the court for the use of a garden.

4.4.1 Identifying an American folk model of mind

D’Andrade (1987), after encountering difficulties with analysing American beliefs about illness by identifying semantic features of illness and taxonomy relations of the early 1970s, acknowledges that the difficulties are due to the “failure of ... a representation of the way Americans actually understand illness” (D’Andrade, 1995: 129). D’Andrade’s abstract representation is a cognitive model. In seeking a folk model of the mind among Americans, D’Andrade (1987) relied on his own native-speaker intuition and through

introspection prepared a category of propositions which included such mental processes and states as 1) perception, 2) belief/knowledge, 3) feelings/emotions, 4) desires/wishes, 5) intentions, and 6) resolution, will or self-control (D'Andrade, 1987: 115-116). Then D'Andrade consulted five student informants who had never been taught in psychology courses and asked them a set of interview questions to test the initial categories of propositions. The interview data that D'Andrade collected supported his major propositions. Holland and Quinn (1987: 17) subsequently maintained that “[t]his strategy of building accounts from native speaker’s intuitions and then testing them against other, independent observations can be expected to become a methodological hallmark of future investigations into cultural knowledge”.

4.4.2 Identifying American problem-solving models

White (1987) sought to develop a model of American problem solving by studying proverbs. Proverbs are regarded by White (1987: 156) as packaged with cultural wisdom and thus able to express culturally constituted understandings about how to respond to problematic circumstances. After surveying a range of well-known sayings using his own intuition as a native speaker of American English, White selected eleven proverbs such as ‘Time heals all wounds’, ‘Every cloud has a silver lining’, ‘The squeaky wheel gets the grease’, which he considered to be both conceptual and pragmatic in problem solving.

It is mainly the conceptual process that underlies proverb meanings that is White’s concern. In line with a cognitive approach, White maintains that proverbs provide “an interpretation of specific action or events in terms of a general, shared model” (p. 151). That is, proverbs “represent generalised knowledge ... and they may tell us something about enduring cultural models of experience” (White, 1987: 152).

White’s method resembles that of D’Andrade (1987) in terms of a two-stage procedure. The first stage involved selecting proverbs using his own native English speaker intuition, and the second stage included eliciting data from 17 native English speakers and students at the University of Hawaii. The informants were asked to explicate the 11 proverbial sayings by paraphrasing them. The paraphrases were used to survey the similarities and differences among the informants’ interpretations. White also asked the informants to group the eleven proverbs according to similarities and to provide

a rationale for their grouping. This was done to pursue the hypothesis that the proverbs he selected derived their meaning from a common underlying ethnopsychology.

The inferences in informants' paraphrases indicated that they drew on a cultural model of *the person*. Such models of the person included 'One is rarely satisfied with what one has' or 'Contentment is seldom achieved' (White, 1987: 161). Other cultural models such as the American cultural model of mind and notions about personal actions were also evident in interpretations of the proverb meanings.

There are two points of relevance to the present study observed in both D'Andrade's and White's studies. Firstly, the two researchers are the cultural insiders of the speech communities under investigation, in the same way as the present researcher is. Secondly, the method of integrating the intuitions both from the researcher and from informants is compatible with the etic-emic tradition of ethnographic research.

Other studies following similar research methodological strategies are not reviewed in detail here. These studies include the Lakoff and Kovecses' (1987) research on the American cognitive model of anger, Sweetser's (1987) study of the speech act *lie* based on a folk model of relevant experience, and Kay's (1987) study of two hedges, *loosely speaking* and *technically* by using folk theories of language. Holland and Quinn (1987) embrace all these articles mentioned.

4.4.3 Identifying American explanatory systems

As mentioned earlier, Linde (1978) and Hutchins (1980) inspired some cognitive anthropologists to study cultural models by investigating explanations and narratives in natural discourse. Linde (1987) defines an explanatory system as:

a system of beliefs that occupies a position midway between *common sense*, the beliefs and relations among beliefs that any person in the culture may be assumed to know, if not to share and *expert systems*, which are beliefs and relations among beliefs held, understood and used by experts in a particular domain". (Italics original. Linde, 1987: 343)

From Linde's further explications, it can be seen that Linde defines the explanatory system in a cognitive way. Linde (1987: 343) states that "common sense ... closely corresponds to the notion of *cultural models* or *cultural theories*" and expert systems are similar to folk theories. The data that Linde (1987) collected for her study were oral life stories from fourteen middle-class Americans. She conducted interviews with the participants on choice of profession, on the basis that professions are important to participants and form a major part of their life stories. During the interview, Linde employed such techniques as probing questions and extended silence to elicit life stories. According to Linde (1987: 346), information on one's occupation is public and available in social interaction. Inferences can be drawn from one's profession about the person speaking.

Linde used what she called "discourse analysis" (Linde, 1987: 346) to analyse the data. Linde was mainly concerned with how speakers constructed life stories as coherent narratives through explanatory systems. The explanatory systems in the data were the systems of popular Freudian psychology, behaviourist psychology and astrology which underpin the fourteen American informants' life stories of their professional choice.

4.4.4 Identifying American models of marriage

Quinn's research (1985, 1987, 1991; 1992; 1997) is also relevant to the present study in terms of methodology. Quinn's work (1987) is ethnographic (D'Andrade, 1995: 169), involving "extensive interviews of a small but varied group" of 22 American married men and women. Participants were interviewed separately by Quinn and her research assistant (Quinn, 1997: 138). The participants varied in terms of their geographic origins, religious affiliations, ethnic and racial identities, occupations, educational backgrounds, neighbourhoods and social networks and the lengths of their marriage. Each participant produced 15 or 16 hours of audio-recording on their marriage individually.

Quinn's study was non-directive (D'Andrade, 1995: 169), and thus the discourse produced is regarded as "natural-seeming discourse" in contrast to the elicited discourse from, for instance, a controlled question-answer type. Quinn designed the interviews to be "structured as closely as possible after ordinary conversations that one might have about one's marriage with a friend or relative, one's spouse, or oneself" (Quinn, 1997: 138).

Quinn carried out “a multilayered analysis of the corpus” (Quinn, 1997: 139). One of the techniques applied to analysing models of American marriage was categorising the metaphors of marriage that “recur” in the transcribed data (Quinn, 1987: 175). Metaphors such as +MARRIAGE IS A MANUFACTURED PRODUCT+, +MARRIAGE IS AN ONGOING JOURNEY+; +MARRIAGE IS A DOUBLE BOND BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE+ are believed by Quinn to be shared among American couples with similar experiences (Quinn, 1997: 140). Such metaphors converge in the underlying schema that marriage is enduring. Quinn found eight schemas underlying the metaphors that American people used to talk about marriage.

4.4.5 Identifying Ecuadorian cultural models of illness

The above four accounts of methodologies all utilise U. S. informants. This is not to suggest that cognitive anthropological studies do not investigate other peoples. A study conducted by Price (1987) departs from American data to study Ecuadorian data.

Data from Price (1987) included the recorded narratives of fourteen adult Ecuadorians discussing four cases of illness (except for one of the narrators being an older sister of a 6-year old patient. Her age is not spelled out by Price. 1987: 335). The recordings were collected during Price’s one year of field work in a marginal, largely Mestizo neighbourhood of Quito in Ecuador, South America. It is implied in the paper, although not stated explicitly, that Ecuadorian informants spoke Spanish.

Price maintains that “illness stories are a natural form of discourse, rather than a task imposed by the investigator” in the neighbourhood where the study was conducted (1987: 314). Illness stories were observed by Price through participant observation to be a natural part of everyday communication. They also illustrated “many references to other stories that informants say they heard from other people” (p. 314). Illness stories emerged naturally from Ecuadorian informants with little or no prompting from, and the stories were ongoing and often repeated two or three times by the same narrator. In other words, the high frequency of and the well-remembered nature of illness stories during everyday social interaction marks them as salient part of the natural discourse in the Mestizo neighbourhood of Quito.

Price identifies four cultural models or schemas relative to cultural knowledge about the roles that the narrators play in the illness events in their stories. These are the

‘cultural model of the family’, the ‘model of extrafamilial social support’, the ‘cultural model of social hierarchy and biomedicine’ and the ‘multiple notions of cause’. These models were identified by “numerous ‘traces’ of cognitive models that bear on the interpretation of illness” (Price, 1987: 314). The traces of cognitive models are not only what the narrators highlight or elaborate on, but also what the narrators leave unsaid. In Price’s own words, “[b]ecause (tacitly understood) knowledge shapes natural discourse to such a large degree, important traces are found not only in what is said, but also in what is left unsaid” (1987: 316). Price also holds that unspoken traces reflect the fact that “the narrators take for granted that listeners share many of their assumptions about how the world works” (Price, 1987: 316). The omission of information due to the narrators’ assumptions about shared cultural knowledge reveals differences between cultural insiders and cultural outsiders (Price, 1987: 317).

Price’s analysis also focuses on stories with “overelaborated detail” (p. 317). She holds that the overelaborated detail may “indicate a deviation from the standard expectations for role behaviour” (p. 317). In many cases, the deviation is evaluated by the narrator with *counterexamples*, which according to Price (1987: 319), are “narrative descriptions of individuals who are not fulfilling their roles adequately or in expected ways”. The counterexamples relate to cultural models which embody cultural knowledge and cultural rules in the sense that they are exceptions to the rule. “The exception matters because the rule matters” (Price, 1987: 325).

Seven other traces that Prices makes use of for identifying cultural models are “repetitions, key words, generalisations, metaphors, false starts, evaluative statements, and hedges” (Price, 1987: 317). The traces of cognitive models detected by Price are heuristic as far as the present study is concerned. They have been employed judiciously for analysing the data.

4.5 Identifying cultural schemas in cultural linguistics

In terms of research methodology, cultural linguistics draws on ethnographic research traditions, because it is a discipline closely associated with linguistic anthropology. All the case studies conducted in the discipline of cultural linguistics recognize a need to undertake systematic and thorough descriptions (Palmer, 1996: 38). These descriptions centre on the participant’s cultural identities, world view, histories, imagery, cultural

schemas and the cognitive construals of meaning and discourse. However, cultural linguistics does not require any one specific methodology as do some disciplines (such as psychology, as some perceive it).

4.5.1 Identifying Australian Aboriginal cultural schemas through systematic etic-emic investigations

Cultural linguistics (Palmer, 1996), as an interdisciplinary field developed from the synthesis of traditions of linguistic anthropology and cognitive linguistics, employs research methods from ethnographic traditions. The following three distinctive research methods and techniques for collecting and analysing data in cultural linguistics are outlined, as they all indicate that recurrent linguistic features in natural discourse are the marks of salience which can be taken as the traces to cultural schemas.

Malcolm, together with his colleagues, has engaged in a series of studies (e.g. 1995, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999, 2000; Malcolm et al, 1999; Malcolm and Rochecouste, 2000; Malcolm and Sharifian, 2002; Rochecouste and Malcolm, 2003) investigating Australian Aboriginal cultural schemas. The distinctive characteristic of this research is the systematic use of emic and etic traditions which involve in data collection, transcription and data analysis. The fundamental understanding of the necessity for integrating the emic intuition into the etic research traditions used by Malcolm et al is “the recognition of Indigenous people as both decision-makers and resource persons in themselves” (Malcolm, 1995: 15).

The adequate recognition of the ownership of Australian Aboriginal people’s language and culture leads Malcolm and his research team to the commitment of establishing collaborations with Aboriginal people. For instance, Malcolm (1998a: 4) sought to achieve “a balance of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants both on the *base team* ... and the *field team* ...” (italics original). The base team included members who are linguists, educationists and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal research assistants based in Perth, and field team recruits were Aboriginal/Islander Education Workers (Aboriginals) and their teacher-partners (non-Aboriginals) in widely separated school communities across the State of Western Australia.

Malcolm’s projects (e.g. 1999) are characterised by “the two-way research experience” (Malcolm et al. 1999: 34) which penetrates into data collection, transcription

and data analysis. Gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal intuitions are lessened by regular meetings among base team members who are composed of non-Aboriginal researchers and Aboriginal research assistants, and by live-in camp workshops which enabled a sustainable cross-cultural bonding between the two insights.

Malcolm and Rochecouste (2000:101) identify four prototypic Australian Aboriginal schemas from 40 passages derived from the transcription of 12 cassette tapes, recording more than 200 natural and non-directive “communal narrative” speeches elicited among Aboriginal children aged 5 to 13. The four prototypical schemas are the Travel schema, the Hunting schema, the Observing schema and the Encountering the Unknown schema. “These four schemas are identified in terms of the particular lexical and structural choices that set them apart” (p. 101), on the basis that “[v]ocabularies relate to schemas, so that in a particular instance of usage each word corresponds to a part of some schema or a perspective on a schema” (Palmer, 1996: 66).

Being distinctive would not in itself identify vocabulary and structures as traces of a cultural schema, “unless they recurred in distinctive patterns” (Malcolm and Rochecouste, 2000:102). In Malcolm and Rochecouste (2000), 33 of the 40 passage texts instantiate the four prototypical schemas. The four schemas are found to be strongly associated with the collaborative narration and with discourse markers by Malcolm and Rochecouste (2000: 106 – 109). For instance, Malcolm and Rochecouste (2000: 109) explain that “[t]he Travel schema is associated with particular attention to [the discourse markers of] time orientation reference, participant identification and the distinction of “moving” and “stopping” segments”. The Hunting schema is also exploited by Aboriginal people in describing sports activities. Linguistic features are often the traces to the Hunting schema such as giving a high degree of attention to details about the environment, the suspensory use of parataxis and the foregrounding of persistence which also prevail in the Aboriginal way of describing sports (Malcolm and Sharifian, 2002: 176). Thus, Malcolm and Sharifian (2002: 174) conclude that “the recurrent textual features and their associated schemas point to some cultural practices, institutions, beliefs or values”.

On the whole, Malcolm’s research corresponds to the research paradigms of EOC and cognitive anthropology in terms of being committed to the two-way or etic-emic

collaborations for data collection and analysis. Seeking distinctive and recurrent vocabularies and structures is also compatible with cognitive anthropology for cultural schema identification. It is the systematic and longitudinal collaboration between the base team members and field team members when eliciting and analysing data from Australian Aboriginal children that sets Malcolm's research apart from the previous five studies reviewed in Section 4.4.1 to Section 4.4.5. This very feature of the systematic and longitudinal collaboration as a research tradition contributes to the ways of doing ethnography in the fields of anthropology and cultural linguistics.

4.5.2 Identifying Australian Aboriginal cultural schemas through word association-interpretation

Sharifian (2001; 2002) adapts the research technique of *word association-interpretation* for studying Australian Aboriginal cultural conceptualisations. Word association is “a powerful technique employed by researchers in all the human sciences for more than a century” (Sharifian, 2002: 97). Among major fields that have used word association as a research tool are psychology, linguistics and education (Sharifian, 2002: 97). Sharifian's research technique involved two phases of association and interpretation. During the association phase, a continued word-association was administered to elicit data from a group of 50 Aboriginal students, with an age range of 6-13, and randomly selected from metropolitan primary schools in Perth, Western Australia (2001: 6).

The second phase of interpreting relied on Sharifian's own intuition and the informants' retrospective probing (Sharifian, 2001: 6). With retrospective probing, “the informant is asked to provide an explanation of his or her culturally marked responses plus eliciting interpretive comments, based on cultural intuitions, from one or more speakers from the same cultural background as the informant” (Sharifian, 2001:5). The associations as well as interpretations are then used to tap culturally constructed schemas, categories, and other conceptual structures and processes.

The same research technique was also applied by Sharifian (2002) to a further study of Aboriginal cultural schemas by comparing a group of 30 Aboriginal primary school students and a matching group of 30 non-Aboriginal students. The emic-etic research tradition was also applied to the data collection by Sharifian for his cross-cultural study. He prepared a list of 30 words to be administered as part of the

association-interpretation technique. In preparing the list, he consulted an Aboriginal research assistant who was informed of the aims of the study. Sharifian also consulted a dictionary of Aboriginal English. Before the list is finally compiled, Sharifian invited a non-Aboriginal research assistant to check its relevance to the life experiences of non-Aboriginal children. Among the 30 words, the top 10 were *Aboriginal; Home; Food; People; Fight; Family; Country; Fun; Australia and camping*. A pilot test was also conducted to confirm the suitability of the stimulus words, and two additional words were used as warm-up trials.

When analysing the data, Sharifian (2002) focused on responses that had arisen from the conceptualisations emerging at the cultural level of cognition. He also relied on the intuition of several insiders to each group of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants. Sharifian (2002: 3) finds “the operation of two distinct, but overlapping, conceptual systems among the two cultural groups studied”. Sharifian concludes that the discrepancies between the two systems are largely rooted in the cultural systems and give rise to the different dialects spoken by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal school students.

4.5.3 Identifying agency schemas in Tagalog

There is no doubt that cultural linguistics (Palmer, 1996) establishes the fundamental framework for the present study. Palmer’s research into cultural linguistics is extensive. It includes investigations of the Tagalog affix *ka-* as a semantic partial (Palmer, 2004), the Tagalog prefix category PAG- (2003), the conceptual and grammatical analysis of emotion-tropes in Tagalog (Palmer, Bennett and Stacey, 1999) the grammar of Sñchítu’umshtsn (Coeur d’Alene) plant names (Palmer, 2003), the semantic structure of Coeur d’Alene place names (Palmer, 1993), Bantu noun classification (Palmer and Arin, 1999), Shona Class 3 nouns (Palmer and Woodman, 1999) and talking about thinking in Tagalog (Palmer, 2003). All are conducted in line with the ethnographic approach. However, it is the research pertaining agency schemas in Tagalog emotion language that is most related to the present study (Palmer, 2001a; Palmer, Bennett and Stacey, 1999). Tagalog is one of the major languages spoken in the Philippines.

Agency “represents a very abstract schema of social interaction in which the subject or focal participant initiates or performs an action” (Palmer, 2001a: 9). Palmer also maintains that “[a]gency schemas underlie grammatical voice at its semantic pole”

(2001a: 10). Grammatical voice (in the specific form of voice affixes) in Tagalog emotion language has been documented by Palmer (e.g. 2001a: 21) to communicate the presence or absence of agency schemas, or whether the speakers present themselves as actors [initiators] or experiencers [patients], or as salient or indistinct, or as with or without control. In other words, it is the underlying agency schemas to be profiled or to be obscured that decide the different choices of voicing affixes in Tagalog. In this respect, the studying of agency schemas in cultural linguistics contributes to an understanding of the semantics of grammatical affixes in its socio-cultural context (Palmer, 2001a: 29). It also reveals the construal of discourse situations by the discourse participants (Palmer, 2001b: 19).

In studying agency schemas in Tagalog emotion language, Palmer and others (see Palmer, 2001a, Palmer, 2001b, Palmer, Bennett and Stacey, 1999) use Tagalog videotaped dramas. Palmer's method consists of four phases embodying the principle of emic-etic collaboration for data collection and data analysis. The researcher watched the videotaped dramas, comedies and action movies with native speaker consultants. Among these was the melodrama entitled *Sana'y Maulit Muli* 'I Hope It Will Be Repeated Again'. The second phase involved asking native speaker consultants "to translate portions of the films that had emotional or cognitive topics and to comment on them" (2003: 257). Based on the translation and comments from the consultants, Palmer relied on his knowledge as a researcher "to collate a lexicon of terms and expressions that seemed to fall within the domains of cognition and /or emotion" (Palmer, 2003: 257). The fourth phase continued with the intermitted emic-etic collaborations which involve the consultants providing their native-speaker intuitions. The four phases do not necessarily have to occur sequentially as described here. Palmer (2003) also follows the principle of "openness" as required by EOS (Saville-Troike, 1989: 4), allowing consultants to add new insights to the research agenda.

In sum, Sections 4.3 and 4.4 have reviewed the eight well-established research methods adopted in cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics for the identification of cultural schemas in natural and natural-seeming discourse. All of them follow ethnographic traditions by relying on native cultural members' intuitive knowledge and by being guided by etic research principles. They also use one or more such research

tools as questionnaires, introspection, interviews and word-associations. Linguistic data that are analysed are either as proverbs, oral life stories, natural discourse or videotaped dramas.

4.6 Methods and procedures for identifying and analysing Chinese cultural schemas

The eight studies reviewed in Sections 4.4 and 4.5 have indicated that it is feasible to identify some salient linguistic and discourse features that recur in discourse. Recurrent linguistic and discourse features in the present study were those features that frequently surfaced across conversations in the intercultural discourse data. They were recurrent ways of linguistic realisation of speech acts that most Chinese participants would employ. They were also conversation topics that most Chinese participants frequently 'foregrounded'. Frequently 'foregrounded' topics were identified from those topics that most Chinese participants were willing to initiate or elaborate on.

It is maintained here that the issue of 'recurrence' should be viewed from the perspective of similarities which were observed among Chinese participants. That is, among mainland Chinese participants, there appeared similarities in realising some speech acts, similarities in foregrounding some conversation topics and similarities in initiating and elaborating on those topics. These similarities could be counted as recurrent linguistic and discourse features among mainland Chinese speakers of English when they interacted with Anglo-Australians in social settings. In other words, not only did one or two mainland Chinese participants speak English with the linguistic and discourse features that substantiating these similarities, but a number of them did, and they did it naturally

In addition, the issue of 'how much recurrence' in this thesis could also be viewed from the perspective of similarities across mainland Chinese participants and mainland Chinese informants. That is, the recurring nature of some linguistic and discourse features that emerged from the discourse produced by mainland Chinese participants could also be accounted for by the fact that many mainland Chinese research informants had a tendency of taking for granted these linguistic features. When they were invited to provide interpretations of data excerpts, some informants would take for granted these linguistic and discourse features. They accepted these features naturally. The tendency of taking for granted and accepting these linguistic and discourse features revealed that these

informants did not regard these features as something alien. That is, they would, more or less, employ similar, if not the same, linguistic and discourse devices if they were in similar intercultural communication contexts. Informants' taking-for-granted and accepting naturally the linguistic and discourse features produced by participants thus could also be regarded as these features being recurrent on the part of research informants

Depending on a different level of cultural sensitivity, some other mainland Chinese informants would also recognise some salient linguistic features of the discourse that were produced by participants. The recognition was often substantiated by their explicit interpretations of the saliency (e.g. IC8 in Excerpt 5.14). Informants' recognition and interpretation of linguistic features produced by participants thus could also be regarded as these features being recurrent on the part of research informants.

In brief, it is held here that, although the identification of recurrent linguistic and discourse features was often based on frequencies, the present study was not quantitative. Given the credit that quantitative studies have demonstrated in many disciplines, as far as the present study is concerned, the quantitative measuring of cultural schemas is not only invalid, but also unnecessary. Statistics might have blurred the focus of the analysis and diverted the research orientation away from studying cognitively the intercultural discourse. Therefore, recurrency in this study is illustrated by the transcribed and analysed data which are presented in the following three chapters.

Saliency in this thesis was characterised in two ways. Firstly, it was characterised by those features that frequently occur in Chinese literature and philosophy. These features stand out in the memory of most mainland Chinese people. As a result of reading a lot of ethnography, most mainland Chinese are able to relate their daily lives to these features. Secondly, saliency was characterised by varied degrees of miscommunication, communication gaps and communication discomfort by either the Chinese or Australian participants. Obvious miscommunication and communication gaps were identified by researcher according to her emic knowledge as a cultural member of the speech community under study and her knowledge of Australian culture. Her intuitive Chinese knowledge was corroborated by the documentary sources. Her Australian cultural knowledge was also authenticated by academic literature. The researcher also invited some participants and informants to cross-validate the researcher's identification of those

linguistic and discourse features that caused obvious intercultural difficulties. Information on informants will be presented in Section 4.9.

The subtle communication gaps or communication discomfort that needed intuitive cultural knowledge were identified by drawing on emic intuitions of participants and informants. Nuances were provided by participants in follow-up interviews and by informants in independent interviews (Section 4.9). That is, the researcher would ask informants to listen to some data (or read some transcribed data) and identify any parts of the conversation that reflected understanding of miscommunication, communication gaps or communication discomfort. Participants and informants were then asked to provide their explanations which were employed in the analysis.

Recurrency and saliency emerging from the collected intercultural discourse data frequently overlap with each other. Thus data analysis only focused on those excerpts of transcribed conversations from the corpus that were both recurrent and salient.

There were six major procedures used for the identification and analysis of Chinese cultural schemas. Firstly, all the collected data were carefully listened to by the researcher, except for four tapes which had technical problems. Two of these recordings were either mongering or not distinctive enough for transcribing. The other two tapes were spoilt when rewinding and forwarding. The remaining 39 conversations were transcribed by the researcher. Transcriptions were randomly cross-checked by English native speakers for accuracy. Secondly, the researcher identified recurrent linguistic and discourse features in the data. Thirdly, based on follow-up interviews and the transcribed data, the researcher identified salient linguistic and discourse features which marked cultural miscommunication, communication gaps and communication discomfort. The identified excerpts of conversation were randomly cross-checked by Mainland Chinese cultural members and Anglo-Australian cultural members for validity.

Fourthly, interviews were conducted with some mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australian cultural members to discuss unidentified data. Their intuitive cultural knowledge was drawn on for generating the identification of further linguistic and discourse features which marked cultural miscommunication, communication gaps and communication discomfort. Fifthly, sample analyses were presented to two mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australian cultural members to check for validity. Lastly, sample

analyses of the data were presented in seminars and conferences and submitted to journals for publication. Acceptance for publication by anonymously peer-reviewed international journals and conference proceedings was also assumed to be a check of the validity of the analysis (See Leng, 2005, in press-a; in press-b).

These outlined procedures were not carried out linearly, due to different availability of participants and informants. For instance, some transcriptions were done before the whole data collection phase was completed. Sample identification and analysis of some of the transcribed data was also done before all the data were collected. One article generated from the study was also accepted for publication before all the data were transcribed.

4.7 Pilot studies

Two pilot studies were administered before embarking on collecting and analysing the data in November, 2002. The intention was to try out the possibility of analysing data from intercultural communication using a cognitive perspective, and, particularly, the discourse produced by mainland Chinese speakers of English. The first pilot study was done with the data that were recorded in Shanghai, China by Jones (2003). Jones was a fellow MA student at Edith Cowan University. He was willing to grant the researcher access to one of his 90-minute tapes. Jones (2003) had conducted an ethnographic study of communication on English corners in Shanghai. An English corner is an informal place for mainland Chinese learners of English to practice oral English over weekends. Most of the English corners are located in public parks and squares. The Chinese learners who voluntarily go to English corners are highly motivated. Their English proficiency levels vary, but frequently these Chinese learners have the level that enables them to conduct brief everyday conversations with other English learners or with native English speakers in the English corner.

The tape from Jones was transcribed by the researcher. It was found that certain linguistic features in the English produced by the Chinese speakers in Shanghai when they interacted with Jones, an Anglo-Australian, were of a recurrent nature. These linguistic features, which were treated as clues or traces of Chinese cultural schemas, were salient since they contrasted strikingly with the natural discourse produced by the

Anglo-Australian. As a result, the Anglo-Australian experienced communication difficulties with the Chinese speakers of English in Shanghai.

The second pilot study was conducted by the researcher through observing everyday intercultural communication between her fellow mainland Chinese students and Anglo-Australians. Two brief conversations were written down by the researcher and checked by the students and their Anglo-Australian interactants. The two conversations were analysed with the permission from the interactants, on the condition that their names would not be revealed. Discussions of the two pilot data are to be presented in Chapter Five and Chapter Seven.

The two pilot studies confirmed the suitability of the research design and reinforced the feasibility of the research.

4.8 Selection of participants

Chinese participants were invited from a speech community whose members were adult mainland Chinese speakers of English, who were studying for or had obtained their first degree, or who worked or lived in Australia. None of the Chinese participants has studied or lived in Australia for more than ten years. They had all come to Australia since 1993, due to the policies of both Chinese and Australian governments enabling mainland Chinese to come to Australia to study or work. Among the 43 Chinese participants, 34 were students of different universities in Perth, and the rest were mature aged employees working in Western Australia. The average age of the Chinese participants was 28. In order to ensure the cross-cultural differences between the two groups of participants, the Chinese informants did not include people with direct Australian kinship.

All the mainland Chinese speakers of English had a command of English for social purpose which was a prerequisite stated in the Letter of Research Disclosure to Chinese participants. However, it was obvious that English proficiency levels would vary among these participants. It merits mentioning that all the mainland Chinese participants were also *Han*³ by race. Minority Chinese of other ethnic or racial groups were not among the participants.

³ There are altogether 56 races in mainland China. The Han Chinese is the largest ethnic group, making up 92% of the population of China.

The Australian participants were adult Anglo-Australians, either born in Australia or second generation Australians who had been educated since primary school in Australia. In order to ensure the cross-cultural differences between the two groups of participants, Australian informants did not include those with direct Chinese/Asian kinship. Among the 43 Anglo-Australian participants, 12 were students on the same campus as the researcher. The rest were volunteers from the neighbourhood or participants' acquaintances. The average age of the Anglo-Australian participants is around 40, since most were retirees.

4.9 Data collection

After Ethics Clearance was issued by the University Committee in October, 2002, the researcher started data collection. The three major principles of ethnographic research methodology which directly related to the present study were adopted. They are 1) a clear awareness of the researcher's own position; 2) natural discourse to be collected in natural settings and 3) establishing prolonged contact with participants and generating more data from participants' friends by informal interviewing and participant observation following the recording of conversations.

The first principle addresses the issue of objectivity of ethnographic study. Since the researcher is a member of the speech community to be investigated, given the advantages as observed by Saville-Troike (1989: 110), the researcher was also fully aware of the likelihood of bias and subjectivity. To reduce as much as possible the researcher's influence on the participants, the researcher chose to collect data in the form of non-participant observation. That is, the researcher taught participants how to use the tape-recorder and left the tape-recorder with the participants. The participants would decide when to start and when to end recording their conversations. However, in most of the cases, the participants were happy to start recording their conversations with the researcher's introduction to using the machine. In this case, the researcher left the participants with the explanation of the non-participant observation research design. However, the researcher was in the vicinity and available when the conversation had finished. Observation under these conditions could only be done after the conversation.

The full awareness of the researcher's position to achieve maximum objectivity is also embodied in the second principle of collecting natural data in natural settings. By

natural data, it means the discourse that the two participants produce according to their own agenda. All the participants were informed in the Letter of Research Disclosure to talk about anything they feel comfortable with. This point was reinforced when the researcher introduced the two participants, so as to lessen any possible inconvenience derived from meeting and talking to strangers. In terms of the venue, the researcher either provided a quiet room on her campus with tea and snacks for the participants, or made use of the office of one of the participants (with his or her permission), if the conversation has to take place off campus. As much as possible, the researcher ensured a friendly, secure and quiet place for the participants to engage in their conversation. Thus, the recorded conversational data were produced by volunteer participants who were introduced for social purpose and the genre of the talk was of a social meeting.

However, it is understood that the data collected for this study were not naturally occurring. It was naturally produced data. Naturally occurring data, although desirable, is hardly realistic. Technically speaking, as long as the data is collected with a research purpose and involves the intent of a researcher, it is not occurring absolutely naturally. Naturally produced data, on the other hand, is the data produced by participants according to their own agendas. For this research, participants were left on their own to decide what they would like to converse about. Interaction *per se* is a process that is likely to engage the participants to be interactants, and the interaction process is likely to generate an interaction agenda that is natural to the interacting parties. The naturally generated interaction agenda leads to naturally produced conversation data, although the conversation topics, which emerge from the natural agenda, may not necessarily please both parties.

The third principle of establishing prolonged contact with participants was carried out with the researcher's initiation. Thank-you phone calls were made or emails written after the recording of conversations. When it was convenient, informal follow-up interviews were pursued. Gifts were presented to those volunteers who invited their friends to participate, and Chinese style New Year dinners (for 2003 and 2004) and Chinese Spring Festival dinners (for 2003 and 2004), and lunches or dinners on other occasions were also organised for those participants who had the time to join the researcher after the data collection.

Frequent interaction with participants and their friends not only enabled the researcher to get more people to participate in the study, it also gave the researcher opportunities to seek insiders' insights. Informal interviews were often conducted with both mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australians during casual meetings over tea, lunch or dinner.

It should be made clear here that there were two types of interview data collected by the researcher in order to seek emic intuitions from mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australians. The first type was from follow-up interviews. Follow-up interviews were conducted if participants were not in a hurry to leave after recorded conversations. The second type of interview data was collected from independent interviews. Independent interviews were conducted with people who were non-participants of the study. They were interviewed for providing interpretations to some data produced by participants. All interviewees, whether they were participants or non-participants, were labeled in this study as informants. Informants were cultural insiders who contributed to the emic analysis of the data.

All interviews were conducted either orally or via emails. Oral interviews were audio-taped. Mandarin Chinese was used when the researcher interviewed Chinese informants so that Chinese informants' native points of view could be expressed with their native language. Direct translations from Chinese into English were done by the researcher when Chinese interview data were used for analysis. All the email interviews, which were conducted with Anglo-Australian informants and mainland Chinese informants who were in Western Australia, used English. Thus, the pool of the collected data for the present study included recorded conversations and interview data. Interview data included follow-up interviews and independent interviews. Independent interviews were conducted with both participants and non-participants of the study.

There were altogether 26 informal interviews conducted. Among these, seven were follow-up interviews, and 19 were non-participant independent interviews.

4.10 Coding system

The present study employs a coding system which follows the ethical principle of keeping participants anonymous. C stands for mainland Chinese speakers of English who participated in the research and C1 stands for the first Chinese participant. In turn, A1

stands for the first Australian participant. Participants who were in pilot studies are coded as PA1 or PA2, indicating the participants were Anglo-Australians. Participants or informants who were interviewed are coded as IC1 or IC2, indicating the participants were mainland Chinese. The coding of the rest of the participants follows the same system.

Table 1: Sample of the coding system for participants

Code	Standing for
C1	Chinese Participant Number 1
A1	Australian Participant Number 1
PC1	Chinese Participant Number 1 in the Pilot study
PA1	Australian Participant Number 1 in the Pilot study
IC1	Chinese Participant Number 1 in the interview (Informant)
IA1	Australian Participant Number 1 in the interview (Informant)

4.11 Summary

This chapter has discussed the research traditions of EOC, cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics. EOC, as a corrective to the exclusive study of linguistic structures in the situation of an idealized world. It argued for a concern with not only linguistic repertoire, but also with “cognitive repertoires” (Hymes, 1972b: xlii) in the sense that “the values of the speakers must inform the data” (Malcolm et al. 1999: 38). However, as Palmer (1996: 24) maintains, EOC does not have its main focus on “the cognitive study of language” and it is also maintained by Palmer (1996) that it is necessary for EOC to incorporate “the principles of cognitive linguistics” (p. 26).

Cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics provide the present study with not only the theoretical paradigm, but also the research methodology for identifying cultural schemas from natural discourse. In sum, the methods of collecting non-instructional data in natural settings, consulting cultural insiders for insights through frequent and prolonged contact was informed by EOC. The methods of discerning distinctive and

recurrent linguistic features as evidence of cultural schemas followed the methods that the cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics observe.

The following three chapters are the analysis of the data collected by mainly applying the analytical tools of cultural schemas, discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals.

CHAPTER FIVE

Data analysis (1): Chinese Cultural Schema of *Harmony*

5.1 Introduction to the chapter

Seeking harmonious relationships with nature and with social environment is observed by some philosophers as the benchmark of Chinese culture. The influence of the Chinese ancient concept of harmony on Chinese ways of thinking is far-reaching. The current Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao “vowed to build a harmonious society” (Xinhua, 07/02/2005) to solve social problems arising from the economic development generated by the Reform and open-door policies in the last two decades (Business Weekly, 12/28/2004).

This chapter presents the identified Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*⁴ from the collected data. Twenty-four excerpts of transcribed conversations and interview data are analysed. All the data are analysed in the light of cultural linguistics, making use of such analytical tools as discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals, as reviewed in Chapter Three. Different expectations embedded in culturally-constructed discourse scenarios frequently lead Chinese speakers of English to interpret and produce some discourse that may not be fully appreciated by their Anglo-Australian interactants. It is found that underlying the Chinese discourse scenarios is the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*. Different expectations embedded in culturally-constructed discourse scenarios frequently lead Chinese speakers of English to interpret and produce some discourse that may not be fully appreciated by their Anglo-Australian interactants.

As a preamble to the data analysis, the emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* will be explored first. Instantiations of the *Harmony* schema in Chinese language and literature are also discussed before presenting the data analysis. A section of summary and discussion contributes to the identification of the Chinese *Harmony* schema on the basis of activated discourse scenarios. Influences of the Chinese *Harmony* schema on intercultural communication will also be provided in the same section.

⁴ Capital H and the italicised ‘*Harmony*’ are reserved for harmony in its culturally-constructed and schematic sense. That is, it is used in the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*.

5.2 Emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*

The Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* might be regarded as a body of schematic knowledge which is linguistically represented as *he wei gui* (和为贵 ‘*Harmony* is most valuable’). The proposition of *he wei gui* ‘*Harmony* is most valuable’, or the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*, emerges from the interaction of a myriad of life experiences of mainland Chinese people for thousands of years. Among these experiences are five major cultural experiences, namely, the Chinese world view of *tian ren he yi* (天人合一 ‘unity of Heaven⁵ and men’⁶), *yin-yang* balance as a view of the universe, the philosophies of Daoism, Confucianism and the religion of Chinese Buddhism. These five major Chinese cultural experiences have a widespread and profound influence on Chinese people. While interrelating with one another, the five major cultural experiences interact with traditional Chinese agriculture, various Chinese hierarchical familial and social structures and the social need for peace during and after war and turmoil. Thus, for the past 5,000 years, mainland Chinese people who have been exposed to the abstract interaction of these cultural experiences have collectively, although with varied degrees of schematisation, developed the conceptualisation that harmony is valuable.

It should be noted firstly that the present study does not wish to suggest that the term ‘Chinese’ is homogeneous in denotation. The homogeneous interpretation will lead to sweeping generalisation. Moreover, the researcher is aware of the danger in simplifying the complex phenomena of the Chinese people and of China itself due to its long history. However, according to Wang (1999: 286), “the term ‘Chinese’ or ‘Han’, while initially an ethnic definition, can refer to a flux of peoples who lived, at one time or another, in the land around the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers”, since “China is ... historically constructed”. Thus, it is maintained here that a certain level of generalisation is necessary for the researcher to discuss Chinese cultural schemas.

⁵ Capital H for Heaven is purported for the Chinese conceptualisation of heaven for nature.

⁶ This thesis will use the convention of Chinese *pin yin* followed by Chinese characters and English translation for Chinese expressions. All the Chinese characters and their translations are in brackets. Their translations are in single quotation marks. Chinese characters for all the expressions appear only once, but English translations always follow the Chinese *pin yin*.

5.2.1 Chinese world view of *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’ and *he* ‘harmony’

Tian ren he yi ‘unity of Heaven and men’, as the fundamental Chinese conception of the world, “is based on belief in the nature-people correlation” (Wang, 1999: 285 – 286). The very combination of the four Chinese characters *tian ren he yi* is to be found in *Zheng Meng* (正蒙 ‘Correct Discipline for Beginners’) by a neo-Confucianist Zhang Zai (Chang Tsai: 1020 -1077) who maintained that “since all things in the universe are constituted of one and the same *qi* [wandering air], therefore men and all other things are but part of one great body” (quoted in Fung, 1966: 279). The world view of ‘unity of Heaven and men’ is documented to be evolved from the ancient Chinese cosmic knowledge of *shen ren yi he* (神人以和 ‘the harmony between and within gods and human beings’) and developed by many other Chinese philosophers after Zhang Zai (Zhang and Jiang 1990: 26; 48).

The knowledge of *shen ren yi he* was recorded in the first Chinese book of history, *Shang Shu* 尚书 (also called *Shu Jing* 书经) which was edited by Confucius (551 -- 479 BC) and documents the earliest Chinese historical period of Emperors Yao 尧 and Shun 舜 (Zhu and Wang, 1991: 243). *Shen* (神 ‘gods, spirits’), according to the ancient Chinese cosmos knowledge, could mean nature, could also mean *tian* (天 ‘heaven’) in its broad sense to embrace both the sky and the earth, and could also mean Chinese ancestors with both animal and human features. The ancient Chinese knowledge, which blurs the boundaries of nature, gods and human beings, is reflected in a colloquial Chinese collocation *lao tian ye* (老天爷 ‘old heaven grandfather’) for god. It is considered therefore that the cultural knowledge of *shen ren yi he* might have resulted from the limited knowledge that the ancient Chinese had of the cosmos (Zhu and Wang, 1991: 243).

Many Chinese legends reproduce the ancient knowledge of the cosmos *shen ren yi he* (神人以和 ‘the harmony between and within gods and human beings’). Most of the Chinese legendary heroes are human ancestors in the form of either gods or goddesses. These gods and goddesses have Chinese family names and their hometowns can be traced to certain areas in China. For instance, one Chinese ancestor, Emperor Yan (炎帝), whose Chinese family name is Jiang (姜), was embodied in the figure of a bull’s head on a

human body. Emperor Yan was the leader of the Jiang People living in the Jiang River area of Hubei Province, China. He was also known as god of the sun (*yan* 炎), with godly power enabling him to initiate and teach Chinese agriculture. Thus, he was also known as *Shen Nongshi* (神农氏 ‘godly farmer’). Emperor Yan was an affectionate god-ancestor, who, in the Chinese folk stories, tasted thousands of plants so as to distinguish weeds from wheats to feed his people properly and to make use of herbal plants as medicine to treat his sick people.

Emperor Yan is not the only Chinese legendary ancestor. The legends of Pan Gu (盘古), Nu Wa (女娲), Fu Xi (伏羲), Hou Yi (后羿), to name a few, also reflect the Chinese cosmology of *shen ren yi he* ‘the harmony between and within gods and human beings’ which links up gods and human beings. Pan Gu, the giant, exhausted all of his own body parts for the creation of the sun, the moon, mountains and trees, rivers and oceans for human beings to live with. Nu Wa, after creating human beings with mud, patched up the gulf of the sky and the chasm of the earth with melted stones for a peaceful living environment for the sons and daughters that she had created. Fu Xi, God of the East, taught his people how to make nets to catch fish, birds and beasts to improve their quality of life. Hou Yi, a god in heaven, came down to human beings to shoot down nine suns which scorched people to death. These godly ancestors are people-loving, and were seen to facilitate and protect ancient Chinese civilisation.


The Chinese world view of *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’, which evolves out of the cosmic knowledge *shen ren yi he* ‘the harmony between and within gods and human beings’, has developed to be the Chinese conceptualisation of the universe and human beings. This conceptual correlation of Heaven and men manifests itself in the relationship between nature and human beings which is conceptualised by Chinese people as harmonious. This harmony exists in the unity of nature (with the sky and the earth combined into one) and human beings, who are conceptualised as a coherent component of nature. Zhu and Wang (1991: 244) maintain that the Chinese conceptualisation of the harmonious unity of nature and human beings is related to the life experiences of ancient Chinese ancestors who lived in the temperate area of the middle of China with mild weather conditions.

5.2.2 *Yin-yang* balance and *he* ‘harmony’

The Chinese character *yin* 阴 literally means a lack of sun, shade, darkness or dampness.

Yang 阳 literally means sunny, clear, bright or dry. The conceptualisations of *yin* and *yang* originated from a Chinese philosophical school called the *Yin-Yang* school.

“Members of the *Yin-Yang* school had their origin in the practitioners of occult arts”

(Fung, 1966: 37). “[T]he *Yang* and *Yin* came to be regarded as two cosmic principles or forces, respectively representing masculinity, activity, heat, brightness, dryness, hardness, etc., for the *Yang*, and femininity, passivity, cold, darkness, wetness, softness, etc., for the *Yin*” (Fung, 1966: 138). The two principles are illustrated in the symbol of  in *Yi Jing* (易经 ‘The I Ching: The Book of Changes’).

The *yin-yang* balance is the balance of the two dynamic opposite forces interacting with each other. The balance lies in the supplementation and complementation of the two opposite forces operating harmoniously in one body. This means that, firstly, one kind of force changes into its opposite in an eternal cycle of reversal. Secondly, one force uses the other as a reference for its state of being. Thirdly, one force produces a proportion of the other force. Conversely, all phenomena in the universe are regarded by the *Yin-Yang* school to be represented by the two opposite forces which have within them the seeds of their opposite being. The production of one another and overcoming one another are embodied in one process. The core of the successful dynamic process is balance. If the balance is breached, disorder produces chaos which is inclined to cause disaster.

The Chinese *yin-yang* view of the universe gives rise to the Chinese conceptualisation of *he* ‘harmony’. That is, the schematic image of the two opposite forces is related to the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*. Despite the fact that the Chinese *yin-yang* balance gives rise to the Chinese conceptualisation of *he* ‘harmony’, harmony and balance are different. The difference lies in the different degree of schematicity between harmony and balance. Harmony, as in the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*, is more schematic than the Chinese *yin-yang* balance, being “the reconciling of differences into a harmonious unity” (Fung, 1966: 174). Balance, as in the Chinese *yin-yang* view of the universe, is one of the core ideas by which most mainland Chinese people organise their daily lives.

As far as a society is concerned, “[a] well-organised society is a harmonious unity in which people of different talents and professions occupy their proper places, perform their proper functions, and are all equally satisfied and not in conflict with one another” (Fung, 1966: 174).

The world view of *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’ and the *yin-yang* view of the universe extend to the Chinese conceptualisations of social relationships. They also have a place in many Chinese philosophies and religions. For instance, the *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’ and the conceptualised balance-harmony are further developed by Daoism, Confucianism and Chinese Buddhism, all of which heighten the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*.

5.2.3 Daoism and *he* ‘harmony’

The world view of *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’ and the *yin-yang* view of the universe are reinforced in Daoism. Daoism is one of the earliest philosophies in Chinese history and describes a simple and anxiety-free style of life through maintaining peaceful relationships with nature. According to Daoism, following Dao (the Way) is the only path for human beings to be harmonious with nature. Lao Zi (Lao Tzu⁷, Old Master: 6th Century BC), the legendary founder of Daoism, gave prominence to the relationship between Dao and *he* (和 harmony) which he contended was to be found by returning to the eternal source, by emptying oneself of all desires, and by flowing like water along with the current. Lao Zi’s position is found in *Dao De Jing* (*Tao Te Ching* 道德经 ‘The Book of Dao: Classic of the Way and Power’) which states that *gui gen yue jing, jing yue fu ming. Fu ming yue chang, zhi chang yue ming* (归根曰静, 静曰复命。复命曰常, 知常曰明 “To return to the root is Repose; It is called going back to ones’ Destiny. Going back to one’s Destiny is to find the Eternal Law. To know the Eternal Law is Enlightenment”⁸. XVI, translated by Lin, 1948: 34).

⁷ Names of ancient Chinese philosophers and titles of their works, when introduced with the English version in this thesis, follow Fung (1966) for the sake of consistency, although other versions are also acknowledged here.

⁸ Where published translations of Chinese expressions are used in this thesis, the following convention is applied: quotation marks are used for the published translation of Chinese expression, followed by the reference of the expression [name of the book].

Dao in Lao Zi's book was claimed to be the origin of the universe. He wrote in *Dao De Jing* that *dao sheng yi, yi sheng er, er sheng san, san sheng wan wu* (道生一，一生二，二生三，三生万物 “Out of Dao, One is born; Out of One, Two; Out of Two, Three; Out of Three, the created universe”. XLII, translated by Lin, 1948: 48). Dao in *Dao De Jing* is also characterised by the harmony of the two opposites, namely *yin* and *yang*, in everything. This understanding of *yin-yang* harmony is expressed in *wan wu fu yin er bao yang, chong qi yi wei he* (万物负阴而抱阳，冲气以为和 “The created universe carries the *yin* at its back and the *yang* in front; Through the union of the pervading principles it reaches harmony”. XLII, translated by Lin, 1948: 48). To know harmony is wise. Thus Lao Zi wrote *zhi he yue chang, zhi chang yue he* (知和曰常，知常曰明 “To know harmony is to be in accord with the eternal, [and] to know eternity is called discerning”. LV, translated by Lin, 1948: 54).

Lao Zi was followed by Zhuang Zi (Chuang Tzu, Master Zhuang: about 365 – 286 BC) who inherited and developed Daoism. Zhuang Zi is as well known as Lao Zi in Chinese Daoism and together they are called Lao-Zhuang. Zhuang Zi proposed that people should not be allowed to meddle with what was created by nature which was in line with Lao Zi's doctrine of leaving things well alone by *wu wei er wu bu wei* (无为而无不为 “By doing nothing everything is done”. XLVIII, translated by Lin, 1948: 50). Zhuang Zi pointed out that Dao was all-prevailing and permeated everything in nature, and although men were constrained by time and space, the cosmos was infinite. Limited human life, while congruent with the Dao of nature, could also achieve infinite freedom. Thus he maintained that “balance is the great schema of the cosmos; harmony is the universal path of life as a whole” (cited in Bond & Hwang, 1986: 213). Zhuang Zi's balance-harmony position has had a strong bearing on the Chinese conceptualisation of harmony.

Daoism may have been tinged with mysticism (Lin, 1948: 21) and harmony in Daoism might also be susceptible to mysticism. The mystic nature of Daoism lies in the conceptualisation that Dao is beyond description, and only Dao can host peace. In the

Chapter: Verse], translator, year of publication and page number. The unacknowledged ones are in single quotation marks, indicating that they are my own translation.

beginning of *Dao De Jing*, Lao Zi claimed that *dao ke dao, fei chang dao; ming ke ming, fei chang ming* (道可道，非常道；名可名，非常名 “The *Dao* that can be told of is not the absolute *Dao*; The Names that can be given are not absolute names”. I, translated by Lin, 1948: 27). Lao Zi strengthened the mystic nature of Daoism and harmony by stating that *xuan de shen yi, yuan yi, yu wu fan yi, nai zhi yu da shun* (玄德深矣，远矣，与物反矣，乃至于大顺 “When the Mystic Virtue becomes clear, far-reaching, and things revert back [to their source], then and then only emerges the Grand Harmony”. LXV, translated by Lin, 1948: 59). To a large extent, Daoism views harmony as a means to *Dao* which integrates opposites in nature and embodies the ‘self’ in the eternity, the boundlessness, the fathomlessness, the evasiveness and the elusiveness of nature.

5.2.4 Confucianism and *he* ‘harmony’

It seems that Daoism has taught Chinese people to seek *he* ‘harmony’ from nature for balanced and eternal perspectives and to establish harmonious relationships between human beings and nature. Confucius also advocated *Dao* and harmony, but with the specific purpose of securing and fulfilling social order and developing social stability, through establishing harmonious self-other relationships.

Confucius lived in the era of Spring-Autumn when states under the Zhou Dynasty (770 – 221 BC) were claiming autonomy and fighting for power and territories among themselves. As one of the greatest humanists in Chinese history, Confucius proposed that *li zhi yong, he wei gui* (礼之用，和为贵 “In conducting the rites, seeking harmony is the most valuable principle”, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 9). This notion of tranquilising the anxious states is recorded in Verse 12, Chapter I of *Lun Yu*. *Lun Yu* (论语 The Analects) is the collection of Confucius’ sayings and the sayings of some of his eminent disciples.

Like Daoism, Confucius and his followers also made use of such concepts as *tian dao* (天道 ‘way of heaven’). However, in Confucianism *tian dao* ‘way of heaven’, together with many other kinds of *dao*, such as “the *tao* [*dao*] of sovereignty and of ministership, or of fatherhood and sonhood” (Fung, 1966: 167), is endorsed with the

purpose of rationalising social hierarchies. By conceptualising social hierarchies as *tian dao* ‘way of heaven’, Confucianism promotes social harmony and enhances social Dao.

Schwartz (1985) observes that Dao in The Analects was largely equivalent to the sociopolitical order in which the heart of a hierarchical society lies:

In the *Analects*, in its most extended meaning, it [*Dao*] refers to nothing less than the total normative sociopolitical order with its networks of proper familial and proper sociopolitical roles, statuses, and ranks, as well as to the ‘objective’ prescriptions of proper behaviour – ritual, ceremonial, and ethical – that govern the relationships among these roles. (Schwartz, 1985: 62)

In Confucianism, *he* ideally means harmony through accommodating diversity (Young, 1995: 8 & 45) which was recorded in The Analects as *jun zi he er bu tong, xiao ren tong er bu he* (君子和而不同，小人同而不合 “Gentlemen seek harmony rather than agreement; Petty men seek agreement but not harmony”. XIII: 23, translated by Li, Zhu and Li, 2001: 135). Thus, Confucius made a distinction between ‘harmony with diversity’ and ‘agreement with sameness’. Diversity in the Confucian sense is constructed upon the presupposition that China is a society of hierarchies. Thus ‘harmony with diversity’ does not mean pursuing harmony among the diversity of people on an equal basis. Rather, the harmony pursued in the Confucian sense is through minimising the inharmonious elements among the different hierarchical social orders.

Relative to the Chinese agricultural environment and the hierarchical social structure, Confucian harmony embodied a presupposition that a Chinese society was collective in nature, with everyone related to one another in relational connections within hierarchies. Confucius referred to two basic relationships between people, the proper handling of which was regarded by him as vital in governing a state. *Qi Jinggong wen zheng yu kong zi, kong zi dui yue: ‘jun jun, chen chen, fu fu, zi zi’* (齐景公问政于孔子，孔子对曰：‘君君，臣臣，父父，子子’ “Duke Jing of Qi asked Confucius how to govern a country. Confucius said, ‘Rulers, subjects, fathers and sons should observe their respective rites’”. *The Analects* XII: 11, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 215).

The social harmony proposed by Confucianism was construed on the basis of the Confucian conceptualisations of *ren* (仁 ‘benevolence’, ‘charity’, ‘humanity’, ‘love’, ‘kindness’) and *li* (礼 ‘propriety’, ‘good manners’, ‘politeness’, ‘rites’, ‘ceremony’, ‘worship’⁹). Since *ren* ‘benevolence’ and *li* ‘propriety’ were initiated by Confucius, they have been adapted and developed by other Chinese philosophies and religions such as Mencius and Mo Zi. Mencius (Meng Zi, 孟子, Master Meng 372 – 289 BC) inherited and developed Confucianism with his own intellectual work which claimed that human beings were born with a good nature. Mencius argued that incipient tendencies toward virtues could be developed into full virtues of benevolence, righteousness, wisdom and ritual propriety (van Norden, 1998: 1). Regarding the issue of social harmony, Mencius maintained that *tian shi bu ru di li. Di li bu ru ren he* (天时不如地利。地利不如人和 ‘Opportunities of time granted by Heaven-Nature are not as good as advantages of situation afforded by the earth. Advantages of situation afforded by the earth are not as good as the harmony arising from the accord of men’. *Mencius*: IIb).

Moism was founded by Mo Zi (Mo Tzu, Master Mo (about 480 -- 400 BC) “to oppose both the traditional institutions and practices, and the theories of Confucius and the Confucianists” (Fung, 1966: 49). However, Mo Zi accepted Confucian *ren* ‘benevolence’ and *yi* ‘righteousness’ and advocated an all-embracing love and that “everyone in the world should love everyone else equally and without discrimination” (Fung, 1966: 53). As far as Mo Zi was concerned, social harmony was achieved through the ruler of a state loving his people and the people being disciplined and obedient to the ruler.

For thousands of years the Chinese feudalistic ruling classes used *ren* ‘benevolence’ and *li* ‘propriety’ to their advantage to govern the people. There were two domains where the Confucian *ren* were applied. The first domain related to the ruling classes of all levels embodied as the superior for the creation of harmonious inter-state diplomatic and intra-state political relationships. To a large extent, the *ren* in Confucian terms was similar to the English concept of “being patronising”, but without the pejorative meaning of manipulation.

⁹ *Ren* and *li*, each of them embodies a number of meanings. In the following translations of them, only the first meaning of each word is cited.

The second domain of *ren* ‘benevolence’ related to people of roughly the same social hierarchy for harmonious interpersonal relationship engagement which was more along the lines of mutual benefit. The second domain of *ren* ‘benevolence’ was justified by the Confucian definition of *ren* ‘benevolence’ as loving others which is recorded in *fan chi wen ren, zi yue: ‘Ai ren’* (樊迟问仁，子曰：‘爱人’ “Fan Chi asked what benevolence was. Confucius answered, ‘To be benevolent is to love’”. *The Analects*. XII: 22, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 223). *Ren* ‘Benevolence’ represented the highest virtue of the ruling class and of a *sheng ren* (圣人 ‘Sages’¹⁰). It was the noblest value that society could bestow.

Li ‘Propriety’ in Confucianism embodied all the appropriate behaviours of a structured society where people were connected with each other through prescribed roles, status, ranks, and positions. *Li* ‘Propriety’ was important because, according to Confucius, it was what distinguished humans from animals. Showing proper behaviours in relationships with others was deemed to be of high value because it reinforced the concept of universal order and the harmony of the hierarchical society, and therefore the order of the state.

With due emphasis on *ren* ‘benevolence’ and *li* ‘propriety’, Confucians held that the existence of self is for the purpose of living harmoniously with others. *Ren* ‘Benevolence’ and *li* ‘propriety’ are the guidelines for harmonious self-other relationships. Confucians treated self as an indispensable element in the relationship with others, and recommended that self-civilization was the path to *ren* ‘benevolence’ and *li* ‘propriety’. Indeed, the aim of self-cultivation was to bring peace to the world. This position is expressed in *xiu shen hou er jia qi, jia qi hou er guo zhi, guo zhi hou er tian xia ping* (修身后而家齐，家齐后而国治，国治后而天下平 “Their selves being cultivated, only then did their families become regulated. Their families being regulated, only then did their states become rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, only then could the world be at peace”. *The Great Learning*. I, translated by Fung, 1966: 182). Besides, Confucius viewed the *xi* (习 ‘evil habit of the self acquired from various environments’) as a potential threat to *li* ‘propriety’ and *ren* ‘benevolence’, thus

¹⁰ Capital S is applied to Sage, indicating that the sage is the sage with the Chinese meaning.

deprecating poor self habit for *li* ‘propriety’. This view of Confucius is recorded in *The Analects* which states that *ke ji fu li wei ren* (克己复礼为仁 “One who restrains himself in order to observe the rites is benevolent”. *The Analects*. XII: 1, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 205). Thus, a *jun zi* (君子 ‘Gentleman’¹¹) was considered by Confucius to be able to subdue one’s self and remain humble and return to propriety and benevolence.

Confucius posited that ‘self-willingness’ was essential for the development of *ren* and *li*. Confucius questioned the truth of *ren* if self-awareness was not involved. He maintained that *wei ren you ji* (为仁由己 “[The practice of benevolence] wholly depends on oneself, not on anybody else”. *The Analects*. XII: 1, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 205). Self-motivated *ren* ‘benevolence’ was regarded as the highest *ren* ‘benevolence’ as expressed by Confucius in *ren yuan hu zai? Wo yu ren, si ren zhi yi* (仁远乎哉? 我欲仁, 斯仁至矣 “Is benevolence really far away from us? You only have to want it and it will come”. *The Analects*. VII: 30, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 121). For a person of high ideals, self could also be entirely sacrificed for the sake of *ren* as claimed in *zhi shi ren ren, wu qiu sheng yi hai ren, you sha shen yi cheng ren* (志士仁人, 无求生以害仁, 有杀身以成仁 “A man of benevolence and lofty ideals should not, at the expense of benevolence, cling cravenly to life instead of braving death. He will, on the contrary, lay down his life for the accomplishment of benevolence”. *The Analects*. XV: 1, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 289).

Regarding the self-other relationship, Confucius advanced the principle of self-other relatedness. The oft-quoted sayings from Confucius *ji yu li er li ren, ji yu da er da ren* (己欲立而立人, 己欲达而达人 “A benevolent man is one who helps others establish what he himself wishes to establish, helps others to achieve something that he wishes to achieve”. *The Analects*. VI: 30, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 102), and *ji suo bu yu, wu shi yu ren* (己所不欲, 勿施于人 “Never impose upon others what you dislike yourself”. XII: 2, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 207). The self-other relatedness principle was geared towards the interpersonal harmony which is maintained by Confucius as *xiu ji yi an ren* (修己以安人 “To cultivate oneself brings peace and

¹¹ Capital G is applied for Gentleman, indicating that the gentleman is the gentleman with the Chinese meaning.

happiness to the people close to one”. *The Analects*. XIV: 42, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 281).

A higher degree of self-other relatedness in Chinese culture is “other-directed self” (Wen & Clement, 2003: 19). In other-directed interpersonal relationships, self is relational and is defined by the contexts of family, neighbourhood, school or the nation. Being able to develop an awareness of one’s appropriate position in the social hierarchical links and to speak and behave accordingly is regarded as a virtue of *dong shi* (懂事 ‘understanding things: being thoughtful with other people’), since the capacity of reading the minds of other people and attuning oneself to others is one of the Chinese cultural expectations in the other-directed relationship (Young, 1994: 9).

The other-directed ‘self’ can also be self-suppressed for the establishment of interpersonal harmony. ‘Self’ in Chinese culture is not often heightened, and is even admonished with such Chinese common sayings *qiang da chu tou niao* (枪打出头鸟 ‘The gun shoots dead the bird that holds out its head’), *shu da zhao feng* (树大招风 ‘A tall tree catches the wind’), *chu tou de chuan zi xian lan* (出头的椽子先烂 ‘The rafters that jut out rot first’). Therefore, when being praised, compared with the English speaking world, Chinese self tends to be “more likely to claim that pride should only be experienced for outcomes that benefit other” (Stipek, 1998: 616). Underlying this Chinese modesty is the conceptualisation of striving for a balanced interpersonal relationship which “shows one’s sense of propriety and one’s level of cultivation” (Young, 1994: 155).

The Chinese self-other relatedness is “also characterised by a sense of group belongingness” (Wen and Clement, 2003: 21). This is based on *wu tong* (五同 ‘five commons’). According to Wen & Clement (2003: 21), the five commons are 1) *tong zong* (同宗 ‘people with the same surname’), 2) *tong zu* (同族 ‘people with the same race’), 3) *tong xiang* (同乡 ‘people coming from the same native place’), 4) *tong xue* (同学 ‘classmates, or school mates’), and 5) *tong shi* (同事 ‘colleagues’). The five commons function as linkages, connecting Chinese people by way of various ‘insider groups’.

Chu (1979: 9) argues that the insider group generates relations which are “personal in nature and maintained primarily for their intrinsic, affiliated qualities”.

Young (1994: 52) also observes that most Chinese exert much effort for the development and the maintenance of the insider group membership by “a willingness to seek out and create shareable views”. Presenting a different opinion to a Chinese colleague, for example, might be conceptualised as harming the harmony of the insider group (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996). Homogeneity in ideas and verbal expressions is therefore valued as a symbol of harmony.

Insider group membership, however, does not remain unchanged. Similar to the Chinese family linkage which is likely to be extended to include non-family members (Leng, in press), social insider group membership can also include strangers, on the condition that the interactants have engaged in certain activities together. The boundaries between strangers become blurred with communication as the catalyst. As Young (1994: 52) observes, Chinese “try to draw a circle around a ‘we’ rather than a line between self and other”.

Under the unity of the Zhou Dynasty Emperor, *ren* and *li* in Confucianism gave rise to the harmonious self-other relationship construction, which included the relationships between states, between the ruling classes and the common people and between people of same social levels. For over two thousand years until the May Fourth Movement (1919), the fundamental teachings of Confucianism were adopted by the dynasties of Chinese feudal ruling classes. In the modern China, Wen & Clement (2003: 19) observe that:

Although the collectivistic aspect of traditional Chinese society is gradually losing its structural strength and functional importance ... during the course of modernisation, collectivistic values still contribute significantly to the shaping of the Chinese self and to one’s perception of the relationship between self and others or the outside world.

Overall, due to the influenced of the Confucian principles of *ren* and *li*, most Chinese people conceptualise harmonious self-other relationships as one of the key issues in their life experience. The effect of this influence is discernable and identified in the

intercultural discourse produced by some mainland Chinese speakers of English when they interact with Anglo-Australians. This influence will be analysed in Section 5.3.

5.2.5 Chinese Buddhism Chan Sect (禅宗 ‘Zen’ and *he* ‘harmony’)

Buddhism was carried to China during the Qin Dynasty (221 – 206 BC) and the Han Dynasty (206 BC– 220 AD). The golden age of Chinese Buddhism was from the age of the Three Kingdoms (220 – 280) to the Tang Dynasty (618 – 923). During this period various Schools in Buddhism evolved and bloomed. By integrating the Chinese life experience of agriculture and other Chinese philosophical traditions, Buddhism developed into the Chinese *Chan Sect* (Zen) (Fung, 1966: 243; Huang, 2002: 15).

The Chinese Buddhist *Chan Sect* favours harmony between individuals and “the Universal Mind” (Fung, 1966: 244). Emancipation from eternal suffering, which is called *lun hui* (轮回 ‘the eternal Wheel of Birth and Death’), is through transcendence from Ignorance into Enlightenment which results in *nie pan* (涅槃 ‘Nirvana’). Nirvana “may be said to be the identification of the individual with the Universal Mind, or ... the Buddha-nature” (Fung, 1966: 244). One school of Chinese Buddhism called the School of Universal Mind holds that a human being “is the Universal Mind, but formerly he did not realise it, or was not self-conscious of it” (Fung, 1966: 244).

Zhu and Wang (1991: 243) maintain that the identification of the individual with the Buddha-nature in Zen is consistent with the Chinese world view of *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’. The Chinese Buddhist Chan creates a linkage between Buddha and a human being by holding that the Buddha-nature resides in every human being, who, through *dun wu* (顿悟 ‘Sudden Enlightenment’) can reach Buddhahood. That is, according to Chinese Buddhism, everyone can become a Buddha, and there is no distinction among Buddhahood, the Universe Mind and human beings, which co-exist in the harmonious unity.

Thus far, the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* has been reviewed in the context of the world view of *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’ and the *yin-yang* view of the universe, the Chinese philosophies of Daoism and Confucianism, and the religion of Chinese Buddhism. Despite the heterogeneity among these schools of thought, there exists the common core of understanding that *Harmony* is most valuable. The status

of these Chinese schools of thought in Chinese history is influential enough to exert an undeniably profound and unrivalled influence upon Chinese conceptualisations for generations. Culturally constructed conceptualisations of unity, balance, *dao*, *ren* ‘benevolence’ and *li* ‘propriety’ constitute the essence of Chinese culture, and the abstraction of them constructs the foundation for the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*.

5.3 Linguistic instantiations of the *Harmony* schema in Chinese language

Schematised knowledge is instantiated linguistically as well as non-linguistically (Sharifian, 2003: 198). For instance, traditional Chinese architecture such as ‘court-yard house’ is a means of achieving the effect of balance-harmony (Su, 1991: 347).

Linguistically, the morphology of the Chinese character *he* (和) can be regarded as an instantiation of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*. *He* 和 is composed of *kou* (口 ‘mouth’) and *he* (禾 ‘a piece of an ancient Chinese musical instrument’), indicating that originally “*he* (和) means ‘making harmonious sounds’” (Li, Zhu & Li, 2000: 288).

The linguistic instantiation of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* is also seen in the extension of the musical sense of harmony to social genres. The Confucian sense of harmony has evolved to mean seeking compromise through “*rong he* (融合 ‘merging’) and *tiao he* (调和 ‘moderation’ in modern Chinese)” (Zhang and Jiang 1990: 48). A dictionary study shows that harmony has six major meanings in the Chinese language (English-Chinese Dictionary, 1993: 795). The first four of them, which are related to the present study, are coded in two-character phrases. They are 1) *he mu* (和睦 ‘peaceful’), *rong qia* (融洽 ‘melting/merging for agreeing’), *you hao* (友好 ‘friendly’) and *yi zhi* (一致 ‘unanimous’); 2) *he xie* (和谐 ‘harmony through coordination’), *xie tiao* (协调 ‘harmony through matching’) and *tiao he* (调和 ‘harmony through proportion/moderation’); 3) (of the inner state) *ping jing* (平静 ‘tranquillity’); and 4) (of music) *he sheng* (和声 ‘harmony’). Except for the last meaning relating to music, the first three meanings seem to suggest that there are different degrees of social harmony involving different parties.

The overall meaning of the word *he* 'harmony' in the Chinese language is that, although "each and every goal of the individual involved in the interaction is achieved to some extent but seldom to the full" (Li, Zhu & Li, 2000: 292), people of different social hierarchical orders all make the effort to achieve the common goal of being friendly and being on good terms for the purpose of establishing interpersonal and social harmony.

Certain features of Chinese syntax can also be seen as instantiating the Chinese cultural schema of Harmony. For instance, one of the distinctive features of Chinese syntax is the combination of *xu* (虚 'illusory', 'sketchy', 'intangible', 'obscure') and *shi* (实 'solid', 'complete', 'tangible', 'exact') (Shen, 1997 [1988]: 17). Chinese syntax in general is viewed by Shen (e.g. 1984, 1988, 1991, 1997, 2001) and other Chinese cultural linguists as instantiating Chinese conceptualisation. That is, "[t]he study of the Chinese (Han) language, therefore, is essentially an interpretation of the cultural 'spirit' (精神) or the 'world view' (世界观, 视界) of the Chinese (Han) people" (Gao, 1997: 2). In particular, the Chinese syntactic structures of "performance sentences" and "topic-comment sentences" as categorised by Shen (1997 [1984]: 154 - 157) reflect Shen's recognition and identification of Chinese culture in the formation of Chinese linguistic structures. Shen also contrasts Western inflectional language with the Chinese language. Western inflectional language is viewed by Shen to reflect a focused viewpoint of its speakers on verbs, which not only govern other sentence constituents, but also denote such linguistic aspects as tense, aspect, person, number, case. The Chinese language, which has the four features of "meaning perception, flow of phrase-chunks, combination of *xu* and *shi*, and use of concrete images" (Shen, 1997: 12), is viewed by Shen to reflect a distributed viewpoint of native Chinese speakers. The distributed viewpoint of native Chinese speakers is attributed by Shen to the Chinese language where meaning is focused at the cost of syntactic forms.

Shen holds that "[*x*]*u* and *shi* are contradictory and complementary elements which form a dialectical unity" (Shen, 1997 [1988]: 17). He also argues that the "integration of *xu* with *shi* is one essential feature in the production and comprehension of Chinese" (p. 18), which leads speakers of Chinese to "use as few words to express as much as possible" (p. 18). The combination of *xu* and *shi* is viewed by Shen as correspondent with Chinese opera and Chinese painting. He explains that "in Chinese

opera, the imagined scene [is] emerging whereas the real scene [is] fading”, and that in Chinese painting white is taken as black (Shen, 1997 [1988]: 18). A well-understood Chinese sentence, like a harmonious piece of Chinese music or painting, is produced and comprehended due to “a nation’s thinking mode” (Gao, 1997: 7).

Furthermore, Su (1991: 340) maintains that the Chinese conceptualisation of harmony is also reflected in Chinese literature. For instance, a classical Chinese tragedy by Guan Hanqing (关汉卿 1240 -1310), entitled *Dou Er Yuan* (窦娥冤 ‘The grievances of Dou Er’ or ‘Snowing in summer’), was given a happy ending to appeal to the Chinese conceptualisation of balance-harmony. The whole story focuses on how the heroine, in spite of her innocence, was tortured and sentenced to death by a feudal legal system. The tragedy was purported to disclose the corrupt justice system in ancient China. However, at the end of the story, the heroine’s father was arranged by the author to pass Imperial examinations (explained in Section 7. 2) and to be promoted to a high-ranking government official. The father was then able to rectify the justice system and announce his daughter’s rehabilitation. The ending in the literary work is regarded by Su as reflecting the Chinese conceptualised balance and harmony (Su, 1991: 347).

The Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*, like any other cultural schemas, has been developed through interaction among Chinese people for over five thousand years. Linguistic interaction, both in oral and written form, plays a facilitative role in the emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*. As Liu (1986: 98) explains, “[w]hen Chinese read classical stories and novels bequeathed from earlier generations, they learn how to think and behave like the characters in these stories and novels”. As seen above, the highly abstract cultural knowledge of balance and harmony is also embodied in Chinese world views, Daoism, Confucianism and Chinese Buddhism, and motivates most Chinese people to draw on the *Harmony* schema in communication.

5.4 Data analysis

Salient and recurrent linguistic features in the discourse of Chinese speakers of English are extracted from the data. These language features are used as clues to the embedded schema that the Chinese participants frequently solicited in conversations with their Anglo-Australian interactants. Thirty excerpts of transcribed conversations are presented

and analysed in this chapter. Part of the data analysis is also included in Leng (in press – b).

The analysis in the following section will proceed with the procedure of presenting the data, presenting some salient and recurrent linguistic features that emerge from the data and explaining these linguistic features relative to some Chinese discourse scenarios. Further excerpts of data are presented and analysed by means of their salient linguistic features to display recurrent instantiations of the Chinese discourse scenarios across different participants. Discussion of all the Chinese discourse scenarios in this chapter leads to the identification of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*.

Excerpt 5.1

(PA1, male in his early 40s; PC3 and PC4, male, possibly in their 20s)

(110)

PA1 was walking around in an English corner in a park in Shanghai, talking with some Chinese learners of English.

1. PA1: But they teach language. (To PC3) Hello! Willi-.
2. PC3: Hello.
3. PA1: How are you today?
4. PC3: Yeah (laughing).
5. PA1: Nice to see you!
6. PC3: Nice to meet you too.
7. PA1: (to PC4) Hello!
8. PC4: (Silence)
9. PA1: Nice to see you!
10. PC4: Um, do you ... do you think I can help [with recording]?
11. PA1: Uh?
12. PC4: Do you think I can help?
13. PA1: Yes, yes ... by myself.
14. PC4: Um?
15. PA1: I come by myself.

16. PC4: And another friend?

17. PA1: No, by myself.

This greeting excerpt was recorded in an English corner in Shanghai by Jones (2003), who agreed to share one of his tapes with the researcher for pilot studies (See Section 4.7).

What emerges from this excerpt as a salient and recurrent linguistic feature is the failure of PC3 and PC4 to follow the Anglo-Australian English greeting adjacency pair to respond to PA1's greetings. PC3 substituted the patterned Anglo-Australian English greeting expressions of 'Fine. Thank you. How are you?' with "Yeah" and a laughter (Turn 4) in response to PA1's "How are you today?" (Turn 3). PC4 also substituted the patterned "Hello/Hi" with silence (Turn 8) after PA1's "Hello!" (Turn 7) and then substituted "Nice to see you too!" with an offer of assistance (Turn 10) after PA1's "Nice to see you!" (Turn 9).

As a result of PC3's and PC4's Chinese ways of responding to PA1's greetings, conversations between them did not seem to flow far. Although PA1 knew PC3 well enough to use his English name, their conversation was brief after the unmatched exchange of greetings (From Turn 3 to Turn 6). PA1 and PC4 encountered obvious miscommunication which also began with unmatched greetings (Turns 8 and 10). On the surface, it seemed that PC4 at Turn 10 asked a question that was not understood by PA1, which might have been due to the noise surrounding the English corner. However, further analysis may show that it may not necessarily be the physical barrier that caused the problem. It is argued here that PC1 activated his Chinese culturally-constructed greeting scenario (which will be discussed below) that caused PA1, who was not familiar with this greeting scenario, to have difficulties in understanding PC4. In particular, PA1 did not expect his greeting to be responded to with an offer (Turn 10), which, after being repeated by PC4 (Turn 12), still did not match his Anglo-Australian English greeting adjacency pair. The puzzled PA1 (Turn 11) forced a reply in order to continue with the conversation (Turn 13).

PA1's forced reply "Yes, yes ... by myself" (Turn 13) was created on the spot, based on the sound similarity between 'help' and 'self'. It seems that PA1 was in a situation where he had to capture a phonetic clue from /el/ in 'help' ("Um, do you ... do

you think I can help?”) (Turn 12) to come up with “Yes, yes ... by myself”. That is, PA1 tried to seek a solution to his puzzle with the /el / sound in “help”, assuming what PC4 said was a question asking him whether he came to China by himself. Then PA1 replied, though hesitantly, with “Yes, yes ... by myself” (Turn 13).

PA1’s reply “Yes, yes ... by myself” (Turn 13), however, was not understood by PC4 (Turn 14). PA1 rephrased it at Turn 15, but the rephrase still could not satisfy the puzzled PC4 who asked for clarification (Turn 16). In other words, PC4 did not expect his offer to be responded to with a statement (Turns 13, 15 and 17).

The Chinese ways of responding to greetings which caused the obvious miscommunication between PC4 and PA1 instantiate the Chinese greeting scenario. In line with the Chinese greeting scenario, greetings or responses to greetings are produced largely for the sake of establishing, maintaining and enhancing interpersonal harmony. That is, utterances that are made for greeting can include any remark that is culturally appropriate for achieving interpersonal harmony. There are many different ways of achieving interpersonal harmony through greeting in Chinese language. PC4 chose to offer help to his Anglo-Australian interactant as a response to the Australian greeting. PC4’s offer of help to PA1 was in line with the addressee-oriented politeness model (Pan, 1994) or the principle of other-directedness (Wen & Clement, 2003: 19), because he saw PA1 recording the conversation and thought PA1 might need help. PC4’s offer could also be underpinned by the Chinese politeness principle of “attitudinal warmth” (Gu, 1990: 245). That is, by offering to help PA1, PC4 presented himself as a warm-hearted person. Being warm-hearted is not only polite in Chinese culture, it is also likely to lead to interpersonal harmony.

Excerpt 5.2

(PA5, female, in her 50s; PC5, female, in her late 30s. PA5 and PC5 met for the first time.)

PA5 was approaching a house, seeing PC5 outside the house in the front garden.

PA5: Hello, how are ya?

1. PC5: Hi! Are you looking for Jenny¹²?
2. PA5: Yeah.
3. PC5: Do you have the key to the house?
4. PA5: No, I don't.
5. PC5: Let me open the door for you (opening the door for her). I talked to you on the phone once, remember? When I was looking for the house, it's you who answered my call?
6. PA5: Yeah, I remember.
7. PC5: So how are you?
8. PA5: Good. And you?
9. PC5: Not bad.

(The conversation ends with PC5 showing PA5 the backyard where the person is.)

This conversation was observed and written down by the researcher for the pilot study. Two salient linguistic features emerge from PC5's discourse. The first one is PC5's presentation of herself as a warm-hearted person according to the Chinese politeness principle. She not only offered to open the door for PA5 (Turn 6), which was similar to what PC4 said and did to his Anglo-Australian interactant [PA1] in the previous excerpt, she also led PA5 to the backyard. Indeed, PC5's concern with attending to and helping PA5 (Turns, 2 4, 6) overweighed her response to the adjacency pair prompt of "how are ya?" (Turn 1). That is, PC5 only uttered "Hi" (Turn 2) to the Australian greeting. The patterned greeting expressions of 'Fine'/'Good'/'Well'. 'Thanks' were omitted. The frequently paired return greeting of 'How are you?'/'And you'/'And yourself'?' was also left unattended for the time being.

The second salient linguistic feature that emerges from PC5's discourse is PC5's efforts to engage herself in a discourse that was aimed at establishing interpersonal harmony with PA5 whom she had just met for the first time. PC5's first effort was to stimulate explicitly PA5's memory of the occasion that they had once spoken on the

¹² All the names of people and places used in the data are pseudo ones for the ethical reason.

phone (Turn 6). Mention of the telephone conversation was expected by PC5 to establish a common experience, which, according to the Chinese self-other relatedness, was a foundation required to establish the interpersonal harmony (Section 5.2.4). PC5's subsequent effort was to take care of the unattended return greeting 'How are you?' and greeted PA5 at Turn 8 with a deferment of five turns.

She might have returned to the deferred greeting to cater to her Australian interactant according to the Australian way of greeting, which could be the result of her conscious learning. After she had achieved the interpersonal harmony that she had assumed to have constructed with PA5, PC5 might have experienced some relaxation and drawn on her learned knowledge of Anglo-Australian greetings. This combination of 'so' and 'how are you?' is not normally observed in Australian greetings between people who meet for the first time. Thus, "So" in "So how are you" could be regarded as a discourse indexical which predicates its use as a sign revealing the topic-comment or old information -- new/significant information discourse relationship that is observed by Young (1982: 75; 1994: 67. Section 2.3.5). In other words, "So" uttered by PC5 together with "how are you?" signals that PC5 would engage in some new and significant information on the basis of the old information that she had gained through her interaction with PA5 from Turn 2 to Turn 7. "So" as a discourse indexical, in Young's words, marks "the transition ... to indicate a shift to the main point" (Young, 1994: 66).

The main point that PC5 might wish to shift to was some detailed information from PA5 regarding PA5's state of being. PC5 might have regarded PA5 as an acquaintance on the basis of the interpersonal harmony that she had assumed to have been established. Regarding a stranger as an acquaintance in Chinese conceptualisation will be discussed in detail in Section 5.5. In other words, by asking "So how are you?", PC5 might have expected PA5 to interact with her as an acquaintance, because the Australian greeting expression 'How are you?', when translated into the Chinese equivalent *ni zen me yang?/ni hao ma?* (你怎么样? /你好吗?), means more than an Australian greeting of 'How are you?'. It elicits the Chinese greeting scenario which entails further information exchange between interactants. Ye (2003) gives an account of how this Australian formulaic phrase activates a different Chinese greeting scenario in her as an immigrant from mainland China:

When I went to the supermarket, I was asked ‘how are you?’ by shop assistants at the cashier. How was I supposed to answer? Why would a complete stranger ask me a question like this? Was she or he really interested in how I was? Although I learned later that it was simply a form of greeting, it did not comfort my uneasiness every time ‘how are you?’ was directed at me, not just from shop assistants, but also from acquaintances, from people whom I got to know well later on. A mere reply of ‘not bad’ seemed so banal, stiff, and abrupt to me; I would have liked to say more. But, I was not supposed to say how I really felt. It is just a greeting, a ritual. (Underlining added. Ye, 2003: 2)

PC5, like Ye (2003), might have activated her Chinese greeting scenario and regarded ‘How are you’ as a conversation starter. That is, PC5 might have expected PA5 to say more than “Good. And you?” (Turn 9). However, when PA5 did so, PC5 followed the Australian formulaic, responding to PA5 with her learned Australian expression of “Not bad” (Turn 10).

Excerpt 5.3

(A10, female in her early 40s; C10, male, in his early 30s; Chinese visitor, male, in his late 30s)

(172)

(Knocks at the door while C10 and A10 are talking in C10’s office)

1. C10: Please, come in. Hello.
2. A Chinese visitor: Hello. Your guest?
3. C10: Yes. We’re doing some (visitor laughing) volunteer research (A10, C10 and the visitor laughing).
4. A10: Thank you (laughing teasingly)!
5. C10: Not really (laughing).
6. The Chinese visitor: Ok.
7. A10: (To the visitor) Bye... (The noise of the door being closed)

This excerpt records the episode happening in the middle of the conversation between C10 and A10, when there was a knock at the door of C10's office where the conversation took place.

The salient linguistic feature that emerges from this brief excerpt is the Chinese visitor's open inquiry into the activity of C10 and A10 in his greeting (Turn 2). Immediately after saying "hello" to respond to C10's greeting of "Hello" (Turn 1), the visitor did not conceal his inquiry about the presence of A10 (Turn 2), asking C10 whether A10 was his guest. C10 attended to the inquiry without hesitation (Turn 3) and provided the Chinese visitor with the reason why A10 came to his office.

A10 might not have expected such an introduction. According to her Anglo-Australian greeting rituals, she was not supposed to be involved in the greeting-inquiries. Thus, A10 uttered "Thank you!" (Turn 4), which might be produced to ease her embarrassment caused by the inquiry-driven and information-given exchange about her between C10 and his visitor.

Realising that A10 might not have appreciated the introduction that had revealed A10's purpose in coming to his office, since, after all, C10 and A10 had only met for the first time, C10 quickly corrected himself by saying "Not really" (Turn 5), which might be meant by C10 as "Don't worry. Our participation is really not as serious as doing research" or "We're participating the research, but our participation is not really that serious" to alleviate A10's uneasiness.

It is worth mentioning that C10's self-correction in this event might be the result of conscious effort according to his learned knowledge of the Anglo-Australian culture. That is, Like PC5 in the previous excerpt at Turn 8, C10 was also aware of some of the Australian greeting rituals. However, his Chinese ways of greeting which were underpinned by the Chinese greeting scenario outweighed his learned knowledge of the Anglo-Australian greeting expressions in this situation.

Excerpt 5.4

Interview data (IA1, female, in her early 30s)

I have a friend working as a manager in a joint venture in China.

Every morning, he was greeted by a Chinese colleague. But, day

after day, the greetings irritated him. The Chinese colleague would greet him with two formulas after ‘Hello’: 1) “Have you eaten your breakfast?” And 2) “You’re early!”. My friend [the Anglo-Australian manager] didn’t understand why his Chinese colleague concerned so much as to whether he has taken his breakfast or not, and he didn’t like the colleague’s comment on him being early.

The salient linguistic feature that emerges from the Chinese colleague’s English discourse is his habitual use of the two formulaic Chinese greetings to the Anglo-Australian manager (IAI’s friend) after saying “Hello”. The two formulaic Chinese greetings of “Have you eaten your breakfast?” and “You’re early” were not accepted by the Anglo-Australian manager as appropriate. He was irritated by them due to their persistence.

As a member of the culture which cherishes a sense of personal space between unfamiliar colleagues, the Anglo-Australian may consider the Chinese greeting “Have you eaten your breakfast?” as invading his privacy. Between unfamiliar colleagues, asking questions about whether one has eaten his or her breakfast is as private as asking one’s marriage status, one’s age and one’s income in Australian culture. However, as far as most mainland Chinese speakers are concerned, greetings with such expressions as *chi la ma?* (吃了没? ‘Have you eaten [your breakfast/lunch/dinner]?’) to replace the English “How are you?” sound appropriate, due to the cultural knowledge of *min yi shi wei tian* (民以食为天 ‘The common people regard food as Heaven’).

To a large extent, the greeting of *chi la ma?* ‘Have you eaten [your breakfast/lunch/dinner]?’ in Chinese language means the same as *ni zen me yang?/ni hao ma?* (你怎么样? /你好吗?), which is roughly translated as “How are you?” (Excerpt 5.1). It also has the pragmatic function of a conversation starter. It is likely to elicit some exchanges on interactants’ current states of being, health or other inquires. Like the Chinese version of “How are you?”, it is also associated with the purpose of constructing a concordant conversation or of maintaining or establishing interpersonal harmony.

The second Chinese greeting “You’re early” which was referred to by IAI also evoked dissonance between the Anglo-Australian and his Chinese colleague. As an Anglo-Australian, the acceptable greetings in the morning should be along the continuum

from a casual “G’day mate!” Hello, how are ya?” to a formal “Good morning, sir” depending on the setting and the social relationship. Once these expected greetings are replaced with a comment, the Australian would try to provide interpretations which went well beyond the English routine. The interpretation could be “You shouldn’t be this early” or “You’ve never been early, and why are you early today?”.

The Chinese greeting “You’re early” might have also elicited negative responses from the Anglo-Australian manager, when he had to express his frustration verbally. His responses could be “What’s it got to do with you?” or “It’s none of your business”.

The interpretations and responses provided by the Australian manager could have been personal. However, they could have been cultural, because they were constructed according to his Anglo-Australian greeting rituals and his embedded Anglo-Australian cultural knowledge of personal space between two unfamiliar colleagues.

Thus far, the above three conversation excerpts and the interview data on greeting have shown that Chinese speakers of English have their Chinese ways of greeting that are underpinned by the Chinese greeting scenario. The Chinese greeting scenario consists of *da zhao hu* (打招呼 ‘saying hi/hello’) and attending to each other’s context in inquiries and information exchange. Information exchanges may vary from whether one needs help (Excerpts 5.1 and 5.2), what the person is doing (Excerpt 5.3), who the person is interacting with (Excerpt 5.3) to some comments on the person (Excerpt 5.4).

It seems that as much as Anglo-Australians may find the Chinese formulaic greetings unacceptable, some mainland Chinese speakers of English have been unaccustomed to the Anglo-Australian rituals of greeting. The command of the accepted Anglo-Australian ways of greeting by Chinese speakers is possible, but it often needs conscious effort. It is argued here that the free command of the Anglo-Australian greeting is not necessarily hampered by linguistic difficulties, but rather by divergent greeting scenarios appreciated by the two cultures. Ye (2003: 4) recounted that “[w]hile adapting to English speech routines, I am not parroting wholesale those that do not make me feel comfortable. I consciously follow some and avoid using others such as ‘how are you?’, replacing it with a mere ‘hello’ or something of the sort”.

Ye’s (2003) tendency in avoiding greeting Anglo-Australians with ‘How are you?’ is caused by her experience of being discouraged by the detail-free ‘Good. And

yourself?’ Anglo-Australian greeting adjacency pair. She maintained that the lack of detailed account of one’s well-being shows indifference. In other words, Ye draws on her Chinese greeting scenario and prefers a way of greeting which supplements *da zhao hu* ‘saying hi/hello, how are you?’ with making inquiries into each other state of being.

Moreover, the Chinese greeting scenario is underpinned by the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*, which not only lends itself to the distinctive Chinese greeting scenario to maximise interpersonal harmony, but also generates other Chinese discourse scenarios, which will be discussed in following excerpts.

Excerpt 5.5

(A8, male, in his early 50s; C8, female, in her mid 30s)

(252)

1. C8: My friend in China, he is doing his business in Chinese tea.
2. A8: Do you know if he exports to other countries now?
3. C8: No.
4. A8: So we need that information.
5. C8: About, about the price and about the samples ...Ok, I see, so I can tell him.
6. A8: Yeah, you can do that, and I’ll give you, send you an email of my particulars.
7. C8: OK.
8. A8: So you can contact me later.
9. C8: Um, that’s good.
10. A8: If you give me your email, I’ll send you that email, that stuff
11. C8: Yeah.
12. A8: Yeah.
13. C8: That’s good, yeah, thank you very much.
14. A8: You can be a successful businesswoman.
15. C8: Oh. (Laughing) No!

The salient linguistic feature that emerges from C8’s English discourse is her unexpected utterance of rejection (Turn 15). Most Anglo-Australians would not take what A8 said at Turn 14 as a compliment (Malcolm, personal communication). Thus there would be no

necessity to reject the ‘compliment’. However, C8 had clearly interpreted it as a compliment and applied the Chinese politeness principle of abruptly rejecting the compliment (Turn 15).

By rejecting the conceptualised compliment quickly and flatly, C8 activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* (不好意思 ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’¹³). The discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’ leads C8 to produce an utterance of denial to conceal her good feeling. Any mainland Chinese speaker who willingly accepts the compliment in such a context is likely to be perceived as *bu qian xu* (不谦虚 ‘not modest’) or as being funny. Revealing one’s happiness in front of his or her interactant might create the situation where the speaker is perceived as better than the interactant. Such a perception is not beneficial to Chinese interpersonal harmony.

It must be noted that there is a distinction between the Chinese discourse scenario *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’ and the English expression humility. According to Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary (1987), humility is “the quality that someone has of being modest and not too proud, because they know that there are things about them which are not perfect” (p. 711). That is, humility, as a quality of someone, might be revealed not for the purpose of achieving interpersonal harmony, but as a result of his or her education or training. In other words, humility is more idiosyncratic than cultural in the English expression.

In contrast, the Chinese discourse scenario *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’ requires mainland Chinese speaker to have an intention of not tilting the balance between him/her and his/her interactants. That is, most mainland Chinese speakers have a tendency of not hampering the development of interpersonal harmony when the discourse scenario *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her]

¹³ It is understood here that there are many different interpretations for *bu hao yi si* in Chinese language, depending on the context of its use. The one I use here is different from the one provided by Wierzbicka (1996: 334. See Section 2.5.1).

good feeling' is activated. By not showing his/her good feelings openly, mainland Chinese speakers often avoid making his/her interactant feel inferior to him/her.

“Oh” at the beginning of Turn 15 and the immediate laughter at the same turn, when produced with the bold “No”, is the indication of C8’s activation of the Chinese discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’. “Oh” was uttered to create the effect that C8 was surprised at A8’s compliment, which mitigated her happy feeling resulting from the compliment. The laughter at the same turn was also meant to convey the message that she did not take the compliment seriously. In other words, although she was happy to hear the compliment, C8 tried to cover up her happy feeling. Laughter used in this way of covering up one’s happy feeling occurs in the next two excerpts.

It must be noted that the abruptness in rejecting the compliment illustrated by C8 might mark a difference between the Chinese way of responding to a compliment and the Anglo-Australian way. The popular norm among Anglo-Australian English speakers is that they would be explicit in their acceptance by saying ‘thank you’ (Wierzbicka, 1996: 335). Anglo-Australians may also reject a compliment, however, if so, they would moderate their tone, using hedges such as “Not really”. For instance, an Anglo-Australian in this context might also downgrade the compliment with “Well, at least I can send an e-mail” or “It would be nice, though” (IA10).

Excerpt 5.6

(A13, female, in her early 70s; C13, female, in her early 30s)

(142)

1. A13: But your English is very good now.
2. C13: (Laughing)
3. A13: Don’t you think so?
4. C13: Um, sort of.
5. A13: Yes, yes.
6. C13: Because I can understand. I think my listening is better than my spoken (A13: Yes, yes), because I can’t make my sentence perfect. Sometimes I feel ‘Ok I should, it could be better’.

7. A13: Yes, that
8. C13: But I couldn't do that.
9. A13: No. And what about taking your notes and work with your thesis?
10. C13: Because for PhD, we don't need.
11. A13: No.
12. C13: We just do my experiments.
13. A13: Just, experiments.
- ... (167)
14. A13: And where do you live then? How did you find somewhere to live?
15. C13: Yeah, very close to the uni. across the street. Just five minutes from the uni.
16. A13: Oh, good, by yourself, are you?
17. C13: To share with someone,
18. A13: Yeah, Chinese?
19. C13: Yeah, Chinese.
20. A13: Oh, good. Good.
21. C13: And it's very interesting.
22. A13: You like cooking?
23. C13: Yes.
24. A13: Oh, great!
25. C13: Um, sort of, sort of (laughing).
26. A13: Yes, yes, yes.

The most marked linguistic feature that emerges from C13's discourse is the failure of C13 to articulate a reply to form an adjacency-pair with A13's compliment on her good English. At Turn 2, instead of making use of the adjacency-paired "Thank you" for the Anglo-Australian compliment (Turn 1) to acknowledge her compliment, C13 replied A13 with her laughter, which, however, was not interpreted by A13 as a reply. Laughter in C13's discourse has the same function of C8's laughter in the previous excerpt. Due to C13's non-verbalised linguistic behaviour, A13 asked for a clarification regarding her evaluation of C13's English (Turn 3). When A13 "pressed for an answer" (IA8) with "Don't you think so?" (Turn 3), C13 equivocated "Um, sort of" as a reply (Turn 4) to

express her modesty. Her equivocation might have left on A13 the impression that she lacked self-confidence. Thus A13 “encouraged” (IA8) C13 with her reinforced “Yes, yes” at Turn 5.

C13 activated the Chinese discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’ when speaking equivocally in response to a compliment. C13’s equivocal compliment-reply “Um, sort of”, which can be roughly phrased in Chinese as “*A, yi ban ban*” (啊, 一般般 ‘Um, just so so’) to downgrade herself. C13 not only gave a modified rejection through her equivocation (Turn 4), but also elaborated in detail on her ‘weakness’ in English, to prove that A13 was ‘wrong’ in saying that her English was very good, because “I can’t make my sentence perfect” (Turn 6), and “I couldn’t do that” (Turn 8), although she was determined that “it could be better” (Turn 6).

All C13’s utterances at Turns 2, 4, 6 and 8 were to redress the conceptualised imbalance between herself and A13, due to the weight of the compliment. C13’s effort in maintaining the balance of harmony is displayed further through her later equivocation at Turn 25. Here C13 also enhanced the effect of the equivocation by repeating herself with “Um, sort of, sort of”, after hearing the A13’s statement that it was great that she liked cooking (Turn 24). Once again, C13’s equivocal utterance would have given A13 the impression that she lacked self-confidence, and once again A13 repeated herself with “Yes, yes, yes” at Turn 25 to encourage her.

A quick analysis may lead us to think that C13 was mistaken in accepting A13’s statement (Turn 24) as a compliment. Anglo-Australian interpretation of the utterance is “Oh, it’s fantastic that you like cooking!” (IA 8). However, C13 took it as a compliment. This is because, according to Wierzbicka (1994: 336), “the notion of ‘compliment’ itself ... is culture-specific”. Thus, it is argued here that, like C8 at Excerpt 5.5, C13 took what A13 said as a compliment and rejected it. C13’s rejection through equivocation was governed by her Chinese discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’, which motivates her to be constantly concerned with not being better than her interactant. In her conceptualisation, C13 might have regarded imbalance between her and her interactant as harming the balance of harmony.

Excerpt 5.7

(A5, female, in her late 30s; C5, female, in her late 30s)

(035)

1. A5: So your husband, what does he do?
2. C5: He is an administrator, in a company.
3. A5: Ah, wow! Very important job.
4. C5: Very important job? (Laughing) I hope so (laughing). I don't, I know very little about him enjoying, but he's very busy. (A5: Yeah). Sometimes, he, e, he has to work, he has to work at night.
5. A5: Really?
6. C5: Um, um.
7. A5: I know. My husband works in a library. He is a library clerk, and so he does lots of filing books and all that things.
8. C5: You're lucky, you have more, he has more time to stay with you.

The salient linguistic feature that emerges from C5's English discourse is her effort at maintaining a low profile for her husband who was an administrator of a company. Firstly, when A5 commented that C5's husband got an important job (Turn 3), C5 did not accept the comment with the acknowledgement that most Anglo-Australians would use in the compliment-response speech act scenario. For instance, in an interview, IA9 offered her intuitive reply in this context as "The money is good too (laughing)". In other words, the Anglo-Australian adjacency-paired reply such as 'Thank you' was replaced by C5 claiming not to be very aware of the importance of the job (Turn 4).

Secondly, C5 said she hoped that her husband had an important position. This "puzzled" IA9, who could not understand why C5 would express such a hope here. Thirdly, C5 directed A5's attention to disadvantages of her husband's job, that is, he might not enjoy working as an administrator. She also pointed out that being an administrator kept him very busy and that he had to work at night. C5's stress of the disadvantages of her husband's job is similar to C13's utterance at Turn 6 in the previous excerpt where she highlighted her weakness in English after being complimented.

C5's remarks were based on the Chinese discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ' [After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling '. In this context, the discourse scenario is activated through her linguistic strategies to avoid expressing her complacency, to downgrade her advantage due to her husband's senior position through downgrading the advantages of her husband's job. C5 also laughed to achieve the same effect as what C8 and C13 had achieved with their laughter, which was to cover up their happy feelings. All of C5's utterances, therefore, construct her conceptualised balance between A5 and herself.

Moreover, when A5 told C5 that A5's husband worked in a library as a library clerk (Turn 7), C5 immediately at Turn 8 commented on the advantage of being a library clerk. That is, A5's husband would have more time to spend with her. C5's schematic cultural knowledge of balance is activated through the strategy of other-elevating, which establishes interpersonal harmony between the conversational interactants.

C5's overt efforts at balancing the two husbands' positions were revealed by her behaviour of rephrasing herself. In "I don't, I know very little about him ..." (Turn 4), the rephrase indicates her attempt at talking down her husband's position as an administrator. Similarly, C5's utterance that "you have more, he has more time ..." might also illustrate C5's effort of figuring out a reason to value A5's husband.

Briefly, several salient and recurrent linguistic features identified in the discourse of mainland Chinese participants in the above three excerpts (5.5 - 5.7) have instantiated the Chinese discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ' [After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling '. This discourse scenario structures C8 (Excerpt 5.5) to reject compliments blatantly, although she may feel happy at hearing the compliment. It also guides C13 (Excerpt 5.6) and C5 (Excerpt 5.7), who may feel equally happy with the complimentary remarks from their Anglo-Australian interactants, to reject compliments in different modified manners.

Excerpt 5.8

(A22, female, in her 50s; C22, male, in his 30s)

(115)

Mobile ringing

1. C22: Ah, excuse.
2. A22: Yeah.
- ...
3. C22: One of my friends, you know, I'm not so familiar with the circum-, environment, so they accompany me around.
4. A22: Ah, OK.

Excerpt 5.9

(A23, female, in her 40s; C23, male, in his early 20s)

(057)

Mobile ringing

1. C23: Sorry, sorry about that.
2. A23: That's alright.
- ...
3. C23: Sorry about it. My friend
4. A23: That's Ok.
5. C23: Has lost the key in the car.
6. A23: Oh yeah. So what's he going to do?
7. A23: I don't know.

Excerpt 5.10

(A34, female, in her 60s; C34, male, in his 30s)

(274)

Mobile ringing

1. C34: Sorry.
- ...
2. C34: Sorry, my friend.
3. A34: That's ok, these things happen.

4. C34: I told you, he, the volunteer, to teach the Bible?
5. A34: Yes.
6. C34: Every week, yeah, he call me, this afternoon, I have time, if I'm free,
7. A34: Yes.
8. C34: He will come here and talk with me for 2 hours.
9. A34: Goodness, goodness!

The above audio-recorded data showed that three Chinese participants answered their mobile phones in the middle of a conversation. All the three were male participants, aged from their early 20s (C23) to 30s (C22 and C34). Each one apologised for the interruption. Moreover, each one, after returning from their brief mobile phone conversation, explained the circumstances of it to their interactants, who they had met for the first time. Their explanations included such details as who they talked to and what the conversation was about. C22 told his interactant that one of his friends was inquiring as to whether he had found the venue for the conversation in the new environment. C23 told his interactant that his friend had lost his car key, and C34 told his interactant that his “volunteer” friend, who he mentioned to A34 before (Turn 4), contacted him for teaching him the Bible.

When an Australian volunteer (IA5) was interviewed for his reaction to the linguistic behaviour of the three Chinese participants in introducing the callers to their interactants, he expressed the view that Australians would not need to do this, unless they were in the middle of a business talk and the caller was part of the business. He asserted that he would not find it obligatory to introduce the caller to someone he had met for the first time, and he would not be expected to do so by an Australian interactant. However, he also said that it would be polite if the Australian interactant could comment on the interruption briefly.

The recurrent linguistic behaviours of C22 (Excerpt 5.8), C23 (Excerpt 5.9) and C34 (Excerpt 5.10) might be considered as indications that these Chinese participants activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* (不见外 ‘not regarding someone as outsider’). The discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* ‘not regarding someone as outsider’ is correspondent with the Chinese politeness principle of blurring the interpersonal boundaries when it is necessary. Blurred interpersonal boundaries can often shorten the

interpersonal distance, resulting in including the outsider (the ‘other’) in the network of the insider (the ‘self’). The reduced interpersonal distance and the effort of transforming outsiders into insiders are in line with the discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* ‘not regarding someone as outsider’.

The discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* ‘not regarding someone as outsider’ might have motivated C22, C23 and C34 to readily provide some details of their callers for their Anglo-Australian interactant. Based on the common experience that they were both participating in the same research project as volunteers, the Chinese participants were likely to extend their personal network to include their interactant as one of their insiders. Under these circumstances, the three Chinese participants were willing to share some information about the caller, and would have expected their interactants to be prepared for inclusion in their insider network. For instance, C34 referred A34 to the caller friend as the one he mentioned earlier in the conversation (Turn 4, Excerpt 5.10) and expected her to associate the caller with the friend who was teaching him the Bible, and also provided further information about the caller.

By contrast, none of the three Australian participants initiated enquiries as to who the caller was or what the call was about, although they all expressed their understanding of the interruption. The Australian cultural knowledge of respecting each other’s privacy would have influenced this. They would not expect to be involved in the conversation between their interactant and their caller. This may explain why A34 did not elaborate further to tell C34 that she remembered the Bible-teaching friends, as C34 might have expected. To a large extent, A34’s brief and perfunctory replies (Turns 5, 7 and 9) might have been a strategy to distance herself from C34’s enthusiasm.

Incidentally, the opposite of the discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* ‘not regarding someone as outsider’ is the discourse scenario of *jian wai* ‘regarding someone as an outsider’, which is a benchmark for interpersonal distance and is also coded with formal linguistic formulas.

Excerpt 5.11

(A14, male, in his 30s; C14, female, in her early 20s)

(210)

1. A14: If you're trying to bring up a Chinese girl as a Chinese girl in Australia, it's impossible. It can't be done. Because she has to go to school, she goes to western school, she is trying to fit in there and coming home,
2. C14: but it's, (seeing A14 waving to a passer-by) "Who is that?"
3. A14: He's a, he serves, he is, he, he sells me beer in the shop (laughing). He didn't recognize me.
4. C14: (Laughing) Do you drink beer in the day time?
5. A14: Yeah, depends, like, I like to drink socially, I like to drink with people, so I very rarely drink on my own.

This excerpt might be regarded as a further instantiation of the Chinese discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* 'not regarding someone as outsider'. C14 asked A14 who he was waving at (Turn 2) in the middle of the conversation. A14 would not expect to be asked about this in this context by someone who he had met for the first time. His discomfort in answering C14 is revealed in his hesitant reply (Turn 3). His stumbling expression might have been caused by his effort of trying to generate a spontaneous answer to C14's inquiry. In the end, he concealed his uneasiness with laughter, and attempted to put an end C14's inquiry with the statement that the person he waved at did not recognize him. However, C14 carried on the conversation with a new topic derived from the 'waving incident', being unaware of A14's discomfort. What underlies C14's natural transit of the conversational theme from "trying to bring up a Chinese girl as a Chinese girl in Australia" (Turn 1) to beer-drinking (Turn 4) might be related to her unawareness of the clear-cut boundaries between A14 and herself which would have prohibited questions about one's drinking habits. In other words, the discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* 'not regarding someone as outsider' entitled C14 to ask A14 questions as if A14 were a cultural insider.

Briefly, the above four excerpts (5.8 – 5.11) have shown that the Chinese discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* 'not regarding someone as outsider' is activated by the Chinese participants. Their verbal behaviours blurred the interpersonal boundary between them and their Anglo-Australian interactants. What underlies the Chinese conceptualisation of blurring interpersonal distance is the Chinese cultural schema of

Harmony. The Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* gives rise to the self-other relatedness.

Excerpt 5.12

(A10, female in her early 40s; C10, male, in his early 30s)

(210)

1. A10: Um, so how often do you go back?
2. C10: Um, I, almost every year.
3. A10: Oh, lovely. Yeah.
4. C10: My wife is still in Adelaide.
5. A10: Is she?
6. C10: Yes, because she hasn't finished her study. Probably she'll come here next month,
7. A10: Right.
8. C10: after she submitted her thesis.
9. A10: Which one is your wife?
10. C10: This one. This is my daughter.
11. A10: Your daughter, lovely. How old is she?
12. C10: She is one and a half years.
13. A10: It's quite hard for your wife to study with a baby then.
14. C10: My mother-in-law is there.
15. A10: Right. So is she from the same area?
16. C10: Yes, we're from the same province.
17. A10: Right,
18. C10: But we know each other in Australia, not in China.
19. A10: Oh, truly?
20. C10: Yes,
21. A10: Oh, I see.
22. C10: Because she is also studying at the University of Adelaide.
23. A10: Right, so what is her area?
24. C10: Oh, biochemistry.

25. A10: Right, I see (laughing), so a bright family.

26. C10: (Laughing) We were married in 1999.

27. A10: Oh lovely, yeah, so. Did your family come to Australia?

The salient linguistic feature that instantiates C10's cultural conceptualisation is his reaction to the English word 'area'. At Turn 15, A10's inquiry about C10's wife's study area resulted in a misunderstanding of the word 'area'. Drawing on his embedded cultural knowledge, C10 told A10 that he and his wife were from the same province (Turn 16), but they had met each other in Australia, and not in China (Turn 18).

A10's primary interest was in C10's wife's study area. After learning that C10's wife was about to submit her thesis (Turn 8) and studied with a baby (Turn 13), A10 asked whether C10's wife was from the same study area as C10 himself. This was rephrased by A10 at Turn 23. In other words, the intended meaning of 'area' in A10's discourse was along the line of study area.

That C10 profiled the meaning of 'area' differently from A10 in his conceptualisation might be regarded as an indication that C10 activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* (老乡情 'hometown fellow feeling'). The Chinese discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* 'hometown fellow feeling' is a mapping of the Chinese cultural conceptualisation of self-other relatedness onto discourse on the basis of the five commons (Wen and Clement, 2003: 21 in Section 5.2.4). In this excerpt, although C10's discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* 'hometown fellow feeling' did not involve A10, C10's discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* 'hometown fellow feeling' caused the misinterpretation of the meaning of 'area' between C10 and A10.

C10 in this excerpt also demonstrated the same Chinese linguistic feature of not accepting a compliment from A10 (Turn 26). Similar to other Chinese participants in Excerpts 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7, C10 laughed, but did not employ the Anglo-Australian adjacency-paired expression of 'Thank you' to acknowledge verbally A10's evaluation of his family, although he might also felt happy at hearing it. Instead, he laughed and let go his happy feeling and shifted the topic of conversation. His laughter, as a discourse indexical, and his conspicuous topic-shift also indicate that he activated the Chinese

discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’ when hearing the compliment from A19.

The Chinese discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* ‘hometown fellow feeling’ is also activated in the following excerpt by C30.

Excerpt 5.13

(A30, male, in his 60s; C30, female in her late 30s)

(285)

1. A30: So, you’re from North China, from Dongbei?
2. C30: Yeah, Jinshan.
3. A30: Jingsa?
4. C30: Yeah, the sa-
5. A30: From Jinshan?
6. C30: The same city as, as Leng Hui.

The salient linguistic feature that is identified in this brief excerpt is C30’s association with the researcher (Turns 4 and 6) regarding her background. Among a number of possible topics related to the city Jinshan, C30 profiled the similarity between her and the researcher. In the subsequent interview, C30 told the researcher that she had felt it almost obligatory to participate in the conversation due to the fact that she knew that the researcher came from the same area as she did. Thus C30 activated her Chinese discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* ‘hometown fellow feeling’ in this excerpt and in the subsequent interview.

The following is an interview excerpt provided by IC8. IC8 told the researcher about her feeling towards a friend of hers who is from the same area as she is.

Excerpt 5.14 (IC8, female, in her late 20s)

I always like to talk with Wu Gui. We not only share the same language, but also we are from the same city. We have many common topics.

Whenever he or I mention some changes to a place in Lumen, we got

really excited. Even though the place is not as famous as, say Opera House, and means nothing to others from other cities, it means a lot to us. That is something to sooth our subconscious homesickness by talking to someone who can talk with you about the things at home. That is something to give me a sense of belongings in the place thousand miles away from home. I felt very happy to say “I’m from Lumen, too!”

IC8’s discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* ‘hometown fellow feeling’ not only structured her to prefer certain conversation topics, it also made her speak with excitement with her home-town fellow Wu Gui. Both IC8 and Wu Gui might have felt that they were related to each other through talking about their common experience of living in Lumen. This sense of self-other relatedness quenches their “subconscious homesickness” and provides them with a sense of belonging to people in Lumen, particularly when they study and work in a new country. In other words, it is the Chinese conceptualisation of self-other relatedness which connects IC8 to Wu Gui and connects both of them to people in Lumen that underlies her discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* ‘hometown fellow feeling’. The Chinese cultural conceptualisation self-other relatedness, which plays a role in the necessity to maintain interpersonal harmony, largely leads to the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*.

Excerpt 5.15

(A12, female, in her 50s; C12, female, in her late 20s)

(438)

1. A12: You know your story.
2. C12: That’s, that’s why I haven’t, I’m thinking I can give a seminar, because actually I’m, I’m a volunteer for this seminar. Our department is looking for people to give a seminar, and I think ‘Oh, I’m leaving. Because it’s, um, I su- I’m supposed to finish in this December (A12: Yeah). And I think I should give them something, like I’ve done, to tell them (A12: Yes) what I’ve done here, and also, because I’m a lecturer in Chinese, in China in our university, so I want to like to

leave them an impression. It's like, I want to benefit like a cultural exchange for them (A12: Yeah) and give them some impression.

3. A12: So how you plan to do your seminar?
4. C12: Yes, you know sometimes your slide shouldn't be fancy or something, but I want to design in a good way to show, um, to show, to attractive as, when, I expect them to say 'Oh, they have a different way to, to give a seminar'
5. A12: Yes?
6. C12: And also, um, I don't know, just like to give a lecture in China, and I will try to explain something in my own way (A12: yeah), and give them lots of table and things and my interpretation.

The salient linguistic feature in this excerpt is C12's seven successive references to "them". "Them" was used five times at Turn 2, once at Turn 4, and one more time at Turn 6. C12's consistent use of "them" reflects her constant concern for "them", which is in alignment with the Chinese conceptualisation of self-other relatedness. Conversely, due to the Chinese conceptualisation of self-other relatedness, C12 related herself to "them", who should be some staff members and students in the department where she worked in Australia.

The reason why C12 emphasised the undefined "them" in her discourse could be related to her understanding that there existed a boundary between "them" and herself. Upon the time of her leaving (Turn 2), C12 would like to leave an impression on her Australian colleagues that she, as a Chinese lecturer (Turn 2), could benefit them by contributing to a seminar as a cultural exchange (Turn 2). The boundary that C12 drew was between herself, a Chinese lecturer, and her Australian colleagues. In other words, in her conceptualisation, there was a social distance between "them" and herself.

Her expressions, which conveyed her constant and intensive concern for "them", might be regarded as an indication of C12's activation of a Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* (内外有别 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside'). The Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside' is a schematic knowledge which is often interrelated with the conscious distinction of the conceptualised 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Only with conceptually

identified outsiders should the discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’ be elicited. With conceptualised insiders, the discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* ‘not regarding someone as outsider’ is drawn on.

As far as C12 is concerned, she identified herself as an outsider to an Australian academic field. As an outsider, she kept a wary eye on her Australian colleagues, because she might be criticised by “them” if she did not do well academically. “Them” [They] played a significant role in C12’s decision making as to whether or not to give a presentation at a seminar and when to give the presentation (Turn 2). “They” also inspired her to leave a good impression on “them” before finishing her program (Turn 2). “They” also monitored the effect of her presentation, which was to make “them” benefit from her cultural exchange (Turn 2). “They” also decided the way she gave the presentation (Turn 4) and the major content of the presentation (Turn 6).

On the whole, the notion of “them” motivated C12’s effort to be a volunteer presenter. It seems that “they” occupied more of C12’s conceptual space than she did herself. To a large extent, being preoccupied with “them” in her conceptualisation could be regarded as a trajectory of her politeness principle which is underpinned by the Chinese cultural knowledge of honouring the significant ‘other’. Conversely, it is the overarching Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* that gives rise to discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’ which governs her constant awareness of catering to people who are not in her insider group.

It must be pointed out that the Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’, similar to the discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* ‘hometown fellow feeling’ instantiated in Excerpt 5.13, does not have a direct influence on C12’s interaction with A12 in this excerpt. It is the conceptualised outsider or ‘them’ that C12 was constantly ‘interacting’ with that is under discussion here. Similar interaction with conceptualised others recurs in the next excerpt.

The discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’ makes C12 interact not only with A12, but also with her conceptualised “them”. The role that the conceptualised ‘them’ plays in the life of some mainland Chinese speakers is also illustrated in an interview data. A Chinese participant (IC3), when she was invited to talk about Chinese families with the researcher, said:

Excerpt 5.16

(IC3, female, in her early 20s)

When my father went shopping in the supermarket, because he has a poor eye-sight, plus not understanding much English, he is likely to buy the wrong stuff. But he would refuse, would not ask others what was on the label, and would not read carefully. He would leave the supermarket as soon as possible after shopping. At home, they [mom and dad] won't answer calls, because they don't speak good English. They insisted on me answering it. These are all because they would like to protect their face, not willing to display their disadvantages to others, such as not being able to speak good English.

IC3's father extended his cultural knowledge of the 'other' to Australia in his immigrant life. "He would leave the supermarket as soon as possible after shopping" because he would not like "others" to know that he could not understand much English. The father would not read closely to reveal to "others" that he had a poor eye-sight. The price that he had to pay for his sensitivity to the conceptualised 'others' was that he was "likely to buy the wrong stuff".

It is shown that the father was not only aware of the visible 'others' in public, he was also conscious of the existence of the invisible 'others' at home by refusing to answer phone calls. He and his wife seemed to have a difficult time being emancipated from their deep-rooted cultural assumptions.

Excerpt 5.17

(A2, male, in his 40s; C2, female, in her mid 20s)

(376)

1. A2: Do you think Taiwan is a part of China?
2. C2: Um, I think most people, they do think so.
3. A2: They do think so?
4. C2: Right.

5. A2: Yeah, thank you.
6. C2: I mean like lots of us, I don't think, like, we care really that much.
7. A2: Um.
8. C2: Like, we really care, OK.
9. A2: The young people, the young people don't care?
10. C2: No, like friends, and all that.
11. A2: Yeah,
12. C2: It's like, but it's like a kind reputation, you know? You've got other, I mean, if you can't even have your own part back, then,
13. A2: Yeah.
14. C2: Then how, it's going international, how are the other people going to look at you?
15. A2: Yeah, right.
16. C2: It's like you're powerless, you just can't get Taiwan back, like, if Taiwan becomes independent, then it'll become another country.
17. A2: Yeah, then?
18. C2: Then China would be, has no face basically.
19. A2: Yeah, OK.
20. C2: You haven't got what you should say. You know.
21. A2: So you think Taiwan should be part of China.
22. C2: Yeah.
23. A2: Yeah, now, that's fair enough.

Two salient linguistic features emerge from C2's discourse. The first one is her reference to "other" (Turn 12) or "other people" (Turn 14) in the discussion of the issue. Like C12 in the previous excerpt, C2 also interacted with undefined conceptual others in her talk with A2. That is, C2 kept in mind those conceptual others and discussed the issue of Taiwan in relation to them. For instance, from the vantage point of the "other" (Turn 12) or "the other people", C2 considered that agreeing to Taiwan's independence would weaken the power of the Chinese government in international affairs (Turn 14) and would

result in the situation where the Chinese government “haven’t got what you should say” about Taiwan (Turn 20), if the government “can’t get Taiwan back”.

The second salient linguistic feature that emerges from C2’s discourse is her reference to the Chinese conceptualised ‘face’ (Turn 18) in the discussion of politics. She articulated clearly that Taiwan independence would “basically” threaten the face of the Chinese government (Turn 18). Face in C2’s conceptualisation is the collective face, rather than the face of any individual Chinese person. It is the ‘face’ of a nation in the context that “if Taiwan becomes independent, then it’ll become another country” (Turn 16). In this sense, the Chinese conceptualised ‘face’ is different from Brown and Levinson’s definition (1987: 60). More discussion of the difference between the Chinese concept of ‘face’ and the ‘face’ as defined by Brown and Levinson will be provided in Section 5.5.

These two salient linguistic features together indicate that C2 activated the Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’. That is, the Chinese government should not lose its face in front of “other people” (Turn 14) regarding the issue of Taiwan. The conceptual demarcation was drawn by C2 between the Chinese nation or Chinese government and “other people”. With ‘outsiders’ or “other people”, C2 raised the issue of ‘face’. According to C2, it was the conceptualisation of preventing the government’s loss of ‘face’ to ‘other people’ that determined whether not to allow Taiwan’s independence. In C2’s opinion, the Chinese government could not afford to lose ‘face’ in the “international” context (Turn 14).

Briefly, the above three excerpts (5.15, 5.16 and 5.17) have illustrated the activated Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’. It is the discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’ that governs C2 and C12 to initiate their references to ‘them’ or ‘others’ in their conversations with their Anglo-Australian interactants. It is also IC3’s discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’ that made her understand her father’s serious concerns with ‘others’ and ‘face’, and would come to help with answering calls at home. Her Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’ was activated by her when

she chose to tell the story about her ‘other’-conscious and ‘face-conscious’ father during the interview.

It is worth returning to Excerpt 5.17 after the summary of the discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’ for another salient linguistic feature that emerges in C2’s discourse. C2 shifted the focus of the discussion on the controversial issue of Taiwan from her expected opinion to ‘their’ opinion (Turn 2). Instead of telling A2 what her opinion was, she referred to the opinion of “most people”. Growing up in mainland China, C2 might have been sensitive to issues relating to politics. She might not be willing to talk about them openly. However, C2 did not tell A2 to change a topic. She stayed in the conversation. Discourse indexicals such as “I mean” (Turn 4), and “like” (Turns 4 and 6) reveal C2’s reluctance to be involved in the topic.

This linguistic behaviour of being ambiguous with her own view on controversial issues so as to remain reserved but also not to reject her interactant’s (A2’s) interest in the conversation topic indicates that C2 activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *sui he* (隨和 ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’). The discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ is also activated by C24 in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 5.18

(A24, male, in his 50s; C24, female, in her late 20s)

(036)

1. A24: Lanxian, I think it’s the one, because there’s a big issue now with Hong Kong men having two wives.

C24: Yeah (laughing softly)?

2. A24: Em? A Hong Kong wife and a Chinese wife.

C24: I don’t know (laughing).

3. A24: Yeah, that’s in the newspaper.

C24: No, yeah,

4. A24: It’s been a big problem in Hong Kong.

C24: Really?

5. A24: ‘Cos, eeee, they have mistresses in Hong Kong, when they travelling

between the, (C24: Oh?) between Hong Kong and the big, new, free trade zones in China,

C24: Aha.

6. A24: Because it's so cheap, (C24: Ah), they can afford to have two wives.

C24: Ah, that's too bad! Um.

7. A24: And the other one was, what else did they do? They're sending them back. They brought the children back to Hong Kong.

C24: Uh,

8. A24: Do you know that?

C24: Well, yeah, yeah, I, yah, watched it on TV. But, well, I think, hum, just some people.

9. A24: But, the parents, are s-, the parents are staying? Parents can stay with some children who were born. I can't remember the law, but they have something different.

C24: Yeah, well.

10. A24: Sound really sad, because they're separating families.

C24: Yeah, but anyway.

11. A24: It's hard.

C24: I don't know what they're thinking of, um (laughing).

23. A24: So you're going to do your account-, you're doing your accounting?

The salient and recurrent linguistic feature that emerges from C24's discourse is her construction of discourse indeterminacy. Discourse indeterminacy is a strategy that C24 has used to avoid expressing open disagreement with her interactant. Indeterminacy in Chinese discourse is observed by Chang as "a tendency [for Chinese] to engage in indirect, ambiguous verbal discourse" (Chang, 1999: 535). On the one hand, C24 told the researcher first thing in the subsequent interview that she felt bad about the conversation, because A24 asked her questions that uncovered the dark side of certain Chinese social issues. As a single woman in her late 20s, C24 felt embarrassed hearing about some young Chinese women being concubines of rich Hong Kong men. She did not like the topic for fear of being related with the issue, given that she came from Lanxian, next to

Hong Kong. However, C24 did not actually articulate her reaction to the topic, nor did she manage to shift the conversation to another topic. Like C2 in Excerpt 18, she stayed on with the topic.

It might be the discourse scenarios of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ that structured C24 to appear collaborative in the interaction, as if she had not been bothered by the topic. C24’s discourse scenarios of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ is indicated to be activated through her ambiguity. Her ambiguity is embedded in her effort to conceal her uneasiness with laughter (Turns 2, 4 and 24). She at the beginning (Turns 2 and 4) pretended to be unaware of the issue. Later she said “No, yeah” at Turn 6 probably to mean that ‘I’m sorry I don’t know, but yes, you’re right, it’s in the newspaper’. C24 also showed an interest in A24’s opinion (Turn 8), and contributed her own “That’s too bad” [to have two wives] so as to cater to A24 (Turn 12).

C24, nevertheless, with her discourse of indeterminacy, implied that she had some reservations about the topic of the conversation. Her reservation is further substantiated with her tentative responses to A24’s question regarding whether she knew of the issue of sending children back to Hong Kong. In spite of this admission, C24 was trying to imply that the topic was not to her taste, which was evident in her “just some people” at Turn 16. Her unwillingness to carry on the topic was also evident in her discourse hedges. For example, at Turn 16, she used “well” twice, “yeah” [and its variety “yah”] three times, and “hum” before she limited the activity to a few people.

C24’s subtle incongruity went unrecognised and also unnoticed was her endeavour to conceal her embarrassment. A24 pressed on with the topic, bringing up the further issue of these children being sent back to Hong Kong (Turn 17), thus accelerating the seriousness of the issue of separating families (Turn 19). C24’s reluctance to engage in such a conversation is shown at Turns 18 and 20. She has had to speak evasively with “Yeah” to appear to agree with A24, but uses “well” and “anyway” to imply her reservation.

C24’s inner struggle to change the topic due to her reservations was eventually picked up by A24, who might have realised that C24 was not really engaged in the conversation. Although she contributed a point of view which agreed with A24 at Turn

22, C24 was not particularly interested in who “they” referred to throughout the excerpt. A24 used the pronoun “they” loosely. At Turns 9 and 11, “they” was used by A24 to mean rich Hong Kong men. Later on at Turn 17, the pronoun “they” was used to refer to “lawmakers” as illustrated in “they’re separating families” (Turn 19). C24 did not make an effort to ask for the clarification of the exact meaning of “they” in different turns, and also purposefully employed the pronoun loosely at Turn 22 with “I don’t know what they’re thinking of”, coupled with “um” and laughter. C24’s evasive discourse and her sporadic interest in the topic served her the purpose of preventing developing the topic, but in a manner not specifically articulated to A24, who finally shifted the topic for C24.

When interviewed, IA6 revealed that if an Anglo-Australian woman were in C24’s situation, she would not linger on a topic which caused her discomfort. The Australian woman would shift the topic by saying ‘I’m not interested in this’ or ‘I’d rather not talk about this’, or by simply shifting to another topic.

Excerpt 5.19

(A36, female, in her late 40s; C36, male, in his late 20s)

(078) Side B

1. A36: I’ve started to learn Mandarin.

C36: Oh, Mandarin.

2. A36: Very slow.

C36: You know, if you, teaching in Chinese, they got, Chi- Shanghainese. There’s another dialect in Shanghai.

3. A36: Yeah, I know.

C36: In Shanghai

4. A36: I can hear it, but I don’t understand that.

C36: Um, just, so. Even here they’ve got Cantonese and Mandarin, these two both. I don’t understand Cantonese.

5. A36: No.

C36: Um (laughing).

6. A36: It’s a very different tone, isn’t it?

7. C36: Yes.

8. A36: It's a very high, high, high-pitched.
9. C36: Um, but not very different, not very different,
10. A36: But it's to western-
11. C36: Just like French and English, I think.
12. A36: But to a western ear, it sounds different. I-
13. C36: Yeah, it sounds different.
14. A36: Because, before I rarely knew mandarin people, I don't experience
Cantonese, and I find it very hard on my ear, I couldn't
15. C36: Um, yeah.
16. A36: I couldn't stay in the room (C36 laughing) for long, because it was (C36:
Yeah) so loud.
17. C36: Really loud. I mean these guys who speak Cantonese can not speak in very
low voice.
18. A36: No. No.
19. C36: They must speak
20. A36: very high
21. C36: Ver- yeah! I know that. Yeah.
22. A36: So it's very surprised when I started to go to Shanghai, but, the, the tone is
very soft.
23. C36: Um, very soft, very soft.
24. A36: It's very pleasant to listen to,
25. C36: Yeah.
26. A36: (Laughing).

The Chinese discourse scenario of *sui he* 'following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]' is also activated by C36 in this excerpt by his two salient and recurrent linguistic features. The first one was repeating after A36 to achieve the effect that he agreed with her (Turns 2, 18, 22, 26 and 28). Literally, C36 was repeating after A36 in English. However, at the level of Chinese conceptualisation, the repetitions that C36 made (or attempted to make at Turn 26) were meant to express 'What you've said is

right'. The effect of C36's being agreeable was particularly strengthened by C36 at Turn 28.

The second feature was C36's moderation of his own view. A Chinese person with the discourse scenario of *sui he* 'following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]' frequently avoids putting his/her personal view strongly, particularly if the listener is someone of a senior position in the hierarchy. Open disagreement may threaten the interpersonal hierarchy and thus violate the hierarchical harmony. After C36 found a discrepancy between his view and A36's at Turns 14, 15, 16 and 17, C36 immediately moderated his view at Turn 18. At first, he stated that Shanghainese and Cantonese are not very different (Turn 14) and provided an analogy at Turn 16. However, after hearing A36 say "But to a western ear, it sounds different" (Turn 17), he moderated his view by agreeing with A36 (Turn 18) and even confirmed his agreement (Turn 20).

By contrast, the Australian participant not only stated her view that Cantonese was different from Shanghainese in terms of tone (Turn 11), she also elaborated on her view (Turn 13). Then, even after hearing a different view from C36, she maintained her own view (Turns 15 and 17). The discourse indexical 'But', which was used twice by A36 at Turns 15 and 17, reveals her persistence. She also provided personal experiences to support her view (Turns 19 and 21).

Excerpt 5.20

(A30, male, in his 60s; C30, female in her late 30s)

(418)

1. C30: ... Every time when I see the parliament debate, I said "If this thing happened in China, there would be the murder or you know, a[n] assassination second day". Yeah, because, you know, you can't challenge people that way and people
2. A30: Not in public, but you're par-
3. C30: Will, will kill you.
4. A30: But you're part of the family, so the family have ways of standing up and saying (C30: Yeah). And, but

5. C30: So for Chinese, if they disagree, they just, you know, shut up, and don't say anything.
6. A30: Yeah.
7. C30: That means, you know, disagree. So.
8. A30: But, I mean, I was back there for three years, and I was in, and then came back for a year and went back to Anhui Province, to Hefei,
9. C30: Ah, I see,
10. A30: I stayed there in the provincial city,
11. C30: Um
12. A30: Helping TAFE set up a college there, and so, I was there long enough for me, um, to stop being angry with the Chinese for not doing things.
13. C30: (Laughing)
14. A30: Or, that sort, say, "Oh why is it happening this way?"
15. C30: Um.
16. A30: And, um, to see, oh, so many people go to another country, like I went to China and you just waste your energy, saying, there were many Americans that I knew were teachers who went there and they wanted the Chinese to do the way Americans do,
17. C30: Yeah, if you talk to them, and they don't say "No", they, they say, sometimes, they say, even say "Yes" and they actually disagree and they're going to do nothing.
18. A30: Yes,
19. C30: And, yeah, that's kind of, maybe that's of cultural thing, yes.

For three times at Turns 5, 7 and 17, C30 explained how the discourse scenario of *sui he* 'following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]' was applied to public contexts in mainland China. She was surprised by Australian parliament debates which are televised and broadcast live to the country as a routine. If such public debates among government members of different ranks happened in mainland China, it would lead to "the murder or ... an assassination second day" (Turn 1). This is because they would violate the fundamental Chinese *Harmony* schema. In this and other similar

circumstances, disagreement is expressed in Chinese discourse through silence (Turns 5, 7). Therefore, the discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ also governs public debate, for example “if they disagree, they just ... shut up, and don’t say anything” (Turn 7).

C30’s point was further elaborated at Turn 17 in reply to A30’s statement that some Americans “wanted the Chinese to do the way Americans do” at Turn 16. C30 drew on her cultural knowledge to reveal that Chinese people “don’t say ‘No’, they ... sometimes ... even say ‘Yes’, and they actually disagree and they’re going to do nothing” (Turn 17). C30 considered this discourse phenomenon as a “cultural thing” (Turn 19).

Briefly, several salient and recurrent linguistic features in the above four excerpts (5.17 - 5.20) have instantiated the Chinese discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’. The discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ structures C2 (Excerpt 5.17) to shift the focus of the discussion from her own view to the view of “most people”, so as not to reject her interactant’s interest in the political issues, although she was sensitive to political affairs. The same discourse scenario also structures C24 (Excerpt 5.18) to avoid articulating different opinions from her Anglo-Australian interactant. The discourse indeterminacy that C24 created allowed her some room for concealing her uneasy feeling with the conversation topic. Discourse indeterminacy is also used by C24 to convey her reservations. This discourse scenario also structures C36 (Excerpt 5.19) not only to repeat after his interactant, but also to moderate his own view to express that he agrees with A36. It is also the discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ that underpins C30’s comments in Excerpt 5.20 on Australian government debates. Basically, the open debates among Australian parliament members violate the Chinese discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ and they surprised C30.

Excerpt 5.21

(A1, male, in his 40s; C1, female, in her early 40s)

(214 Side B of Tape I)

1. C1: I came to the library and finished reading, because the library closes at 5 o'clock on Sunday and I came out of the library and someone stopped us and said 'Would you like to listen to some music?' I said 'All right, oh music'. After, you know, one day of study, I said I'd like to listen to some music and relax, so I took my daughter, and they said 'Oh, come this way.'" And then we just came in and they were very nice and I said 'It's very nice' and then, what kind of music! It was not music, just someone playing guitar.
2. A1: Um
3. C1: Alright. And then they started service. I said 'Oh, what's that?' And they talked about this and this. I wanted to go, because, you know Asian people.
4. A1: Um
5. C1: When they, when the people are very nice to you and polite, you can't be too rude.
6. A1: That's the, that's what I find that fascinating too.
7. C1: Yeah, we're more tolerant.
8. A1: We would stand up and mov- get out.
9. C1: Yeah, so sometimes I prefer, I really appreciate your culture. I wish I could be like that. And I have to, like, put up with it, I just stood there until they finished. And the person came up... he was so nice and he wanted to, you know, to be so friendly to us, Ok, anyway, I don't believe it. If you want to do anything, ok, but no next time. And if I see them next time, and I just went away. This time, just accepted it.
...
10. A1: See now, if I were you, and that happened to me, I would go straight to the administration and said this isn't on. And I'll complain. Absolutely. ...I don't want to be, I don't want to be a victim of these people. So you either tell them to pull their heads in or
11. C1: (Laughing) So we're different, so Asian.
12. A1: Yeah,
13. C1: I said we'll tolerate (laughing).
14. A1: This is so ruminative.

15. C1: (Laughing) But we didn't like it.
16. A1: No. But you didn't tell anybody. Nobody knows you don't like it.
17. C1: But I just don't.
18. A1: Nobody knows it affects your life, because you can't come on Sunday. So you have to change your behaviour.
19. C1: No.
20. A1: No one knows that, because you're so pleasant. But you can be pleasant and complain.
21. C1: (Laughing) Yeah, but I think, you know, everyone is so nice, so friendly ...

The episode portrayed C1's conceptual struggle when she was faced by a conflict. Although those nice, polite and friendly people did not really invite her to just listen to music, she did not leave. On the one hand, she did not like the unexpected musical performance (Turns 1 and 15) and "wanted to go" (Turn 3), on the other hand, being an Asian (and specifically mainland Chinese), she could not be "too rude" (Turn 5) by expressing these wishes. The strategy she adopted was to tolerate (Turns 7 and 13) and "put up with it" (Turn 9) and accept it first (Turn 9). One consolation, as far as C1 was concerned, was that the episode occurred only once, and would be avoidable next time. For example, "if I see them next time, and I just went away. This time, just accepted it" (Turn 9).

Two salient and recurrent features are identified in C1's English discourse regarding her strategies of conflict-settlement. The first one was putting up with the incident (Turns 7, 9 and 13). The second was related to her concern with these people who were nice, polite and friendly to her (Turns 5 and 21), although they were the source of the conflict. Her expressions demonstrate that C1 activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* (忍一时 'being tolerant for the time being'), which is a truncated saying of *ren yi shi feng ping lan jing, dai yi bu hai kuo tian kong* (忍一时风平浪静, 退一步海阔天空 'Being tolerant first for a while [will bring you] dropped wind and subsided waves. Moving a step back [will give you] boundless sea and unrestrained sky: Being tolerant first and thinking alternatively will bring room for future opportunities').

Her activated discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’ conforms to her Chinese cultural politeness principle, whereby one “cannot be too rude to nice people” (Turn 5). Both her discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’ and her politeness principle reflect the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* in the context of interpersonal relationships. In addition, C1 was prepared to give up some of her personal interests for the time being in order to maintain her conceptualised interpersonal harmony.

In contrast, A1 stated that he would either stand up and get out (Turn 8) or complain to an authority or confront the people openly (Turn 10). A1’s underlying problem is that if “... you didn’t tell anybody. Nobody knows you don’t like it” (Turn 16). According to A1, speaking directly with interactants about the unhappy experience or complaining does not necessarily make someone an unpleasant person (Turn 20). In other words, the Australian participant did not appear to conceptualise the link between C1’s action, her politeness principle and her *Harmony* schema. His Australian cultural knowledge is likely to lead him to believe that being polite does not exclude expressing openly and directly to the interactant what he does not like.

The next two excerpts instantiate further the Chinese discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’.

Excerpt 5.22

(A34, female, in her 60s; C34, male, in his 30s)

(018 Side B)

1. C34: So, when, ah! Another interesting thing is that I just, when I just come here, I live in home-stay.
2. A34: Yes.
3. C34: Home-stay, my home-stay is a old lady like you, but she live alone.
4. A34: Yes.
5. C34: And she not, she don’t believe, she doesn’t believe any religion and she, I think she is a little nervous, or, I, I, I don’t know how to describe her, but a little strange, a little strange, and I live with her two month.
6. A34: Yes.

7. C34: Um, one day she told me “I don’t like the smell of your food”.
8. A34: Ah!
9. C34: Chinese food.
10. A34: Yes.
11. C34: And I feel very confused because every time when I um, when I stew, when I stew the beef and some thing,
12. A34: Yes.
13. C34: I invite her to have ta- to have a taste. “Oh, very good, very good!” I ask “Why? That you don’t like my, my smell? And ok, if you don’t like, I out, I move out”,
14. A34: Yes.
15. C34: And last month, I went to the agent again.
16. A34: Yes.
17. C34: Because, because, because nowadays I live with a Thailand student, but we cannot speak.
18. A34: Um.
19. C34: And I think I want to speak English.
20. A34: Yes.
21. C34: And um, so I went, go, go to the agent. “Please find another home-stay for me?”
22. A34: Yes.
23. C34: “What happened with your previous home- home-stay?” “I don’t, I think she don’t like my smell”. But she told me “Oh, you are the last students in his (A34: Uh!), in her home-stay”.
24. A34: Um!
25. C34: “Why?” (A34: em, em), “Because after you come, after you move out (A34: Yes), she se- she sold her house” (laughing).
26. A34: Oh (surprisingly). Ah!
27. C34 “Oh” I think “that’s, why, oh, so that, oh, I understand why she don’t like (A34: Ah!), my smell, so but (A34: Ah!), but when I left, when I lived here,
28. A34: Yes.

29. C34: And generally, I feel happy, but sometimes I don't like, don't.
30. A34: Yes.
31. C34: Because she don't like my, I think, when I just come here, I don't know the culture here and the habits of here.
32. A34: Yes.
33. C34: You know.
34. A34: But home-stay people should understand.
35. C34: But, but she always asked me to do that, not to do that, I, I always (A34: ah, ah!), follow, follow her requirements but, yeah, I'm very careful, I'm very careful.
36. A34: Yes, I'm sure you were. No, I think the people who arrange, the agent who arranged the home-stay should be more careful about the people who they employ, yeah.
37. C34: But my home mo- but I appreciate her for what, for, she, she studied Indonesia language.
38. A34: Right.
39. C34: And she, so she, so she focused on the language.
40. A34: Yes.
41. C34: So when I speak English, it is not very good. The pronunciation is not very good. She, she, she said "What do you said? What do you say?" (A34: um), "I don't, I don't understand." But he, she, she can understand. I know she can understand, but she asked me to correct
42. A34: All right.
43. C34: All right, all right, so
44. A34: Yes, yes,
45. C34: This point I appreciated her, and every day, she, she teach me, she taught me how to pronounce "rrrr".
46. A34: Oh, yes, yes! (laughing)
47. C34: But I cannot, I cannot pronounce it, but (laughing). So, I think everything is, has good thing and bad thing, yeah?
48. A34: You're very, you're, you're, very good, you're very kind to say that (laughing).

The salient linguistic feature that emerges from C34's discourse is about the strategies that he took to avoid verbal conflict with his Anglo-Australian home-stay lady. Like C1 in the previous excerpt, C34 put up with some unhappy experiences first so as to avoid confrontations. He opted for a unilateral solution to the conflict caused by his home-stay lady changing her attitude towards his cooking (Turns 7, 13 and 27), which confused C34 (Turn 11) and led to his moving out (Turn 13). On the one hand, the lady appreciated his cooking whenever he invited her to have a taste, but on the other hand, the lady told him that she did not like the smell of his food. Instead of asking for clarification to clear up his confusion, he resorted to avoidance and moved out (Turns 13 and 15). He also tried to understand the home-stay lady by linking the dislike of his food with her selling the house (Turn 27).

C34 compromised on some incidents in his home-stay experience. For instance, even though he did not like the home-stay lady's rules (Turn 29), he was careful to follow her rules of doing this and not doing that (Turn 35). Therefore, he did not negotiate with the lady, instead, he chose to follow her requirements.

He also relied on his rationale to appreciate the home-stay lady who continually corrected his pronunciation. As a learner of English, although he was not able to pronounce a certain English sound accurately, he could communicate. However, the home-stay lady imposed her own foreign language learning experience on him (Turn 37) and insisted on correcting inaccurate language forms, in spite of their linguistic intelligibility (Turn 41).

His account of the three incidents could be regarded as an indication of his activated discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* 'being tolerant for the time being'. The Chinese discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* 'being tolerant for the time being', together with his Chinese cultural knowledge of respecting elder people (Chapter Six), motivated him to maintain interpersonal harmony with the home-stay lady either by putting up with some unhappy experiences by drawing on the Chinese world view of balance (Turn 47) or by avoiding it entirely through moving out. The discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* 'being tolerant for the time being' prevented him from openly negotiating with the home-stay lady.

By contrast, the Australian participant could see room for negotiation if the same situation happened to her. At Turn 26 she displayed surprise which may show her dissatisfaction with the home-stay lady. She thought that the home-stay family should be able to anticipate some cross-cultural differences between the overseas student and themselves (Turn 34). She was also aware of the responsibility of the agent for briefing home-stay families (Turn 36). At Turn 48 she revealed strong sympathy with C34, which might indicate that if she were in C34's difficult situation, she would not be so tolerant. Thus, it is not difficult to assume that she would confront the home-stay lady and ask for clarification and negotiation if she were C34.

Excerpt 5.23

(A19, male, in his 50s; C19, female, in her 30s)

(305)

1. C19: Yeah, probably before that, can I ask you another question (A19: Um) about the, how to deal with the relationship with the western people?
2. A19: Yes.
3. C19: I, I just shifted to a new office, because I used to have my own office (A19: um) in a lab and now I shifted to a study room,
4. A19: Yeah.
5. C19: Which hosts 12, 12 students, and most of the local students are very young.
6. A19: Yes.
7. C19: Just you know (laughing), going to that PhD from the, directly from the Honours.
8. A19: 23 maybe 24
9. C19: Yeah, yeah, so now they just chat or talking,
10. A19: Yes.
11. C19: All the time (laughing)! Sometimes I don't mind listening their talking, because I think 'Oh, this is a good English environment'.
12. A19: Yeah,
13. C19: But there're some overseas students and, za, they, they complain, oh, because it really disturbed them.

14. A19: Distracts.
15. C19: Yeah, yeah.
16. A19: If you were there to work or see, my own, 'cos I worked through to masters, I was in the same way of roo- a big room, we all had our little desk space.
17. C19: Right, yeah.
18. A19: It'd have been 12 or 14 people sharing the room. But we all made an agreement that causal conversation would take place outside in the staff room where you had your coffee.
19. C19: Right, right, yeah.
20. A19: At that time, your, was this your work space?
21. C19: Not the work space. This is just for the study. Study room.
22. A19: Yes, it's the study room.
23. C19: Yeah.
24. A19: Then it should be treated with respect for everybody.
25. C19: Right.
26. A19: But you have to have arrange-, a meeting of all the participants.
27. C19: Right.
28. A19: Say 'look, some people want to use it for study,
29. C19: Um, um, um.
30. A19: And make for that. And if some people are using for friendship conversation,
31. C19: Right, right.
32. A19: It's just disturbing the study people.
33. C19: Right,
34. A19: Can we have a compromise, can we have an agreement? But
35. C19: Yeah, once upon a time, the school manager went there and gave them a talk (laughing)
36. A19: Yeah, yeah.
37. C19: 'Oh you should be quiet or those'.
38. A19: Yes.
39. C19: But then, and they don't care (laughing).
40. A19: No.

41. C19: They, they (laughing) they still do their own way. Yeah, and the problem is they have so many visitors, the students from the opposite,
42. A19: Yes,
43. C19: And often came or 'Oh, it's tea time', they have so many tea in a day (laughing).
44. A19: Oh, yes. So really your choice is either you don't use that for your study or you have to get, arrange everybody in separate rooms.
45. C19: Because, I'm quite new in that room, so I just try to get used to that and I'm thinking a better solution to
46. A19: Find
47. C19: Sometimes, if you just complain, that's not good.
48. A19: Not. No.
49. C19: Because they will more (laughing), you know.
50. A19: That's right. You have to get an agreement among everybody.
51. C19: Yes, yes.
52. A19: Just complaining is not going to solve things,
53. C19: And even for them, it's not good for them, for their study (laughing),
54. A19: They're wasting their time.
55. C19: Yes, um (350).
... (386)
56. C19: I think, I think here, because relatively you have a high standard,
57. A19: Um
58. C19: Living standard. And since children go to school, they always, you know, plenty of stuff, plenty of books.
59. A19: Yes, yes, much.
60. C19: And everything they want, they can get, so.
61. A19: They can, yes.
62. C19: I think they don't know how to appreciate (laughing).

C19's account in this excerpt, which was about a problem caused by her reluctance to talk openly to the young local students [Australian students] who made the noise in the

study room, was also informed by her activated discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’. C19 was annoyed by the noise, which she gave priority in the discussion when she got a chance to shift the conversation topic (Turn 1). She wanted a quiet study room. Moreover, the expression ‘za’ (after a Chinese sound) at Turn 13 was a discourse indexical indicating that she was unhappy with the situation. However, C19 could only ‘settle’ the conflict by avoiding confronting the noisy students.

The first strategy that C19 employed was to seek a balanced view from the predicament by comforting herself that although it was disturbing, she could treat it as “a good English environment” (Turn 11). This is similar to C34’s strategy when he was faced with the situation that he was continually corrected by his home-stay lady in the previous excerpt.

C19’s second confrontation avoidance strategy was to give a hint of her own situation by referring to the complaints from other overseas students. On the surface, C19 distanced herself from the complaint, however, she was trying to imply that, as an overseas student herself, she had had experiences not very different from other overseas students. They were very disturbed (Turn 13), and so was she.

C19’s strategy of referring to others to describe her own situation is also revealed at Turns 35 and 37. C19 introduced the school manager in the middle of A19’s proposal that there should a meeting arranged in the study room (Turn 34), so that an agreement should be achieved by everyone. The message that C19 was trying to deliver to A19 was that the noise problem was such a serious issue that it had even caught the school manager’s attention. In other words, C19’s implied message was that not only she felt that the young students were noisy, but so did the school manager.

The third strategy that C19 used was expecting the young noisy local students to stop chatting on their own, because, in her view, chatting too much did not do much good to their study. This strategy was seen in her utterance that “even for them, it’s not good for them, for their study” at Turn 53. This is a continual theme in C19’s utterances, for example, chatting “all the time” (Turn 11), having “so many visitors” (Turn 41) and having “so many tea in a day” (Turn 43).

C19’s fourth strategy, after the first three failed to be effective, was relying on her own effort of “try[ing] to get used to that” (Turn 45). Although she was disturbed, C19’s

embedded cultural knowledge of avoiding confrontation encouraged her to put up with it, on the basis that she perceived herself as “quite new in that room”.

None of the four strategies that C19 took were in line with what A19 suggested. Referring to his own personal experience as a student (Turn 16), A19 insisted that a face-to-face meeting should be arranged to bring up the issue openly among all the participants (Turns 18, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34 and 50), because he thought an open agreement would work more effectively than a mere complaint (Turn 52).

It might be suggested that C19 did not regard A19’s proposal of having a face-to-face contact as appropriate. C19 may equate face-to-face interaction with complaining, since either complaining or having a face-to-face meeting meant bringing up the issue. As a result of bringing up the issue, either by the school manager or by some overseas students, the young local students would just talk more (Turn 49).

Underlying all the four strategies is C19’s Chinese discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’. The Chinese discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’ might have motivated C19 to wait until the young local students themselves had realised that too much talking was not good for their study (Turn 53), since as far as she observed, she thought the Australian students did not know how to appreciate the plentiful supply of books in the school.

When a mainland Chinese person (IC7) was interviewed and asked to provide an explanation for C19’s struggle, she expressed the view that it was understandable why C19 had difficulties in approaching the local Australian students. Regarding the episode where the local Australian students did not care and still talked in the same way (Turn 39 and 41) after being reprimanded by the school manager, or even talked more (Turn 49) after being complained about, IC7 commented that speaking abruptly was of no use. IC7 maintained that if C19 could not guarantee a change, there was no point of raising the issue. IC7 then added her personal view, that is, “I don’t want to say things to make others feel difficult nor to make me feel embarrassed” (IC7).

It should be added that the strategies identified with C19’s English discourse in this excerpt were not necessarily culturally exclusive. That is, some Anglo-Australians would probably have reacted to this situation in the same way. Conflict avoidance is an important part of any culture and Anglo-Australians have a reputation for not

complaining. This has been related back to the Australian self-perception of being tough and able to put up with adversities. In this particular case, the students concerned were violating Australian norms by not respecting other people's space. C19 would have been making a wrong assumption if she thought that most Australians would find their behaviour acceptable. To some extent, C19 was right in interpreting the difference between her behavioural expectations and theirs on the basis of age (Turns 5 and 58) (Malcolm, personal communication).

Briefly, the above three analyses have identified the salient and recurrent strategies that C1 (Excerpt 5. 21), C34 (Excerpt 5. 22) and C19 (Excerpt 5. 23) used in the context of conflict. Although they did not use exactly the same linguistic expressions to describe these strategies, the three mainland Chinese participants have activated the Chinese discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* 'being tolerant for the time being'. The discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* 'being tolerant for the time being' is in keeping with the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* for maintaining interpersonal relationships.

Excerpt 5.24

(A13, female, in her early 70s; C13, female, in her early 30s)

(127)

1. A13: And like you, too, wherever you go, say in France, when you, or Germany (C13: Yes). Your husband would've been the same. He would've heard all these voices (C13: Yes) and not to understand (C13: No). But then your ear gets attuned, doesn't it? You start to understand.
2. C13: Yes, yes. So, yeah.
3. A13: And how often do you
4. C13: Call each other?
5. A13: Call, yes. You use the computer, or the internet?
6. C13: Yes, and
7. A13: And the phone?
8. C13: Yes, so we're quite frequently.
9. A13: Yes, yes.
10. C13: So that's ok. That's ok.

11. A13: And when will you meet up?

The salient and recurrent linguistic feature that emerges from C13's discourse is the seeming irrelevance of her two remarks at Turns 8 and 10. At Turn 8, C13 uttered "Yes, so we're quite frequently", and at Turn 10, she said "So that's ok. That's ok". When an Anglo-Australian informant (IA7) was asked to comment on the excerpt, he referred to Turn 8, claiming that "I don't understand it. It doesn't fit the question". He also referred to Turn 10, commenting that "It doesn't make sense" and "It doesn't fit in anywhere". However, further analysis suggests that C13 made these two remarks to reassure A13 that it was all right for her and her husband to be in two different countries, since they could call each other quite frequently.

C13's linguistic behaviour could be regarded as underpinned by her Chinese discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* (替他人着想 'thinking for other people'). *Ti ta ren zhao xiang* 'Thinking for other people' is observed by Young (1994: 9) as a highly-recommended ability in interpersonal communication among Chinese people, because *ti ta ren zhao xiang* 'thinking for other people' often leads conversation interactants to congeniality. The discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* 'thinking for other people' is also compatible with the addressee-oriented Chinese politeness model (Pan, 1994) or the other-directedness politeness principle (Wen & Clement, 2003: 19). Thus C13's remark at Turn 10 might be understood roughly along the line of the Chinese phrase *mei shir, mei shir* (没事儿, 没事儿 'nothing, nothing'). *Mei shir, mei shir* 'nothing, nothing' in Chinese discourse has the function of comforting the interactant who might be conceptualised by the speaker as uncomfortable due to the speaker's misfortune.

As a mainland Chinese speaker with the discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* 'thinking for other people', C13 at Turns 8 and 10 responded to A13's utterance at Turn 1. At Turn 1 A13 mentioned that C13's husband was in Germany, which she had learned from C13 earlier in their conversation. C13 might have perceived that A13 would be worrying about her situation (whether or not this was justified). She empathised with A13's concern and tried to comfort A13. In other words, the saliency of C13's utterances, which appear to be irrelevant, might be caused by her effort to placate her interactant even after several turns.

It is worth mentioning that, although Turn 8 and Turn 10 might be regarded by some Anglo-Australians (such as IA7) as out of context, these two turns are not out of context in light with the Chinese discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* ‘thinking for other people’. In other words, C13 realised her discourse coherence by attending to A13’s state of mind. Coherence in C13’s discourse, therefore, is not limited by her linguistic behaviour, but determined by her Chinese cultural conceptualisation of maintaining interpersonal harmony in the context of relieving the conceptualised worries of her interactant. Coherence understood in light of the Chinese discourse scenario might be regarded as a manifestation of what Shen (1997 [1988]: 12) calls the Chinese distributed viewpoint (Section 5.3), and also as the confirmation of Palmer’s proposal that discourse scenario can be used to “discover why discourse is coherent or incoherent” (Palmer, 1996: 170. Section 3.5).

The Chinese discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* ‘thinking for other people’ recurs in a varied form in other excerpts. These excerpts will be discussed in Chapter Six.

5.5 Summary and discussion

Twenty-four excerpts of intercultural communication or recounted intercultural communication were analysed in this chapter using salient and recurrent linguistic features. The 24 excerpts have instantiated eight activated Chinese discourse scenarios. The eight activated discourse scenarios are:

1. The greeting scenario. This activated greeting scenario leads some mainland Chinese participants to substitute Anglo-Australian greeting scenarios with *da zhao hu* ‘saying hi’, which is often followed by certain specific information of their own or enquiries into others’ state of being;
2. The discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] [not show his or her] good feeling’. This activated discourse scenario leads C8 (Excerpt 5.5), C13 (Excerpt 5.6) and C5 (Excerpt 5.7) to reject compliments in one way or another, although all of them might feel happy at hearing some pleasant remarks directed to them. These remarks were taken by C8 and C13 as compliments, although they might not necessarily be regarded as compliments by their Anglo-Australian interactants;

3. The discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* ‘not regarding someone as outsider’. This activated discourse scenario leads C22 (Excerpt 5.8), C23 (Excerpt 5.9) and C34 (Excerpt 5.10) to introduce their callers to their interactants after they answered their mobiles. The same discourse scenario also leads C14 (Excerpt 5.11) to make inquiries about who her interactant was waving at in the middle of their conversation;
4. The discourse scenario of *lao xiang qing* ‘hometown fellow feeling’. This activated discourse scenario leads C10 (Excerpt 5.12), C30 (Excerpt 5.13) and IC8 (Excerpt 5.14) to profile one particular meaning of the word ‘area’, which instantiates their Chinese conceptualisation of the ‘insider’ group-ship. This ‘insider’ group-ship is derived from one of the five commons identified by Wen & Clement (2003: 21);
5. The discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’. This activated discourse scenario leads C12 (Excerpt 5.15), IC3’s father (Excerpt 5.16) and C2 (Excerpt 5.17) to be constantly aware of ‘them’ or ‘others’ in their decision making, opinion giving, academic life and every day life. Related to the constant awareness of ‘them’ and ‘others’ is their concern for their Chinese conceptualised ‘face’, which in these three mainland Chinese cases, is associated with the ‘face’ of China, either as a nation or as a government;
6. The discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’. This activated discourse scenario also leads C24 (Excerpt 5.18) to employ discourse indeterminacy to appear in agreement with her interactant and to conceal her lack of interest in the conversation topic. It also leads C2 (Excerpt 5.17) to give an ambiguous reply on controversial issues so as to remain reserved but not to reject her interactant’s (A2’s) interest in the conversation topic. Similarly, this discourse scenario leads C36 (Excerpt 5.19) to repeat his interactant’s words and to modify his own views according to his interactant. When the discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ was breached in public debates among Australian parliament members, it drew C30’s attention and surprised C30 (Excerpt 5.20);

7. The Chinese discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’. This activated discourse scenario leads C1 (Excerpt 5.21), C34 (Excerpt 5.22) and C19 (Excerpt 5.23) not to approach and negotiate with those people who caused them to feel uncomfortable, but to use strategies to put up with the inconvenience for the sake of avoiding verbal conflicts with their interactants; and
8. The discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* ‘thinking for other people’. This activated discourse scenario leads C13 (Excerpt 5.24) to produce a discourse that might not be regarded as coherent by her Anglo-Australian interactant. However, the judgment of coherence or incoherence was culturally constructed. Her discourse was meant to be coherent by C13 herself, because it was her activated discourse scenario that structured her discourse.

In discussion, it is worth mentioning that these eight activated Chinese discourse scenarios contribute to the identification of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*. That is, these eight discourse scenarios are all underpinned by the *Harmony* schema and substantiate the schema. As far as the data are concerned, the substance of the *Harmony* schema is identified to include such culturally constructed and culturally accepted knowledge as:

- Greeting with culturally accepted inquiries for harmonious interpersonal relationships;
- Being constantly aware of the significance of other people in society and maintaining balance in interpersonal relationships through thinking for other people;
- Reducing interpersonal distance between conceptual insiders and modifying personal boundaries to turn outsiders into insiders; and
- Expressing one’s views in a manner which does not become a potential danger to interpersonal harmony and avoiding confrontation through tolerance, if possible.

In the context of intercultural communication, the data have shown that the Chinese *Harmony* schema caused subtle communication gaps between mainland Chinese speakers

of English and Anglo-Australians. That is, Anglo-Australian participants might not get the message that mainland Chinese participants wished to convey to them. For instance, PA2 did not realise that PC2 wished to establish a harmonious interpersonal relationship with her. A13 might not know that C13 was thinking to relieve her from worries after hearing C13's story.

The *Harmony* schema has also caused communication discomfort to one of the parties. While in Excerpts 5.3, 5.4 and 5.11, Anglo-Australians (A10, the Anglo-Australian manager and A14) were uncomfortable with either Chinese greetings or with Chinese culturally acceptable inquiries, in Excerpts 5.18, 5.21, 5.22 and 5.23, Chinese participants (C24, C1, C34 and C19) were uncomfortable with their Anglo-Australian interactants because they were structured by the Chinese *Harmony* schema to put up with unpleasant topics or incidents.

Due to the constraints of the data, only one case of miscommunication has been found to the extent that the mainland Chinese speaker of English and the Anglo-Australian misunderstood each other (Excerpt 5.1). This limitation will be discussed further in the last chapter.

Before moving on to the next chapter, two points should be made clear regarding three of the *Harmony* schema-driven discourse scenarios. One is the discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside'. Outsiders are as related to mainland Chinese speakers as much as insiders are due to the Chinese concept of 'face'. However, the Chinese concept of 'face' should not be equated to what Brown and Levinson have defined as 'face' (1987: 60). As Gu (1990: 241) maintains, "Brown and Levinson's model is not suitable for Chinese data ...". Brown and Levinson made a clear distinction which is essential to their framework between negative face and positive face. Negative face is "the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others", and positive face is "the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others" (p. 62). As Gu (1990: 241 – 242) maintains, "the Chinese notion of negative face seems to be different from that defined by Brown and Levinson".

The Chinese concept of 'face' is conceptual, which is often related to the 'face' of the family and the interests of the insider group. The face of the group frequently

overrides the face of an individual. If the individual's 'face' is in conflict with the 'face' of one's insider group, it is the 'face' of the individual that is usually adjusted to be attuned with the 'face' of the group. Sometimes, it may even be sacrificed for the 'face' of the group.

Equally important is the fact that the Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside' is different from the Anglo-Australian schema of maintaining and respecting each other's privacy. The Chinese discourse scenario of *nei wai you bie* 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside' marks space between individual Chinese, however, the conceptualisation of 'space' is different in the two cultures. Firstly, the space between Anglo-Australian individuals might be interpreted as 'a comfort zone'. Not giving each other space is almost equivalent to interfering with each other's private life, which is unacceptable in the Anglo-Australian culture. By contrast, in the Mainland Chinese conceptualisation, space is more likely to be interpreted as *cun you jie xin* (存有戒心 'keeping a wary heart [eye] on someone') or *di fang* (提防 'being on guard for someone'). Frequently, most mainland Chinese people will become uncomfortable if unnecessary interpersonal space is conceptualised, because interpersonal space is often interpreted as the benchmark of distance.

In addition, the Chinese *nei wai you bie* discourse scenario is most likely applied to conceptual outsiders, rather than to conceptual insiders. (With conceptual insiders, it is the discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* 'not regarding someone as outsider' that is applied). However, the distinction between conceptualised insiders and outsiders is prone to modification, depending on numerous factors. The listing of these factors is beyond the scope of this thesis, except for those which either enhance or jeopardise the Chinese concept of 'face' and which play a vital role in boundary modification. In other words, the previous and the existing interpersonal space between two mainland Chinese might be reduced, if not erased, when they accept each other as insiders. Similarly, the interpersonal space between any two insiders might be enlarged to exclude each other, when 'losing face' is conceptually involved.

Despite the fact that the Australian privacy schema does not exclude the conceptualisation of mateship and also distinguishes between different 'sizes' of space

between people of different solidarity groups, the conceptualisation of the insider-outsider distinction in the Anglo-Australian culture might not be as essential as in the mainland Chinese culture. Anglo-Australians are usually judged more or less equally and as individuals, rather than as attached to a group. The ‘size’ of space between two Anglo-Australians, although it might be reduced, might not be reduced to the point of accepting someone as a conceptualised insider. Moreover, as one of the Australian informants (IA7) suggested, the Anglo-Australian conceptualisation of respecting each other’s privacy and allowing each other space is regarded as the foundation of the Australian politeness principle and applied to nearly everyone, regardless of the degree of intimacy between two friends.

The next two discourse scenarios which deserve elaborations are the discourse scenario of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ and the discourse scenario of *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’. These two discourse scenarios are applied to situations where solutions have to be found by mainland Chinese speakers of English when they perceive certain disagreement and conflict. It should be noted that the tendency for most mainland Chinese speakers to favour agreement over disagreement and to opt for temporary tolerance does not suggest that mainland Chinese people do not have a different opinion from their interactants or are unable to confront other people. The argument here is that the discourse scenarios of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ and *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’ demand that most mainland Chinese speakers adopt strategies of avoiding open disagreement and confrontation. That is, it is not the disagreement itself or the confrontation itself that is entirely avoided, but rather it is the open and unmodified expression of this disagreement and confrontation that is conceptualised as threatening the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*.

CHAPTER SIX

Data Analysis (2): Chinese Cultural Schema of *Family*

6.1 Introduction to the chapter

It has been observed by many scholars that the family plays a pivotal role in the life of most mainland Chinese people. “Arguably, Chinese culture may be specified as the culture of the family” (Mak and Chan, 1995: 70). Stockman (2000: 94) holds that family is the bedrock of Chinese society. The Chinese family is also regarded as a basic institution or social unit where “the values of the members are socialized and the pressures of social change are adapted to” (Lau, 1993: 20.2). The fact that Chinese family members have stayed close to survive the weal and woe of 5,000 years in the vast rural areas has given the family a central position in Chinese conceptualisations. This close family structure remains so stable that even the ten-year Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), which brought many changes to mainland China in terms of values and ideology, was observed by Chu and Ju (1993: 272) to inflict “limited and most probably short-lived” damage on the Chinese family.

Incidentally, the influence of Chinese families on an individual Chinese is seen on contemporary mainland Chinese. For instance, Chen Yanqing, who lifted 237.5 kilograms on August 16, 2004 in the afternoon in the women’s 58kg category, gave China its first gold medal in the weightlifting tournament at the Athens Olympic Games. In her interview by Chinese journalists, she not only attributed her achievement to the country, but also summarised her achievement as “*Wo zhe ci zhen shi guang zong yao zu a!*” (我这次真是光宗耀祖呵 ‘I this time have really honoured my ancestors and gloried my forefathers!’) (Sports World Weekly, August 17, 2004).

This chapter presents the identified Chinese cultural schema of *Family*¹⁴ from the collected data. Eighteen excerpts of transcribed conversations and interview data are analysed. All the data are analysed in the light of cultural linguistics, making use of such analytical tools as discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals, as reviewed in Chapter

¹⁴ Capital F and the italicised ‘*Family*’ are reserved for family in its culturally-constructed and schematic sense. That is, it is used in the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*.

Three. The embedded Chinese cultural schema of *Family* largely leads Chinese speakers of English to interpret and produce some discourse in ways that may not be fully appreciated by their Anglo-Australian interactants. Different expectations embedded in culturally-constructed discourse scenarios frequently lead Chinese speakers of English to interpret and produce some discourse that may not be fully appreciated by their Anglo-Australian interactants.

As a preamble to the data analysis, the emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family* will be explored first. Instantiations of the *Family* schema in Chinese language and literature are also discussed before presenting the data analysis. A section of summary and discussion contributes to the identification of the Chinese *Family* schema on the basis of activated discourse scenarios. Influences of the Chinese *Family* schema on intercultural communication will also be provided in the same section.

6.2 Emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*

The Chinese cultural schema of *Family* might be regarded as a body of schematic knowledge about families and family relationships, which is recognised and accepted to varying degrees by most mainland Chinese people. The Chinese cultural schema of *Family*, like the Chinese cultural schema of Harmony, has emerged from the interaction of a myriad of life experiences of mainland Chinese people over thousands of years. Among these experiences are three major cultural experiences, namely, Chinese agriculture, the tradition of joint families living together and Confucianism. The following three sections will elaborate on the three major sources of the emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*.

6.2.1 Chinese agriculture and the Chinese *Family* schema

Agriculture has been an important Chinese cultural experience “not only in peacetime but in wartime as well” (Fung, 1966: 17). Wittfogel (1970) might have given a best account of the role of Chinese agriculture in Chinese civilisation in the form of his book entitled *Agriculture: a key to the understanding of Chinese society, past and present*. China developed agriculture over 5,000 years ago along the Yellow River. For thousands of years, Chinese agriculture was developed across its vast territory and operated on the style of the ‘small-scale peasant economy’. ‘Small-scale peasant economy’ agriculture

required intensive and extensive labour. Chinese agriculture prescribed for most mainland Chinese a living and working style that enjoined family members to stay together for the collaborative activities of farming. In other words, ploughing, sowing, transplanting, irrigating and harvesting required family members to work side by side for family survival.

Generally speaking, the family as a social unit exists to facilitate the individual's development world-wide. However, in the traditional Chinese situation, as Baker (1979: 26) observed, "it was not the family which existed in order to support the individual, but rather the individual who existed in order to continue the family". It is implied from Baker's statement that in ancient China, family survival was a prerequisite for individual survival. "He [the individual Chinese] exists by virtue of his ancestors, and his descendants exist only through him" (Baker, 1979: 26-27). Equally valid is that "the individual exists by virtue of his descendants, and that his ancestors exist only through him" (Baker, 1979: 71). As such, the Chinese agricultural experience of family survival might have given rise to a Chinese cultural conceptualisation that an individual is a relaying constituent of a family, whose existence is embedded both in his/her ancestors and his/her descendants.

The embedding of a Chinese individual in his or her family members is represented in another Chinese cultural practice: that of arranged marriage. Arranged marriage, which was legally banned in 1950 by the Chinese Communist Party, is still being practised in some areas of China in varied forms. According to the Chinese tradition:

A man in China does not marry so much for his own benefit as for that of the family: to continue the family name; to provide descendants to keep up the ancestral worship; and to give a daughter-in-law to his mother to wait on her and be, in general, a daughter to her. (Ball, 1904: 419 – 420, cited in Baker, 1979: 42 - 43)

In other words, in traditional Chinese culture, an individual Chinese was married for the purpose of giving birth to his children for "the continuum of descent" (Baker, 1979: 26).

An individual Chinese, according to the tradition, was couched in his/her family, and was knitted to the family as “a fibre” was knitted into “a rope” (Baker, 1979: 26).

The Chinese conceptual knowledge that the family overrides individuals as an important unit might also be derived from the roles that the Chinese family system plays in society. The Chinese family system was also developed from the agricultural experience. Fung (1966: 21) explained how the Chinese family system came into being:

The farmers have to live on their land, which is immovable ... Unless one has special talent, or is especially lucky, one has to live where one's father or grandfather lived, and where one's children will continue to live. That is to say, the family in the wider sense must live together for economic reasons. Thus there developed the Chinese family system. (Fung, 1966: 21)

The Chinese family system of living together had its social significance. Fung (1966: 21) held that “[t]he family system was the social system of China”. Similarly, Brugger and Reglar (1994: 263) maintained that “the [Chinese] family with its land (either directly owned or leased) was the basic unit” in society. This family system was observed by Lin (1962: 32) as the primary origin of the Chinese “racial stamina and racial vitality”. Lin posited that “[a]mong the cultural forces making for racial stability must be counted first of all the Chinese family system, which was so well-defined and organized as to make it impossible for a man to forget where his lineage belonged” (1962: 32).

The role of the Chinese family system is also a prominent feature in Confucianism. “A great deal of Confucianism is the rational justification or theoretical expression of this social system [family system], or its theoretical expression” (Fung, 1966: 21).

All the emphasis given to the Chinese family system as the rudimentary unit of society, the origin of lineage and the embedding of individuals might have developed the Chinese cultural conceptualisation that families are of vital importance to an individual Chinese, whose survival in society depends on and contributes to the continuum of descent.

6.2.2 The Chinese tradition of joint families and the Chinese Family schema

The Chinese tradition of joint families (Chao, 1983: 11) living together was also derived from the Chinese ‘small-scale peasant economy’ agriculture. Fundamentally, traditional Chinese agriculture required male labour, thus enjoined that the family needed more male children. Consequently, “[t]hrough most of Chinese history both women and men married relatively young, women soon after puberty and men not much later” (Ebrey, 1990: 198). That is, “[w]here women marry early they generally have more children” (Ebrey, 1990: 198). Population could grow rapidly as a result of the early marriage age. Related to the early age of marriage is the tradition of multi-generation Chinese family members living together.

The traditional Chinese architecture of *si he yuan* (四合院 ‘court-yard house’) physically facilitated the sustainability of joint families living together. For thousands of years till the last two decades or so, parents, “especially for families endowed with wealth and longevity” (Huang, 2002: 3), have lived in court-yard houses, joint court-yard houses or houses of similar architectural style together with the families of their male descent (Chao, 1983: 15). *Fen jia* (分家 ‘Dividing up household’) was viewed as a tragedy or a shame to be avoided at all costs. People living together in joint houses have been conceptualised as joint family members, being addressed with varied titles of grandmother, grandfather, mother, father, auntie, uncle, brother and sister. This position might be supported by Huang (2002: 3), who maintains that:

In order to understand Chinese history, it is necessary to look at “Family” with the capital letter “F”, going beyond this father-mother-children constitution and moving into the realm of kinship and lineage. This shift is necessary in order to understand the Chinese family system with its vast extension and interlocking ties. The first step would be to consider the immediate extended family, i.e. extending beyond the parents and their children to include the grandparents, great-grandparents and great great-grandparents generally living under the same roof. This has given rise to the popular Chinese phrase of “*wu dai tong tang*” (five generations under one roof). (Huang, 2002: 3)

As such, it is argued here that the conceptual demarcation of Chinese families into nuclear and extended structures might not have been grounded in mainland China, rather having been introduced into China from the western civilisation with the New Culture Movement at the beginning of the 20th century. The concept of nuclear family was stressed in the late 1970s merely for the promotion of the family planning system in mainland China. Traditionally, mainland Chinese might have conceptualised a family of three or four generations as a family *per se*, regardless of the biological confinement of the ‘nuclear family’.

Joint families living together formed a lineage (Baker, 1979: 49). “[T]he lineage was very similar in structure and certainly in basic ethos to the family” (Baker, 1979: 64). By emphasising the same surname, lineages of different areas were joined to form a clan (Baker, 1979: 68). The same surname shared among clan members normally suggested that clan members had the same ancestor. Clan members with the same ancestor were regarded as being bound up by the blood of the same ancestor or forefather. Clan membership produces the identification of the first of the ‘five commons’ (Section 5. 2.4).

Thus far, it has been shown that the Chinese agricultural experience of requiring more male labour, the tradition of families living in joint houses or in a similar style of houses, the formation of natural lineages, the establishment of surname-bound clans and the tradition of addressing lineage and clan members with family titles have all given rise to the Chinese cultural conceptualisation that Chinese families are stretched to include members who are not confined by the boundary of the so-called ‘nuclear family’, or to include lineage members and clan members.

6.2.3 Confucianism and the Chinese Family schema

Confucianism, as discussed in Section 5.2.4, is an influential source of Chinese cultural knowledge. The reason that Confucianism has been accepted for thousands of years is that it largely fits into the Chinese social-cultural background. For instance, as far as the Chinese family tradition is concerned, “Confucian social doctrine placed great emphasis on the cultural ideal of a large, extended family household, with several generations living together” (Stockman, 2000: 95).

Regarding family relationships, Confucianism is in favour of the clearly marked family hierarchy. Mencius, who developed Confucianism after Confucius (Section 5.2.4), discriminated *wu lun* (五伦 ‘five relationships’) which governed both family and social relationships. “*Fu zi you qin, qun chen you yi, fu fu you bie, zhang you you xu, pen you you xin*” (父子有亲，君臣有义，夫妇有别，长幼有序，朋友有信 “Father and son should love each other. Ruler and subject should be just to each other. Husband and wife should distinguish their respective spheres. Older and younger brothers should have a sense of mutual precedence. And between friends there should be good faith”. *Mencius*. III a: 4, translated by Fung, 1966: 73). As Fung, 1966 observed, out of the five relationships, “three are family relationships. The remaining two, though not family relationships, can be conceived of in terms of the family” (Fung, 1966: 21). Conversely, Chinese family relationships have been regarded by Mencius as the core of all the social relationships.

What underpins the Chinese family hierarchy is Confucian patrilineality. Confucian patrilineality gave order to the Chinese tradition of joint families living together. “Patrilineality [is] one of the fundamental principles of the Chinese family system” (Ebrey, 1990: 200). In patrilineal families, the following are stressed: “the use of patrilineal surnames, the worship of recent patrilineal ancestors, the belief in the need for a male heir to continue the sacrifices and the organization of kinsmen on the basis of common patrilineal descent” (Ebrey, 1990: 200).

The Chinese tradition of joint families living together and the tradition of patrilineality gave rise to Chinese women’s inferior familial status. Chinese women for thousands of years were taught with the Confucian ethic of *san cong si de* (三从四德 ‘three obediences and four virtues’). According to this Confucian ethic, a Chinese woman should be obedient to her father before marriage, to her husband after marriage and to her son after her husband’s death. This Confucian ethic also prescribed that Chinese women should have the gender-specific *fu de* (妇德 ‘women’s morality’), *fu yan* (妇言 ‘women’s language’), *fu rong* (妇容 ‘women’s manners’) and *fu gong* (妇功 ‘women’s work’). Living with her husband’s family, Chinese women in the past also learned to pay respect to the older generation, regardless of gender difference. Conversely, since paternal parents of a young couple were entitled to preside over the young family’s

activities in terms of “child-rearing practices, religious and economic activities, and so on” (Ebrey, 1990: 200), they could set their tone for the junior generation in general, and Chinese daughters-in-law in particular.

Chinese women’s inferior status affected not only most mainland Chinese women, but also most Chinese people at large. Most Chinese women, after they became mothers or grandmothers, would pass on these values of *san cong si de* ‘three obediences and four virtues’ and the values of paying respect to the older generation to their children and grandchildren. Thus, traditional values such as accepting familial hierarchy and social hierarchy, paying respect to and obeying the seniors were passed on through family activities and interactions, generation after generation.

Another important rule that governs family relationships is filial piety in Confucian ethics. The Chinese character for filial piety is *xiao* (孝), which is composed of two parts. “The top part stands for ‘old’ and the lower part represents ‘tzu’ [zi] son or child. ‘Hsiao [Xiao] means what the children ‘tzu’ [zi] owe to the aged ‘lao’, the old in general, and to their parents in particular” (Chao, 1983: 72). In one of the Confucian classics, *Xiao Jing* (孝经 ‘The Classic of Filial Piety’), filial piety is identified from gratitude towards parents. “*Shen ti fa fu, shou zhi fu mu, bu gan hui shang, xiao zhi shi ye*” (身体发肤，受之父母，不敢毁伤，孝之始也 “Our bodies -- down to every hair and bit of skin -- are received by us from our parents, and we must not presume to injure or wound them. This is the beginning of filial piety”. *Xiao Jing*. I, translated by Legge, 1899: 465). Beyond the elementary level of being grateful to parents for giving birth comes a higher level that being a filial child means being obedient to one’s parents during their lifetime and taking the best possible care of them when they grow older. The tendency to avoid debate with the old in the family is considered a virtue.

It is necessary to point out that by the virtue of filial piety, Confucianism can not eradicate Chinese familial tensions of varied forms and degrees. Family tension as well as family harmony is more universal than culturally-specific. However, the difference that the virtue of Chinese filial piety makes is that it sets a norm for mainland Chinese people to abide by and a criterion for mainland Chinese to evaluate their own or others’ behaviours towards their parents. As Chao (1983) maintains:

In spite of tension and discord between them, parental and filial duty and devotion towards each other is conspicuous. The parents take great interest in the children throughout their lives, and their children, imbued with the doctrine of filial piety, are constantly reminded of their bounden filial duty towards their parents. (Chao, 1983: 71)

Associated with Confucian filial piety is the Chinese conceptualisation of *guang zong yao zu* (光宗耀祖 ‘honouring one’s ancestors and glorifying one’s forefathers’). An ancestor “was usually the first of the family who had established himself and his descendants there on the land” (Fung, 1966: 21). *Guang zong yao zu* ‘Honouring one’s ancestors and glorifying one’s forefathers’ is an alternative means of ancestor worship. There are a number of reasons leading to Chinese ancestor worship. The Chinese religion of after-life was one of them, whose elaboration is beyond the scope of the thesis. The Chinese world view is another indispensable source of ancestor worship. In the Chinese world view of *tian ren he yi* ‘unity of Heaven and men’, there is no established external superpower as the creator of the cosmos. Instead, ancient Chinese have seen the cosmos as a contrasting, but complementary and mutually transforming force, with which human beings actively interact. Ancestors were conceptualised as embodying the power of nature in Chinese mythologies (Section 5.2.1), and thus have been much worshipped by Chinese of many generations. A third reason for Chinese to worship ancestors is that an ancestor was “the symbol of the unity of the family, and such a symbol was indispensable for a large and complex organization” (Fung, 1966: 21).

Serving and worshipping deceased parents in particular and ancestors in general was regarded as the alternative form of the duty of Chinese children (Baker, 1979: 72). They were also regarded by Confucius as the advanced level of filial piety. Ancestor worship reflects “the continuation of the parent/child dependence after the death of the parent” (Baker, 1979: 72). Baker held that this kind of Chinese parent-children dependence “differed markedly from the Western [situation]” (1979: 71). In contemporary China, bringing honours to ancestors and deceased parents to create a high profile for one’s surname equals, if not surpasses, the sacrifice provided to ancestors.

The discussion of Chinese family relationships seems to suggest that children who perform filial piety are at the heart of family hierarchy. However, given the vital role of children being filial to their parents, Chinese family hierarchy requires reciprocity in Chinese family relationships. Baker maintains that “the sense of mutual responsibility between parents and son was central to the operation of the family as a continuing and strong unit” (1979: 71). The mutuality lies in the fact that most Chinese parents, who not only provide food and shelter to their children when they are young, but also continue to function as head of the family after their children enter their adulthood. In other words, most Chinese parents’ role in their children’s adult life does not necessarily diminish with the passing of time.

Parents’ roles in their children’s adulthood are justified by at least two major Chinese traditions. Firstly, parents’ own role as a relaying constituent in the continuum of descendants gives them the conceptualisation that they should guarantee that their adult children will fulfil their orthodox role of relaying the family continuum. Thus extending their power over and support of their adult children is conceptualised as most Chinese parents’ obligatory duty. If their adult children were divergent from the family continuum, the parents would regard themselves as failing the continuum of descendent. In other words, most Chinese parents’ conceptualisation of filial piety to their own parents (alive or deceased alike) and ancestors motivates them to be involved in their children’s adulthood, which is primarily for the sake of the family continuum.

Most Chinese parents’ own conceptualisation of *guang zong yao zu* ‘honouring one’s ancestors and glorifying one’s forefathers’ also requires them to bring honour to their ancestors by way of their own children. Extending their power over and providing support to their adult children to assist them to achieve culturally-defined success, in some degree, are alternative ways for most Chinese parents to pay respect to their parents and to fulfil their filial duty to their ancestors.

Thus far in this section it has been shown that the three major cultural experiences of agriculture, joint families living together and Confucianism have contributed to the emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*. Through family activities and various interactions, most mainland Chinese might have developed the schematic knowledge that an individual Chinese is embedded in his or her family members, together

with whom, he or she has a conceptual obligation of ensuring the continuum of descendents; and that family members pay respect to the family hierarchy so that parents and children play their parental and filial duties respectively as prescribed by their positions in the hierarchy. The Chinese cultural schema of Family and the Chinese cultural schema of Harmony also generate the Chinese cultural knowledge that non-‘nuclear family’ members, once they are conceptualised as ‘insiders’ due to vicinity or sharing the same family surname, could be regarded as family members and be addressed with family titles.

6.3 Instantiations of the *Family* schema in Chinese language

The Chinese cultural schema of *Family* leaves some imprints on Chinese language which, in turn, can be regarded as instantiations of the *Family* schema. The Chinese folk art of *chun lian* (春联 ‘a folk art of couplets’), literature, idioms and common sayings, forms of address, greetings and Chinese oral discourse all manifest in one way or another the Chinese *Family* schema. The following five sections, which are a revised version of my early work (Leng, 2004) out of the same study, will elaborate in detail the instantiations of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*.

6.3.1 Folk art, literature and *Family* schema instantiations

The Chinese *Family* schema is instantiated in Chinese *chun lian*, a folk art of couplets popular during the Chinese New Year as a part of its celebration. In *chun lian* ‘a folk art of couplets’, the family, paired with other pervasive entities in nature, is seen as a frequently-depicted theme. Family appears with clouds, mountains, the earth and spring in *yun shan cheng xiu qian ban mei, da di geng xin wan hu chun* (云山呈秀千般美; 大地更新万户春 ‘Cloudy mountains are presenting beauty of a thousand kinds. The good earth is getting fresh when spring comes to visit ten thousands families’), and it appears with the sky, year and the cosmos as in *tian zeng sui yue ren zeng shou, chun man qian kun fu man men* (天增岁月人增寿; 春满乾坤福满门 ‘As the sky grows with the year, men are getting one year older. As the cosmos becomes spring, families are blessed with happiness’). Besides, families are coupled with light and air as in *bian di xiang guang lin fu men; man tian xi qi ru hua tang* (遍地祥光临福门; 满天喜气入华堂 ‘Auspicious

light on the earth is wished to visit every family. Happy air of the sky is wished to come to rooms'). In short, the popular *chun lian* 'a folk art of couplets' instantiates the cultural schema that Chinese families are as essential as other natural elements to any individual Chinese.

Literature is another common medium of instantiation of the Chinese *Family* schema. A good number of Chinese poems feature Chinese families. One example is You Zi Yin (游子吟 'Traveller's Song') by the Tang Dynasty poet Meng Jiao (751-814). He wrote *ci mu shou zhong xian, you zi shen shang yi, lin xing mi mi feng, yi kong chi chi gui* (慈母手中线, 游子身上衣。临行密密缝, 意恐迟迟归 'The thread in the hands of a fond-hearted mother, makes clothes for the body of her wayward boy; Carefully she sews and thoroughly she mends, dreading the delays that will keep him late from home'). The poem instantiates the close knit relationship between mother and son through words such as threading, sewing and mending.

Another poem by Cao Zhi (192 -- 232) of the Three Kingdoms Period might also be regarded as an instantiation of the Chinese *Family* schema. It is said that Cao Zhi wrote the poem and saved his life. His elder brother Cao Pei was a power-freak, who used the excuse that Cao Zhi had violated some rule, and sentenced Cao Zhi to death. Cao Zhi appealed to Cao Pei with the poem: *zhu dou ran dou qi, dou zai fu zhong qi, ben shi tong gen sheng, xiang jian he tai ji?* (煮豆燃豆其, 豆在釜中泣。本是同根生, 相煎何太急? 'Stewing beans with beanstalk. The beans are weeping in the wok. Stemming from the same root, why frying with urgency?'). The conceptualisation of brotherhood as beans and beanstalks stemming from the same root has since then been widely recognised and accepted in mainland China.

The theme of family is well represented in the classics of Chinese literature, *Hong Lou Meng* (红楼梦 'The Dream of the Red Chamber'). *Hong Lou Meng* 'The Dream of the Red Chamber' was written by the Qing Dynasty's greatest Chinese novelist Cao Xueqin (1717-1763). In *Hong Lou Meng* 'The Dream of the Red Chamber', social relationships are reflected through the complex relationships between members of a large family of the upper-class society. Likewise, *Jia* (家 'The Family'), 1931) by a celebrated

Chinese modern novelist Ba Jin (1904-) offers a critique of contemporary society by recounting the lives of three sons of a powerful family.

With respect to the instantiation of Chinese family relationships in literature, *Fu Lei Jia Shu* (傅雷家书 ‘The Family letters of Fu Lei’) (2004) can be regarded as another example. Fu Lei (1908-1966) was a renowned Chinese literature translator and a critic. *Fu Lei Jia Shu* ‘The Family letters of Fu Lei’, which includes 200 letters of over 35,000 Chinese characters (including the translated characters), documents Fu Lei and his wife’s correspondence with their two sons (the elder son Fu Cong in particular, a world-famous pianist) for the purpose of instructing them, teaching them about appropriate behaviours, expressing their concerns about their love, marriage and the pursuit of arts. Commenting on *Fu Lei Jia Shu* ‘The Family letters of Fu Lei’, China Daily (April 14, 2003) reports that:

The book *Fu Lei Jiashu* (*Fou Lei's Family Letters*) gives an insight into the father-son relationship. Vividly depicted in the father's letters to his young sons were merciless discipline, judicious advice, boundless knowledge, patriotic devotion, unyielding righteousness and, above all, fatherly love. China Daily (April 14, 2003)

Fu Lei Jia Shu ‘The Family letters of Fu Lei’ is published and republished as a work of literature due to its content and the style of writing. Letters in *Fu Lei Jia Shu* ‘The Family letters of Fu Lei’ “are truly sincere literary essays imbued with personal discourse in that special historical context and become the most brilliant texts with a unique style in contemporary prose in China” (Yang, 2003: back flap).

In these literary works, the Chinese cultural schema that families are basic social units is instantiated. The hierarchical relationship between family members is not only instantiated but also mapped onto social relationships.

6.3.2 Chinese phrases, idioms, common sayings and *Family* schema instantiations

Some Chinese phrases, idioms and sayings instantiate the Chinese schema of *Family*. For instance, the concept of country, in Chinese characters, is *guo jia* (国家 ‘country family: country’) or *zu guo* (祖国 ‘ancestor country’). The concept of parents in Chinese

characters is *jia zhang* (家长 ‘family head: parent’). People included in any group are *da jia* (大家 ‘big family: everyone/all’), but outsiders are *ren jia* (人家 ‘person family: other people’). Four-character Chinese idioms such as *zun lao ai you* (尊老爱幼 ‘respecting the old, and looking after the young’), as a highly recommended value, are found practically in every Chinese medium. A filial son/daughter, who looks after their parents carefully at the cost of their own interests, is a *xiao zi* (孝子 ‘a filial child’). Such a *xiao zi* ‘a filial child’ is construed as an honest person, who is worthy of friendship and responsibilities. In contrast, a person who violates filial piety becomes a *bu xiao zhi tu* (不孝之徒 ‘an unfilial/undutiful daughter/son’). He/She is categorised as a black sheep of the family, cruel and contemptible and who does not deserve trust.

Many Chinese common expressions also instantiate the Chinese *Family* schema. *Er bu xian mu chou, gou bu xian jia pin* (儿不嫌母丑, 狗不嫌家贫 ‘A son is not disdainful of his ugly mother, just like a dog is not of its poor house’) expounds the mother-children relationship in the similes of child and dog, mother and house. Another saying *jia you yi lao, ru you yi bao* (家有一老, 如有一宝 ‘Having an old person living at home is like having a treasure’) also illustrates the Chinese value of respect for the old.

The Chinese schematic knowledge of respecting the old is largely related to the Chinese cultural knowledge that, when a person grows old, he/she becomes cool-headed with life experiences, and is rich in common sense and life wisdom (Lin, 1962: 51). Many Chinese sayings are accepted as depicting an old person who is conceptualised to be able to understand the present and predict the future. Such sayings go as *lao ren chi de yan bi nian qing ren chi de fan hai duo; guo de qiao bi nian qing ren zou de lu hai chang* (老人吃的盐比年轻人吃的饭还多; 过的桥比年轻人走的路还长 ‘The salt an old person takes in is more than the rice a young man eats. The bridges an old person crosses cover longer distance than a young man travels on foot’). Subsequently, sayings such as *sheng jiang hai shi lao de la* (生姜还是老的辣 ‘It is the old ginger that gives the best spice’), *lao ma shi tu* (老马识途 ‘An old horse knows the way’) and *lao jiang chu ma, yi ge ding lia* (老将出马, 一个顶俩 ‘When a veteran goes into action, he can do the job of two’) give reasons why young Chinese should learn from the old. Otherwise, *bu ting lao*

ren yan, chi kui zai yan qian (不听老人言，吃亏在眼前 ‘The young ones will suffer losses right before their eyes if they ignore parents’ advice’).

Some Chinese sayings instantiate the schema of family relationship. The relationship between children and parents (mother in particular) is conceptualised as a part-whole relationship. A child is *mu qin shen shang diao xia lai de rou* (母亲身上掉下来的肉 ‘the flesh cut from their mother’s body’) or *fu mu de xin gan* (父母的心肝 ‘the heart and the liver of the parents’). The wholeness of the family members is represented in *shang you lao, xia you xiao* (上有老，下有幼 ‘Above [I] have parents, and below [I] have children’). The relationship between siblings is also described as *shou zu qing* (手足情 ‘hand-foot affection’). In the ancient days, the integrity of the family was promoted through Confucius’ teachings such as *fu mu zai, bu yuan you, you bi you fang* (父母在，不远游，游必有方 ‘When one’s parents are alive, one should not travel far away. If one has to, one should tell them where one is going’). *The Analects*. IV: 19, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 57).

A well-quoted Chinese allusion *Kong Rong rang li* (孔融让梨 ‘Kong Rong gave his pears’) instantiates the schema of promoting harmonious family relationships. The saying of *Kong Rong rang li* ‘Kong Rong gave his pears’ was developed from a well-known Chinese story which is about a boy of four years old, Kong Rong of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220). He always placed other people’s interests above his own by offering the best *li* (梨 ‘pear’) to his brothers. Kong Rong gave the best pear to his younger brother, because he thought he was older than the younger brother, and he offered the best pear to his older brother on the grounds that he was younger than the older brother. The story of *Kong Rong rang li* ‘Kong Rong gave his pears’ is taught to Chinese children to promote courtesy between siblings or cousins and friends.

It is maintains here that many Chinese idioms and sayings have been conceptualised by most mainland Chinese people. These Chinese idioms and sayings have given rise to Chinese value systems. These idioms may regulate people’s behaviours while instantiating the Chinese *Family* schema.

6.3.3 Forms of address and *Family* schema instantiations

As discussed in Section 6.2.2, some family titles are used to address non- ‘nuclear family’ members. These forms of address also instantiate the Chinese *Family* schema. Titles of mother and father are embedded in the titles of aunties and uncles in Chinese language. *Yi ma* (姨妈 ‘auntie mother: mother’s sister’), *jiu ma/mu* (舅妈/母 ‘auntie mother: the wife of one’s mother’s brother’), *da ma/niang* (大妈/娘 ‘auntie mother: the wife of one’s father’s first elder brother’), *er da ma/niang* (二大妈/娘 ‘second auntie mother: the wife of one’s father’s second elder brother’), *shen zi/niang* (婶子/娘 ‘auntie mother: the wife of one’s father’s younger brother’) and *gu ma/mu* (姑妈/母 ‘auntie mother: one’s father’s sister’) and uncle father is used for *jiu jiu/fu* (舅舅/父 ‘uncle father: one’s mother’s brother’), *bo fu* (伯父 ‘uncle father: one’s father’s elder brother’). In short, aunties and uncles in Chinese joint families have been conceptualised as close as parents, at least as far as forms of address are concerned.

Similarly, brothers and sisters are embedded in forms of address for Chinese cousins. Cousins in mainland China are frequently addressed as cousin brothers or cousin sisters, or simply and more frequently, as brothers and sisters, as if they belonged to the same biological parents. Thus someone’s eldest cousin brother can be addressed as *da biao ge* (大表哥 ‘eldest cousin brother’) or *da ge* (大哥 ‘eldest brother’).

To a great extent, marriage expands the family network which is strengthened through family titles. Father and mother are the only accepted titles for the in-laws. Older sisters and older brothers are also extended to be the titles for the spouse’s older sisters, brothers and cousins. Any given name used in these contexts will be an insult and regarded as offensive.

The Chinese conceptualisation that families are stretched to include members who are not confined by the boundary of the so-called ‘nuclear family’ is instantiated in Chinese ways of addressing non-family members with the titles for family members. Most Chinese use titles such as grandma and grandpa, mother and father, uncle and auntie, brother and sister loosely to address non-family members, either with intimacy or without intimacy involved in the social relationship. For instance, *er ge* (二哥 ‘Brother Two’) can be used for a neighbour, *er sao* (二嫂 ‘Sister-in-law Two’) for his wife; *da*

niang/a'yi (大娘/阿姨 ‘Auntie’), and *da ye/shu shu* (大爷/叔叔 ‘Uncle’) are the common terms addressing someone (even a stranger) of the parent’s generation, and *nai nai/lao lao* (奶奶/姥姥 ‘Grandma’) and *ye ye/lao ye* (爷爷/姥爷 ‘Grandpa’) for someone (as well as a stranger) of the grandparent’s generation. Indeed, Chinese conceptualise their close neighbours as much as, if not more than, relatives which is instantiated in *yuan qin bu ru jin lin* (远亲不如近邻 ‘A close neighbour is dearer than distant relatives’).

Family membership has even been projected to various government, business or social domains. In the past, *tian zi* (天子 ‘Son of Heaven’) was used to refer to the emperor. In both ancient and modern times, *fu mu guan* (父母官 ‘father-mother officials’) is used to refer to a magistrate. In modern Chinese, soldiers are called *zi di bing* (子弟兵 ‘son-brother soldiers’). The wife of a soldier is called *jun sao* (军嫂 ‘army sister-in-law’). Policemen are known as *jing cha shu shu* (警察叔叔 ‘Policeman Uncle’), bus drivers are *si ji shu shu* (司机叔叔 ‘Driver Uncle’) and female ticket conductors are *shou piao yuan a'yi* (售票员阿姨 ‘Ticket-conductor Auntie’).

In the school domain, the supervisor’s wife is addressed by his students as *shi mu* (师母 ‘teacher mother’), and postgraduate students among themselves call each other *shi xiong/di* (师兄/弟 ‘learning elder/younger brother’), or *xue jie/mei* (学姐/妹 ‘learning elder/younger sister’), usually regardless of the biological age. Affiliated schools to factories or universities are called *zi di xue xiao* (子弟学校 ‘son-brother schools’). Two universities or colleges call each other as *xiong di yuan xiao* (兄弟院校 ‘elder-younger brother universities/colleges’). Any school, college or university where a Chinese graduates is called *mu xiao* (母校 ‘mother school: alma mater’).

Using family terms to address non-family members not only instantiates the Chinese *Family* schema between the addresser and the addressee, but also evokes the extending property of the *Family* schema in the addressee’s mind. That is, motivated by the elicited *Family* schema, the addresser and the addressee are likely to think along the same lines of family and could have the same expectations of each other as they have of their family members.

6.3.4 Greetings and *Family* schema instantiations

The Chinese speech act of greetings not only instantiates the Chinese cultural schema of Harmony, but also the Chinese *Family* schema. “*Hui jia?*” (回家 ‘Going home?’) can be commensurate to “Good-bye!” in Chinese and “*Hui jia!*” (回家 ‘Going home!’) as a reply functions as “Good-bye!”. “*Lai jia la?*” (来家了 ‘Coming home *la*¹⁵’) functions as “Hello, how are you?” in Chinese, and “*Lai jia la!*” (来家了 ‘Coming home *la!*’) by itself can be used as a reply and functions as “Fine, and how are you?”. Depending on the relationship between the interlocutors and the greeting context, “Coming home?/!” and “Going home?/!” may elicit replies with different details. A smile or a nod can be a reply, if the addressee is in a hurry, or as mentioned above, the confirmation can also be a brief reply. Some Chinese may use this greeting as a conversation initiator and also extend the conversation.

Family members and joint family members are often embedded in Chinese greetings which are not only common in informal and oral Chinese conversations, but also in formal and official letters. On the occasion of congratulating the first Chinese astronaut, Yang Liwei, the two provincial government officials of his hometown, Suizhong, Liaoning Province, wrote a letter of greetings to his parents and wife and extended their congratulations to them (15/10/2003). They associated Yang’s achievement with the family and praised Yang for gaining glory for the country as well as for the family. The following letter is translated from *Liaoning Daily* (15/10/2003).

Parents of Comrade Yang Liwei and his wife:

We are very delighted to hear about the success of launching into space the first Chinese manned spaceflight Shenzhou-5 this morning on 15 October 2003, which entered the planned orbit. As the first space-exploring hero in our country, Comrade Yang Liwei is the pride of every Chinese, and the honor of your family. Comrade Yang Liwei’s hometown is in Suizhong, so the people in Liaoning are very proud of having such an outstanding son. On behalf of Liaoning Provincial Committee, Liaoning

¹⁵ *La* is a Chinese particular.

People's Government and ourselves, we would like to express to you our sincere congratulations and warm regards!

We attribute Comrade Yang Liwei's special honour and gaining glory for our country to your great support. We would like you to [continue to care about and support the national astronautic career as much as you did before, and meanwhile wish you could look after the family, take care of your health, and continue supporting Comrade Yang Liwei's work, so that he could contribute more to the country.

Wish you a good health, successful work and a happy family!

Wen Shizhen

Party Secretary of Liaoning Committee;

Director of the standing committee of People's representatives

Bo Xilai

Deputy Party Secretary of Liaoning Committee;

Governor of Liaoning Province

What might be culturally distinctive that emerged from the letter is that not only the spouse but also the parents of the adult astronaut were conceptualised as family members who were entitled to receive the greetings (IA5). Extending concern for and paying respect to the astronaut's parents in the hometown and honouring them for their attachment with the astronaut are considered to be an appropriate manner of greeting the astronaut himself. To a large extent, it is the Chinese *Family* schema of an individual embedded within his family that underlies the official letter.

Thus far, the Chinese *Family* schema is shown to be instantiated from the Chinese folk art of *chun lian*, literature works, Chinese phrases, idioms, common sayings, forms of address and greetings. The widely-instantiated *Family* schema influences Chinese conceptualisations of the families, society and interpersonal relationship through the semantic content conveyed in the language.

6.3.5 Chinese discourse and *Family* schema instantiations

In order to study whether the Chinese *Family* schema is instantiated in everyday Chinese discourse, a study was conducted by the researcher (Leng, 2004) among nine adult mainland and overseas Chinese students studying in a pre-university college in Western Australia. The rest of the section is adapted from Leng (2004).

The study adapted the research technique of “association-interpretation” (Sharifian, 2001, 2002. Section 4.3.7) for identifying schemas. The stimulus used for the study was the movie *The Joy Luck Club*. The following section discusses the results of this study.

The Joy Luck Club is adapted from the novel by Amy Tan (1993). The movie reveals both the conflicts and the mutual appreciation among family members by recounting the experiences of four Chinese immigrant mothers and their four respective daughters who were born and raised in America. Whilst the conflicts largely embody the different cultural values that the Chinese mothers and their American daughters hold, the appreciation tends to arise painfully out of the identification and negotiation of core Chinese family values on the part of the mothers and their respective daughters.

The nine students were shown the whole movie continuously once. Then they came back to participate in the discussion two days after the movie was shown so that they could have some time to ponder over it. The discussion, which included participants’ own association and interpretation, was prompted by the question “Which character or episode in the Joy Luck Club impressed you the most and why?” The discussion which lasted for two hours was conducted in Mandarin Chinese and audio-recorded.

Below are direct translations of some parts of the transcribed discussion which express the participants’ interpretations of the movie characters and their reflections on their own life experiences. “P” followed by a number stands for the number of participants speaking up in the discussion. And a second number after a hyphen stands for the number of times that the participant spoke up. For instance, P1-1 means Participant 1 speaking for the first time.

Interpretations of the movie characters

In the discussion, many participants found the stories of Lindo, her daughter Waverly, Suyuan, and her daughter June, very impressive. They not only gave an account of stories, but also elaborated on them with their interpretations.

... When her daughter Waverly got a champion, Lindo took her and the magazine with Waverly as the cover girl to the street to show off to every passerby. It's very interesting here. In China, many parents like to compare their children with other children, as if to raise their own status. Most Chinese would compete for being Number One, i.e., if they've got a Number One, they're perfect. If they themselves [parents] failed, they would insist that their children should get Number One. Eventually, if their children got Number One, they would be very happy, and would tell others about it. Getting Number One is an honour. In the past, people worked hard to achieve academic success to honour and glorify their ancestors, to let others know about their family. That is, to make their family famous. This tradition continues all these years ... (P1-1)

Later when Waverly grew older, in order to please her parents, she married a Chinese. More often than not, if you don't do things according to mom's will, mom will show her unpleasant facial expression to you. So, in order to please her mom, Waverly then married a Chinese. This has to do with Chinese tradition. (P1-2)

... I understand why Suyuan wanted her daughter June to be perfect, although June at first quarrelled with her mother, telling her she wasn't. Suyuan rested all her hopes on June. She lost two twin baby daughters, and she would like June, the surviving daughter, to shoulder all her hopes, and it's June's family duty. Chinese parents and children have a close tie, but so close that I feel it brings pressure on children, just like on June. But eventually, June agreed to try. (P3)

Lindo, Auntie Lindo, I feel, she, she left me the deepest impression, that is, Lindo experienced many struggles in her mind, and she changed her view of life. When she was young, she could not control her fate, she was arranged by her mother, arranged by her mother to a marriage ... Just because she didn't have any say in her own life, she didn't want her own daughter Waverly to repeat her own miseries in life, she arranged her daughter this, and arranged her daughter that ... So when the daughter had achievements, her mother was very happy. Chinese people pay attention to the connections between family members. So when the daughter achieved, the mother naturally felt happy for herself. (P5-1)

... The daughter [Waverly] was rebellious [when she was young]. However, she learned to obey to her mother when she grew up. When she had a boyfriend, she made a point to seek her mother's opinion. She hoped her mother would accept her boyfriend. Chinese stress the importance of family, and this makes them Chinese. (P5-2)

... She [Lindo] herself had never had such an opportunity of learning to play chess, so she felt, she placed all her hopes on her daughter. She regarded her own, her own daughter as the extension of her own hope. (P6-1)

... The boyfriend Waverly found herself was also very successful... She hoped that her mother could realize this, hoping her mother could agree to her own choice. (P6-2)

The tension between Waverly and June surfaced, but indeed, the tension, there were also subtle tensions between the two mothers [Lindo and Suyuan], although they were friends, playing mahjiang regularly together. As a matter of fact, the tensions between the women were the tensions

between two families. In tradition, Chinese people are inclined to stress their own family, their own family's status, hoping to honour and glorify their ancestors... Although Chinese always want to brag about themselves, to show that they are better than others, for most Chinese, from the perspective of the tradition, this indeed shows that their family is better than other families. It is their family that is better than others'. It is their family that can bring up such a successful person. As a result, in order to compete between families, they [the younger generation] cannot follow their own wills, as they wish. Parents and other people of the older generation will force you to accept their ideas. If your father wished to be a lawyer, but he failed, he would want you to be a lawyer. If you wished to be a doctor, your father would be unhappy with you. (P8)

... Whenever she [Waverly] had some ideas, or whenever she had something to do, her mother [Lindo] would say opposite words, would be very strict with her daughter in her attitude. Indeed, at the bottom of her mother's heart, her mother loved her, and cared about her very much. (P9)

It seems that one of the reasons why the stories of Lindo, Waverly, Suyuan and June left the participants with a deep impression is that the stories triggered off the participants' embedded cultural knowledge about Chinese families and family relationships. The entangled relationship between Lindo, Waverly, Suyuan and June reflected that in Chinese culture, parents involve themselves in their children's lives, either to prevent their children repeating their own past miseries (P5-1), or to take pride in what their children have achieved (P1-1). Children's achievement was largely related to their involvement (P1-1; P5-1) or to their love and care (P9). The striving for an individual's success might be motivated by family glory (P1-1) or pushed by competition between families (P8). Most Chinese children, as a result of family expectations, would try (or more frequently be forced to try) to live up to their parents' expectations (P3), and try to please their parents when making decisions so as to achieve family harmony (P1-2; P5-2;

P6-2). The Chinese *Family* schema about the relationship between family members also underlies P6's interpretation (P6-1) that children are the extension of parents' hope.

Participants' self-associations

In the discussion participants also related certain movie episodes to their own life experiences, which, to a large extent, verified the movie story and consolidated their interpretations.

... Chinese parents are proud of their children's academic achievement. They would think, the parents would think, that the children's achievement is their own, is what they have 'planted'. My parents are proud of me and my sister studying here overseas. Children would please their parents to show their love, or get good marks for the exams, or accompany their parents whenever they've got time, and be filial to their parents. (P2)

...I think it's good to listen to parents [heed what parents say]. Certainly good. Because they have more experiences than me... Children should listen to their parents. If not, they will regret and suffer losses. (P4)

...I won't ignore their [my parents'] vanity, because Chinese give priority to the word filial ... It's not easy for parents to give birth to you and to bring you up. They have sacrificed pretty much. You should appreciate their favours and return their favours. (P7)

*...My brother and I have been in Australia for over three years. We don't work here. My parents have been supporting us, paying our tuitions and bills. They are willing to pay, because they want me to study better. They are worried for my future, my future work, my future family and many of my other stuff. They have *cao xin* (操心 'exhausted their heart') for me. (P8)*

It is seen from the participants' discussion that the Chinese *Family* schema was elicited when the participants interpreted the movie and associated it with their own related

experiences. They drew on the evoked core cultural knowledge to comment on parent-child relationships in the movie and in real life. Their recounts indicate that the Chinese *Family* schema propels individual Chinese, particularly adult children, to strive for the goal of family honour and family glory. Other family members, parents in particular, are involved in the process along with the striving children. The involvement is conceptualised as parents' responsibility, love, care, 'exhausting hearts' and sacrifice, although parents' own wills, dreams and interference are also involved. The conceptualisation of the family relationship also underlies children's accommodating parents' interference, attending to parents' words, pleasing their parents and understanding and appreciating them.

6.4 Data analysis

Following the same data analysis procedures as explained in the previous chapter, the analysis below will make use of some other Chinese discourse scenarios. Discussion of all the Chinese discourse scenarios on the basis of the data in this chapter leads to the identification of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*.

Excerpt 6.1

(A19, male, in his 50s; C19, female, in her 30s)

(550)

1. C19: Also me (laughing), I need to push my, my son. I have one son.
2. A19: One son, and he, he is here with you?
3. C19: Yes, he is nine years old, and I try to give him all the opportunity I didn't get. You know, even though I'm poor, I bought a piano for him (A19: Wow!), I send him, I'll send him to a Australian youth choir (A19: Yes), and just give him any opportunity (A19: Um, yeah) to, you know, improve his quality (A19: Yes) or any ability.
4. A19: Yes, I'll certainly identify their skills and then make sure they get (C19: Yeah) use, I mean, we all did that too to our kids, I think and lots of Australian families do that too. You, you're around and you're sure they join clubs and they learn the extra things you don't get at school (C19: yeah) ...
5. C19: Just give, give them chance

6. A19: The opportunities, yes
7. C19: Develop, develop the
8. A19: Develop their potentials
9. C19: Yes, yes. My husband wish him be an athletic.
10. A19: Of course, yes, sports, yes,
11. C19: But, because he like football, soccer, (A19: yeah), but my, I know my son is not very good at sports, but still you know, send him, to as-, let him to join a soccer club.
12. A19: Right, yes.
13. C19: Last year,
14. A19: He's quite young to do all these things.
15. C19: Yeah (laughing).
16. A19: Will your husband come to agree with you for this sort of thing?

C19's narration in this excerpt about her and her husband's wishes for her son displayed some recurrent linguistic features. C19 used expressions such as "I need to push ... my son" (Turn 1), "I try to give him ... " (Turn 3), "even though I'm poor, I bought a piano for him" (Turn 3), "I send him, I'll send him to a Australian youth choir" (Turn 3), "just give him any opportunity" (Turn 3), "My husband wish him be an athletic" (Turn 9), and "because he [her husband] like football ... I know my son is not very good at sports, but still ... send him ... let him to join a soccer club" (Turn 11). All these expressions reveal that she and her husband, as parents in the family, took it as their responsibility to push the son to study and to learn extra skills (Turn 1), make decisions for the son, provide all the possible opportunities that they missed to improve their son's quality and ability (Turn 3).

C19's salient and recurrent linguistic expressions might be regarded as an indication that C19 activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* (父母总是为孩子着想 '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]'). This discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]' could be regarded as a specification of

the discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* ‘thinking for other people’ in the context of families. The discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’ embraces firstly the schematic knowledge of parents providing various essential care for their young children. More importantly, it also includes the culturally-constructed conceptualisation that most mainland Chinese parents, as head of the family and with more life experience than their children, are entitled to direct, push and provide emotional and financial supports to their children for their children’s present and future benefit. Thus, parents’ decisions that are made for their children are often conceptualised by most Chinese parents and children as wise decisions. Emotional and financial support provided by most Chinese parents seldom stop after their children have become adult.

The discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’ motivated C19 to buy a piano for her son and pay for him to join the Australian youth choir, although she was a “poor” mainland Chinese student studying overseas (Turn 3). C19’s conceptualisation might be that by providing her son with “any opportunity” of “improving his quality” and “any ability” (Turn 3), she might have prepared for her son a promising future. The same discourse scenario also motivated her husband to send her son to join a soccer club. That is, her husband made a decision for her son to be trained to become an athlete, despite the decision not being based on her son’s physical potential (Turn 11).

The discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’ made C19 and her husband take it for granted that they did not need to consult their nine-year-old son when they made decisions concerning him. There was no linguistic clue to manifest such a necessity in her discourse.

In contrast, A19’s recurrent linguistic features indicate that he had a different schema regarding families and parent-child relationships. He not only expressed his opinion that he did not think a nine-year old could accommodate that many hobbies all at the same time (Turn 14), he also expressed his concern about whether C19’s agreed with the strategy (Turn 16).

A19's opinion and concern might be regarded as a clue to his Anglo-Australian family schema that parents should let go of their children and be able to see their children as individuals in their own right (de Vaus 1994: 59) rather than simply as an extension of parents. A19's Anglo-Australian family schema motivated him to display a gap in appreciating C19's belief and behaviour with regard to pushing a young man to accommodate his parents' desires for him to learn many things at the same time.

Excerpt 6.2

(A10, female in her early 40s; C10, male, in his early 30s)

(507)

1. A10: I remember once a lady saying to me that small children small problems, big children big problems.
2. C10: Yeah, you're right.
3. A10: That, um, I mean,
4. C10: That's, my wife often say "Ok, when you", talks, talk, talk to my daughter, "when you're five, we, we will be, be liberated".
5. A10: Five, no.
6. C10: I borrowed it. More or less.
7. A10: Say till 25 (laughing).
8. C10: Now, I, even after 25, probably you'll worry about her marriage and the-.
9. A10: Well, exactly. Yeah. It's, it's non-stopped, I mean, and it makes you appreciate your own parents because they've all gone through this.
10. C10: I think you'll worry for whole life.
11. A10: Exactly.
12. C10: After marriage, from then, you, to look after the grandson or granddaughter.
13. A10: Yes, that's right, exactly, goes on (laughing).
14. C10: Not easy.
15. A10: Yeah, the children make you less self, self-selfish, because you have to think of somebody else, I think that's, certainly having children is, is good (laughing).
And I get worried,
16. C10: It's part of the life.

17. A10: Yes.
18. C10: Yeah, it makes you busy, and sometimes probably, not so happy, may, but, it's, it's part of your life, I think.
19. A10: Yes.
20. C10: Experience everything.
21. A10: Exactly, yeah.
22. C10: That's the aim of human life.
23. A10: Yeah, that's right.

The discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]' might make C10 diverge from A10 in this seemingly smooth intercultural interaction. On the surface, it appears that C10 and A10 communicated without disruption. However, throughout this excerpt, C10 and A10 activated different family schemas for their interpretations of the saying "Small children, small problems; big children, big problems". C10's discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]' entailed his thinking that parenthood was a life-long commitment.

C10's activated discourse scenario of the life-long parenthood commitment is revealed by his expressions such as "even after 25" (Turn 8), "probably you'll worry about her marriage and the- " (Turn 8), "worry for whole life" (Turn 10), "After marriage" (Turn 12), "look after the grandson or granddaughter" (Turn 12), "It's part of the life" (Turn 16), "not so happy ... but it's part of your life" (Turn 18), "Experience everything", and "That's the aim of human life" (Turn 22). All these expressions describe the scope, the aim and the content of being a parent in his conceptualisation.

Although A10 appeared to agree with C10 in her discourse, her position was clear in the sense that the parenthood, which is committed to a five-year old, could change when the child reaches 25. In other words, A10 profiled the age of 25, which was much longer than the accepted age of 18 in Australia, because it was clearly adult in the Anglo-Australian culture. Anglo-Australian children of this age should be treated as independent individuals.

A10's divergent position from C10's life-long parenthood commitment is revealed from her echoing utterances at Turns 11, 13, 17, 19, 21 and 23. It was C10, speaking English as a foreign language, who made the initial efforts to develop the conversation, whereas A10 made minimal utterances at these turns. This discourse imbalance may indicate that A10 wished to subtly and implicitly convey that she did not fully agree to the life-long parenthood commitment. However, A10 did not express her disagreement openly with C10.

A10's explicit demonstration of her cultural differences is shown in Turns 9 and 15. At Turn 9, she explained that the meaning of being a parent is "mak[ing] you appreciate your own parents" (Turn 9), "mak[ing] you less ... self-selfish" (Turn 15). In other words, A10 conceptualised the meaning of the parenthood as self-enriching, whereas C10 conceptualised the meaning of the parenthood as the life-long giving of support to and worrying for one's children and grandchildren.

A10's family schema, in terms of parenthood, is much in line with the concept that de Vaus (1994) proposes for Australians: the concept of "letting go". He defines "letting go" as "*the capacity to see the other person as an individual in his/her own right rather than simply as an extension of oneself*" (italics original. de Vaus 1994: 185). A10's letting go of her children at the age of 25 was much longer than the accepted age of 18 in Australia. However, it seems that most Chinese parents would simply have not thought of letting their children go, and are ready to live with their children and their grandchildren all their life long.

Two other mainland Chinese participants provided accounts on how they, as adult children, accepted the decisions that their parents made for them.

Excerpt 6.3

(A22, female, in her 50s; C22, male, in his 30s)

(059)

1. C22: ... then I went the Philippines, take my MBA here, master in business and treasure. After that, you know I got, encounter several choices. After graduation you've got to make choice. So the first choice is, my professor recommend me to

study in the United States for PhD in Finance, because I'm the best foreign student there, and I graduate with distinction.

2. A22: I see, so he says keep going.
3. C22: Yeah, keep going. That guy is really excellent, you know. He got two degrees from both Harvard and Stanford.
4. A22: Ok.
5. C22: He was the
6. A22: Harvard Business School is very famous, in that area.
7. C22: So that guy recommend me to work and study in, what's, what's the name of the school? Yeah, Berkeley, Berkeley.
8. A22: Oh Berkeley.
9. C22: Yeah, that's very famous, yeah, top ten in the United States.
10. A22: Berkeley is in San Francisco, is it? Or Los Angles.
11. C22: Oh, I guess it's, yah, yah, almost that area.
12. A22: California.
13. C22: Yah, California yah.
14. A22: Yeah
15. C22: So I'm not so sure about that, and, but my parents strongly object me to take that immediately. They said you know, you have got to be, stop here. Ok, find a job, get married, then you want carry, you know, where you go, you know, yah, yah, you may do anything you want, you go to college for PhD. Actually, you know, for PhD, you know, it's my ultimate goal, you know. I'll still pursue it, probably later, yah, five years.
16. A22: Yeah.

C22's narration showed that he gave up his opportunities of going to the United States to pursue his PhD in one of the top ten American universities because his parents "strongly object[ed]" (Turn 15) to him doing so. He accepted his parents' objection, because he, as an adult his 30s, might have drawn on his discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]', and reasoned that his parents must have objected

for his 'good future'. Therefore, he accepted his parents' arrangement for him of stopping the study, finding a job, getting married, and then doing his PhD last (Turn 15).

Excerpt 6.4

(A36, female, in her late 40s; C36, male, in his mid 20s)

(139)

1. A36: Have you made some, um, Australian friends?
2. C36: Yeah.
3. A36: Yeah?
4. C36: Of course, yeah, but, most, most of them is just, when I, my teacher, you know, my music teacher, yeah, he just bring me some. Yeah.
5. A36: Yeah.
6. C36: Yeah, yeah, so, but computers, I don't know. Maybe the computers are all very strange, strange, a little strange you know.
7. A36: So do you spend a lot of studying or playing your music?
8. C36: Ah. I've studied a lot of time. When I was in China, I studied for four years, four years. And I played guitars and some, I played some key board, I played some drums, and just play some, you know, not very classical musical instrument, and just. When I come here, I just get here for, after I arrived here for three days, just three days, I get a guitar from the Zanis Music. Yeah, I just get one and I just keep playing. I don't want to forget this.
9. A36: No, it's important.
10. C36: Yeah, yeah, but my parents, they didn't know, you've now here.
11. A36: They'll have a big shock.
12. C36: But they know, they know I played guitar when I was in high school, they know that after I get maybe for one years, after I get the guitar and they knew that, they knew I get one, and they just do that, let me play it, but they don't like me play it when I was study oversea. They want me just to study computer science.

C36 has demonstrated in this short excerpt that, although he was passionate for music, he came to Australia to study computer science according to his parents' wish (Turn 12). His

passion for music was revealed, firstly, from the friends he made. That is, he only made friends with music people, who were introduced to him by his music teacher (Turn 4), because he found people in computer science “all very strange” (Turn 6). His passion for music was also shown from the experience that he played a number of different musical instruments in China (Turn 8), in particular he played guitar when he was in high school (Turn 12). His passion for music was further shown in that he bought himself a guitar three days after he arrived in Australia (Turn 8). Despite his passion for music, C36 abided by his parents’ decision and studied computer science.

His account reveals that both he, as an adult in his mid 20s, and his parents took it for granted that his parents could and should make decisions for him against his interest and against his passion. He did not complain about his parents’ wish for him to study computer science. Both he and his parents may have thought that the parents could make wiser decisions than the young man could, according to their discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’.

Excerpt 6.5

(A15, female, in her 50s; C15, female, in her 50s)

(039)

1. A15: ... And have you been, you haven’t been to this university?
2. C15: No, my son studied here.
3. A15: Did he?
4. C15: Um.
5. A15: What did he study?
6. C15: Um, accounting and information system.
7. A15: Ah, yeah.
8. C15: Um. He’s working now.
9. A15: I’ll say he’s been here before.
10. C15: He’s been, yeah.
11. A15: Yes, a couple of my children worked at the uni. One finished, one didn’t.
12. C15: Um, but.

13. A15: Hoping by me keeping on going will inspire my older son to go back, but I don't think. (15-second pause) They just get on their own lives, certainly they do what they like.
14. C15: Um.
15. A15: So what brought you out to Australia?

This excerpt is presented here for the illustration of an Anglo-Australian mother's cultural conceptualisation of the parent-child relationship. A15, who was a mature age student, had a wish that, by herself returning to university in her 50s, she could inspire her older son to resume his unfinished university study (Turn 13). However, it seems that her Anglo-Australian cultural conceptualisation of the parent-child relationship curbed her attempt, because she was fully aware that her adult son had his own life (Turn 13), and as a mother, she should respect her son's choice and not interfere with his life.

The discourse indexical of the 15-second pause in the middle of her utterance might reveal the struggle between her wish for her son's returning to university and her awareness that she should not be involved in her son's decision making. The struggle could be a difficult experience. She changed her topic immediately at Turn 15.

Thus far, the first four excerpts have manifested, from both the parents' point of view (Excerpts 6.1 and 6.2) and adult children's perspectives (Excerpts 6.3 and 6.4), that in some mainland Chinese families, both parents and their children, young or old, speak, think, make decisions and behave according to their embedded Chinese discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]'. Both C19 and her husband (Excerpt 6.1) did not think of consulting their only child when they made decisions for him, because they would think and work for their son. C10 expressed the view that he would think and work for his daughter life-long (Excerpt 6.2). Both C22 (Excerpt 6.3) and C36 (Excerpt 6.4), the male adult children, did not make it a point of negotiating with their parents when they had goals and passions which were in conflict with their parents' wishes. Instead, they were ready to compromise their own goals and passions to obey their parents. Their discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's

present and future benefit]’ might have structured them to think that their parents’ decisions were wiser than theirs, and were made for their ‘good future’, due to their parents’ life-long experiences.

Excerpt 6.5 might have instantiated a contrasting Anglo-Australian cultural conceptualisation of parent-child relationship. Respecting an adult child’s own choice as an independent individual might have underpinned A15’s non-interference with her son’s life.

Many adult mainland Chinese children were not only ready to accept their parents’ decisions on major issues, but also on everyday life activities. The following account is from an interview excerpt, provided by a mainland Chinese (IC7) volunteer. She said,

Excerpt 6.6

An interview data (IC7, female, in her late 20s)

I left home for Britain in 2001 and started to travel by myself. I took a lot of pictures to send back home. But my parents are never satisfied with my photos. My father told me again and again “why you always took photos without your feet? You should take photos either with your whole body or half of your body only.” I ignored him for quite some time. But with the time being and with more photos taken, he still nags me about it. And later, even my mother started to talk about it. After I came to Australia, I travelled to some places and sent photos back. My father got angry to see that there was no improvement at all. I still took photos without my feet or lacking of a small part of legs. He spoke to me in a high pitch once I called back home “You tell them (who takes photos for me) to take either half of you or the whole of you. Not only without your feet!” Well, I do not want to quarrel with him for such little things. And since then, whenever others take photos for me, I repeat my father’s requirement. “Please either take half of me or include my feet in the photo otherwise my father will nag me again.” and

whenever I called back home during the travel or after travel, my father would ask the question “have you included your feet in the photos?” But now I can reply him with “yes”, and this makes our conversation easier. Anyway, I called back home only once each week. I do not want to end up the conversation with unhappiness to all of us. Actually, I did it as a task at first. But now, I feel that my father may be right about it. The photo looks better with my feet in it.

IC7’s account illustrates her father’s and her mother’s serious concerns about the photos that she took overseas. The degree of her parents’ seriousness in the everyday activity of photo-taking might not be shared by every mainland Chinese parent. However, her parents’ remarks, which reflect the cultural conceptualisation that *er xing qian li mu dan you* (儿行千里母担忧 ‘children 1000 *li* away [still] parents worry for them: Parents would worry for their children no matter how far away they are’), might also have been structured by their discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’. That is, their adult daughter, who was in her late 20s, travelling overseas, must listen to them and change her photo taking-behaviour according to their advice.

IC7’s initial acceptance of her parents’ advice, which she accepted to avoid unhappy telephone conversations and which she regarded as a task for her parents’ sake, might reveal her discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’. That is, underlying her initial unwilling acceptance of parents’ mandatory advice was her conceptualisation that, although she did not like her parents’ advice, her parents must have given their criticism and expressed their concern out of their good will for her, after all. Her eventual acceptance of her parents’ advice might have confirmed her discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’.

IC7’s account about her interaction with her emotional parents, about the fact that she kept on sending them her photos while travelling overseas in Britain and Australia

from 2001 to 2004 and the fact that she must make an overseas phone-call every week revealed that IC7 attended to her parents' emotional attachment to her. Her discourse indexical "only" in "Anyway, I called back home only once each week. I do not want to end up the conversation with unhappiness to all of us" confirmed her attending to her parents' emotional state. This attending to her parents' emotional attachment to her might be regarded as a clue to another discourse scenario which might be represented linguistically as *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* (关心照顾老人 'being concerned about and looking after the old'). The discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' is related to the Chinese *Family* schema of filial piety. However, since the Chinese *Family* schema of filial piety can take many forms, the discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' is more specific as far as the data is concerned.

Excerpt 6.7

(A37, female, in her late 40s; C37, male, in his early 40s)

(089)

1. C37: ... I mean, for the family value.
2. A37: Yeah
3. C37: They've got it stronger than other areas. I think. Australian is one of them. I got some neighbours, you know, (A37: um) first in Booklands. I think the old gentleman should be 80 or nearly 90 years old.
4. A37: Um.
5. C37: I think his sons, his grandsons just live around south Perth, or Fremantle, not very far away
6. A37: Yes.
7. C37: I don't think, in my opinion, they never, never come to see to the, come to see that gentleman,
8. A37: They didn't come to visit him.
9. C37: Yeah, just for Christmas, some of his birthday
10. A37: Birthday (laughing), yeah!
11. C37: I, I think, it's, for a Chinese, unbelievable doing that.

12. A37: Yeah,
13. C37: Because he is an aged man, I have to carry a lot of heavy things for him.
Actually his kids ought to do that, yeah?
14. A37: Yeah.
15. C37: Yeah, shopping for him.
16. A37: Um.
17. C37: Um (laughing), you know.
18. A37: Yeah, I think we have, I don't know if we've changed, or we've always
been, I would, I think we
19. C37: Yeah.

The salient linguistic feature in C37's discourse was that he gave his strong personal views on his aged neighbour's experience. For instance, at Turn 7, he used expressions such as "I don't think", "in my opinion", "never, never", at Turn 9 he used "just for ...", at Turn 11 "unbelievable", and Turn 13 "ought to", and "yeah?". All these expressions construe the profile of an aged man, who was in his late 80, nearly 90, but lived on his own, although his sons and grandsons lived "not very far away" (Turn 5), but they came to visit him rarely". The base for C37's profile of the old man is the family value that C37 holds, that is generated from the discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old'.

As discussed in Chapter Five, most mainland Chinese participants frequently elicited their discourse scenario of *sui he* 'following [others for] harmony when disagreement appears' and adopted some strategies to avoid talking negatively to their interactant. Although C37 did not talk negatively to A37 in this speech event, it was A37's culture that C37 commented on. Therefore, it is argued here that the effect of the old man's family members violating the discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' surpasses his discourse scenario of *sui he* 'following [others for] harmony when disagreement appears' and motivates him to construe the figure of the old man. Conversely, when the discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' is violated, the person concerned, that is, the aged gentleman, becomes a conceptual figure against the

conceptual ground of C37's family values. Thus C37 behaved and judged the sons and grandsons of the aged gentleman according to his discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old'. For instance, he said he had to "carry a lot of heavy things for him [the aged man]" (Turn 13). "[H]ave to" in this utterance might be treated as a discourse indexical, because it reveals that, although he could carry heavy things for the old man, he reasoned, according to his discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old', that the sons and the grandsons "ought to" do it (Turn 13). However, on the other hand, given the discourse scenario-generated reasoning, he could not leave the old man unattended. He had to help the old man. That is, his behaviour was motivated by the discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old'.

The discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' is also activated by other mainland Chinese participants in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 6.8

(A32, male, in his mid 60s; C32, female, in her late 20s)

(272 Side B)

1. C32: You Australian people, especially the old people, you support yourselves, right?
2. A32: Yes.
3. C32: Yeah, but in China, I mean the son of the family should support the parents to support their lives, to feed them, especially when they are very old and sick. So how about you? You'll be very lonely.
4. A32: I have a wife, and here
5. C32: But, excuse me, how about when you're getting very old, and can not move very freely?
6. A32: (Laughing, making the noise of embarrassment)
7. C32: So you just lie in bed of the hospital and
8. A32: Oh! Oh! (In an embarrassed tone and laughing)
9. C32: enjoy your television.

10. A32: No idea (laughing)! I'll have to give each of my sons a book about Kong Fu zi [Confucius] and say "you read that, and I want some filial piety".
11. C32: (Laughing) So that's very. When I first came here, I always see the old people there, getting on the bus themselves, and go to shopping themselves, and even they are very old, and can not move very freely, they just order food from the restaurants, but they are alone, and no children come their place to support them, so.
12. A32: Children might not be here, children might be living elsewhere in Australia or living overseas, they. It's very much the sense of Australian independence. People very much, well, look after themselves. OK, you've got some families or many families around the place which are large and, maybe sort of sticky together like Chinese family. But in the main part, the Australian families, sort of scattering and spreading, moving around. Um, probably because we have this sort of culture in Australia.
13. C32: Yeah, I see, yeah.

The salient linguistic feature in C32's discourse was that she depicted a vivid picture of being old in front of her interactant who was in his mid-60s. For instance, she used the word "old" or "very old" five times in the brief excerpt at Turns 1, 3, 5, and 11. She also used expressions associated with being old such as "sick" (Turn 3), "very lonely" (Turn 3), "can not move very freely" (Turns 5 and 11), "just lie in bed of the hospital" (Turn 7) and "enjoy your television" (Turn 9). In other words, C32 did not conceal her concern about old people whom she saw in Australia (Turn 11), and her discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' was triggered off when she was talking with her interactant. That was why she openly asked A32 "So how about you? You'll be very lonely" at Turn 3.

C32's open and euphemism-free remarks tap into her discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old'. Under the influence of the discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old', C32 did not think that it was taboo to talk about being old in

front of a man in his mid-60s. In her conceptualisation, there was no stigma attached to being old, and therefore, being old could be talked about and described again and again.

C32's schema-driven remarks put A32 in an obviously awkward situation so that he laughed again and again (Turns 6, 8 and 10) to ease the embarrassment, or made a joke to satisfy C32's imminent concern (Turn 10). A32's reactions to C32's questions were based on his activated Anglo-Australian family schema. Both old people and their offspring, in Anglo-Australian culture, prefer their independence (Turn 12). And many elderly people would feel ashamed and embarrassed to become a 'burden' to their children, since culturally speaking, Australia has fostered a youth culture since the 1920s (McDonald, 1995: 32), and since the 1960s and the 1970s, the value system has been geared towards greater personal autonomy (McDonald, 1995: 35). Understandably, the Anglo-Australian family schema is related to the Australian economic and geographic situations, which was also expressed by A32 at Turn 12.

The euphemism-free remarks about being old in front of Anglo-Australians recurred in C34's discourse in Excerpt 5.29 (Chapter 5). C34 told A34 about his home-stay mother and said "Home-stay, my home-stay is a[n] old lady like you, but she live alone" (Turn 3 of Excerpt 5.29).

Underlying the mainland Chinese participants' open comment on their Anglo-Australian interactants' being old is the conceptualisation that old people are worthy of respect. That is, due to the Chinese *Family* schema of filial piety and the discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old', most mainland Chinese might conceptualise that being old is acceptable. The same conceptualisation motivated C11 in the following excerpt to believe that her parents were old, which elicited a quasi-debate between C11 and A11.

Excerpt 6.9

(A11, female, in her 40s; C11, female, in her late 20s)

(039)

1. A11: We haven't talked about your parents yet, I know they're doctors, but tell me about your parents' hobbies or interests.

2. C11: Well, they're very, ah, how to say, they're very quiet people, not outgoing. And my dad likes tennis. He plays tennis every day. And my mom just likes house working.
3. A11: She works at home.
4. C11: And both of them are retired now. And my dad just enjoys his tennis and my mom is looking after my dad. Before I came to Australia, my mom used to be looking after two people, my dad and I. Now, she is concentrated on looking after my dad.
5. A11: How old are they?
6. C11: My father is 62 years old, and my mom is two years younger.
7. A11: Oh, they are young!
8. C11: Which is 60.
9. A11: They are still very young, do you think, you don't think they are young?
10. C11: No (with a higher pitch, louder voice, longer vowel sound).
11. A11: No?
12. C11: In China, no.
13. A11: No, that's the difference, isn't that?
14. C11: Yes, yes.
15. A11: For me now, 60 and 62 are not old at all.
16. C11: How about your family?

C11's reaction to A11's comment that C11's parents were young (Turn 7) reveals the Chinese conceptualisation that being old is acceptable and respectable. This culturally-constructed conceptualisation might be linguistically represented as *lao jiu shi lao* (老就是老 'The old is old') discourse scenario. This discourse scenario of *lao jiu shi lao* 'The old is old' is revealed in C11's argument in the quasi-debate between her and A11 regarding whether being in one's 60s is old or not. When A11 commented that C11's parents were young (Turn 7), since they were in their early 60s, C11 could not agree with A11. C11 made the clarification that the age was 60 (Turn 8), as if she thought A11 might have misheard her. C11 rejected flatly the proposition (Turns 10 and 12) that her parents were still young, which, however, was A11's view (Turns 7 and 9). Her eagerness in

accepting A11's proposal that there was a difference between Chinese culture and Anglo-Australian culture (Turn 13) in this regard is revealed in her repeated reply at Turn 14. In other words, C11 would rather accept a neutral position that there was a cultural difference regarding the conceptualisation of the age issue than giving up her view that her parents were old in their early 60s, because she might have thought that it was respectful of her to think of her parents as old. She might have associated her view with her discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old'.

Although C11 thought her parents were old in line with the discourse scenario of *lao jiu shi lao* 'The old is old', her admiration for them was not reduced. Her father and mother, as old and retired people, were enjoying life and were useful to the family (Turn 4).

A11's comment on C11's parents' age indicates that there is a cross-cultural difference in the conceptualisation of age. Motivated by her Anglo-Australian cultural schema that individuals are independent, A11 believed that a 60-year old was as independent people in any other age group, as such she thought C11's parents were "young" (Turn 7) or "still very young" (Turn 9).

Excerpt 6.10

(A9, male, in his 50s; C9, female, in her 30s)

(032)

1. A9: So, are you getting prepared for the Olympic Games, like the Olympic Games in Bei- Beijing?
2. C9: Um, I, I know. 2008.
3. A9: Yes. Are you, you running? You look very athletic.
4. C9: Oh.
5. A9: Are you very strong swimming?
6. C9: No, but for hobby, not for, not for sports.
7. A9: No. You look very strong, athletic, tennis, ping-pong, is it? Ping-pong, you like ping-pong?
8. C9: Um, most Chinese like it but me (laughing).

9. A9: Yeah, you look like a champion.
10. C9: I like to, to compete, but my
11. A9: Yes.
12. C9: My, you don't know, my age,
13. A9: Yes.
14. C9: is slightly old.
15. A9: Oh, you look so young! 20, 20, 22
16. C9: Maybe
17. A9: 22.
18. C9: 18 (laughing)!
19. A9: I don't say 18.
20. C9: No, just joke.
21. A9: Yes, that's fine.
22. C9: I'm o-, I'm over 30.

The salient linguistic feature in C9's discourse is that she not only told A9 her age frankly (Turn 22), but also profiled her age in the conversation on sports. C9's discourse might reveal the mainland Chinese conceptualisation that age is not a private issue, and being old (even at age 30) can be talked about. In other words, there was no stigma attached to being old in C9's discourse scenario of *lao jiu shi lao* 'The old is old'.

Thus far, salient linguistic features in the five excerpts above have shown that although some Chinese participants spoke English with their Anglo-Australian interactants, their English discourse was structured by their overarching Chinese cultural schema of *Family*. They drew on their discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' either to accommodate their parents' request (Excerpt 6.6), or to comment on some lonely old Australians that they have observed (Excerpts 6.7 and 6.8). They might openly tell their interactant that their interactants were old without modification (Excerpts 6.8 and 5.22). Underlying their frank remarks could be their discourse scenario of *lao jiu shi lao* 'The old is old', that is, the conceptualisation that old people in mainland China are associated with both experience and wisdom, who deserve the respect of the young. Structured by the same

discourse scenario of *lao jiu shi lao* ‘The old is old’, C11 (Excerpt 6.13) categorised her “still very young” parents as old (Excerpt 6.13) and C9 regarded herself at the age of 30 plus as slightly old (Excerpt 6.14).

Excerpt 6.11

Interview data (IC2, female, in her early 40s)

I once had a talk with an American lady... She came to sis and me when she learned that [our] Mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. She herself had a breast taken. And she was really kind to tell us about her story and showed us her reconstructed breast. It seems that we do share a lot with similar experience. But what made me surprised is to hear her talking about her children.

She said that she was so grateful to her daughter, who lived in the same city and went to help her “once in a week” when she had the operation. I asked if she wished her daughter could live with her for a few days. Then it was her turn to feel surprised. “Why? She has her own family”, she said. “Besides, I prefer to live alone even if my daughter had meant to live with me for some time”.

I really felt a bit puzzled to see her cool politeness to her married daughter even when she was threatened with such fatal disease. Didn’t she feel lonely and frightened? Wouldn’t the daughter feel desperate? Wouldn’t they worry about each other?

In my family, the tie is too tight for anyone to keep a rational distance. Yes, just like a one-thread weaved tie, once a loop gets loose, the whole texture is in danger.

The excerpt is presented here to reveal IC2’s conceptualisation of the relationship between parents and adult children, despite the fact that it can be used to reveal her discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* ‘being concerned about and looking after the old’. By presenting the excerpt, the researcher does not wish to imply that all the

Anglo-Australians would conceptualise family relationship exactly the same as the American lady did. The data is presented here merely for analysing IC2's conceptualisation.

The first salient linguistic feature in IC2's account is her surprise at, and puzzlement by her interactant's "cool politeness to her married daughter" (Paragraph 3) at the time of her being ill with cancer. IC2's surprise was manifested by her comment "But what made me surprised is to hear her talking about her children". Her surprise grew to be puzzlement, because of her expectation of what a married daughter should do for a seriously-ill mother. Her three consecutive questions at Paragraph 3 displayed her puzzlement.

The second salient linguistic feature in IC2's account is her explicit expression of the family relationship by using such words as "tie", "a one-thread weaved", "loop" "texture", "tight" and "loose" (Paragraph). These words could be regarded as a clue to IC2's conceptualisation of family relationships. IC2 might have conceptualised family relationship as a tightly-knitted fabric, which is similar to the rope metaphor used by Baker (1979: 26. Section 6.2.1). Both the fabric and the rope metaphors might give rise to another Chinese discourse scenario of *Family* which is *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* (紧密的家庭关系 'interlocking' (Huang, 2002: 3) or an "entwining" (Leng, 2004) family bond').

IC2's discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond' drove her to expect that family members should devote themselves to each other without reservation (or "keeping a rational distance"), especially after her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond' caused her to be surprised when she learned about the American lady's gratitude towards her married daughter who lived in the same city and helped the mother "once in a week". As a married woman, she and her family members could not remain "cool" when the mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Instead, they felt "desperate" (Paragraph 3).

By contrast, the American lady activated her cultural schemas of space and independence when talking about herself and her daughter. She observed her married daughter's independence and space and did not expect her daughter to violate them on

her behalf. Meanwhile, she appreciated the space that her daughter reserved for her, since she conceptualised herself as an independent person, even when she was seriously ill.

In fact, between the two families, the emotions towards the sick mothers might be more or less the same. Due to the different family schemas, however, the manifestations of the emotions are rather different and culturally-defined. This interview data supports what Palmer (1996: 7) has observed in that “[a]n emotion term, such as love, predicates not only feeling states, but also scenarios of discourse and social action”.

Emotions towards family members generated by the Chinese discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* ‘interlocking-entwining family bond’ are also displayed in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 6.12

(A7, female, in her 50s; C7, male, in his early 20s)

(040)

1. C7: ... It's a, the place where I come from is a very small village. And it's very close to the coast. My father is a fisherman, but originally, he came from the farm. He is both a farmer and a fisherman. He is very good with fishing (A7 laughing). He, he always, always goes to fishing.
2. A7: He always, he likes it?
3. C7: Yeah, he definitely likes it.
4. A7: It's a good pass time and you get food as well.
5. C7: I know, he still catches the fish right now, nearly every single day. (A7: Yeah), because he's not working at the moment. (A7: Yeah, yeah). He usually catches those breams, black breams. (A7: Yeah, yeah), beautiful. When you stew them, wow, that tastes brilliant.
6. A7: So is it the south of Suzhou down there or
7. C7: No, south. It's very close to Vietnam, I will say, it'll take about 3 hours trip through the boat from my village to Vietnam. So you can imagine the distance between them is very short. Not that long.
8. A7: No, 'cos we went to Guilin.
9. C7: Um, oooh yes! Guilin is a very nice place.

10. A7: It's nice, yeah, and cool.
11. C7: Because my dad have been, has been to Guilin, you can see all the, he told me that all the waters are very clear, you can see the mountain reflects from the, from the water. You can see through the whole bottle of the water, the river, you know, so clear.
12. A7: It's very nice, yeah, lots of very nice mountains.
13. C7: Yes, it's like the shape of the animals. Camels, sheep or anything like that, very beautiful. But myself, I haven't got a chance to go there. But I wish to go.
14. A7: Will you be, will you be able to travel to there or is it too far from where you're living?
15. C7: It's quite, a far, it's quite a distance from my village to Guilin. But if I have a chance, I may go there myself or with my parents something, but ...
16. A7: So did you speak very much English when you came here or is it while you came here to learn to speak?
17. C7: No, no. I mean my dad is here. And he wants my whole family to be into here. So my mother, myself and my brother come out all together to Perth, 1998. I love Australian by the way. People are very kind, friendly... Now my father lives with me and my brother. He looks after both of us.
18. C7: So all boys are together in the family. (C7: Yes) So who does the cooking? Your father?
19. C7: My dad is a very good cooker.
20. C7: I know, yeah, I hear from different people.
21. C7: He cooks almost everything. He cooks some main-meal stuff, fixing stuff, cooking, fishing, catching very some crabs.
22. A7: Very handy,
23. C7: Very handy.
24. A7: Also do you cook?
25. C7: I'm not a very good cooker, but my brother, he, he likes cooking (A7: Yeah, Ok). I don't. But one thing my father is not good at is the electronics and electricity, and the electricity. (A7: Yeah). And that's why I want, that's one of most the things we work now. So Asian, so I want my sons and my grandsons

knows something about electronics (C7: Yeah) and electricity, that's it. That's one thing that my grandparents don't know about. (A7: Yes, yeah), so I'll learn about that.

Two salient linguistic features emerge from C7's discourse. The first one is that he frequently referred to his father in the discourse. He not only talked about his father at Turns 1, 3, 5, 11, 17, 19, 21 and 25, he initiated topics with his father's story (Turn 1), when explaining his own origin in China. He commented on the scenery based on his father's experiences (Turn 11), and planned to take a holiday in future also with his parents (Turn 15). C7 also attributed his English learning to his father (Turn 17), which did not answer A7's question directly. He not only praised his father for looking after him and his brother (Turn 17), and for being a good cook (Turn 19), but also remembered the father's disadvantage in electronics and electricity (Turn 23). In a word, his father, as well as his brother (Turns 17 and 25), his sons, grandsons, grandparents (Turn 25), was profiled in his conceptualisation.

The second salient linguistic feature is that C7 employed affectionate expressions to talk about his father and his father's daily activity. He used such adjectives and adverbs as "very good" (Turn 1), "always, always" (Turn 1), "definitely" (Turn 3), "still ... right now, nearly every single" (Turn 5), "beautiful ... brilliant" (Turn 5), "very good" (Turn 19) and "almost everything" (Turn 21).

The two salient linguistic features might reveal C7's discourse scenario of a *jin mi* relationship among family members. As a young-man in his early 20s, C7 did not seem to have difficulty in expressing his attachment and gratitude to his father or his family. Independence or his individuality did not feature in his discourse.

Excerpt 6.13

(A16, female, in her early 30s; C16, male, in his early 30s)

(248)

1. C16: I found, I found it's a very different thing, very different from China thing is, you know the old lady have, has a very beautiful spoon, a beautiful spoon and cup, it's silver, silver spoon, spoon and cup, and

2. A16: Is this, is this in Adelaide?
3. C16: In, in Brisbane,
4. A16: In Brisbane.
5. C16: Yeah in Br- Brisbane. And when, when we wen- went together to, to, to her son's home, and, and she bring there, bring them there.
6. A16: Aah!
7. C16: And you know, in Brisbane there, and after the lunch, it's very interesting thing, and her son washed it very clean, and let her mother bring back to home. In China it's quite different. In China maybe,
8. A16: 'cos it doesn't happen here.
9. C16: Yeah?
10. A16: No, I mean it doesn't happen in our family.
11. C16: Yeah, yeah, it's. No?
12. A16: No.
13. C16: No, no?
14. A16: No, perhaps it's special for her.
15. C16: But, but, maybe special, but maybe, but in China, you know, the, the mother and the son usually regard as the same, the same family.
16. A16: Yes.
17. C16: Everything should be ours.
18. A16: Yes.
19. C16: Not only yours or mine.
20. A16: Yes. That's interesting.
21. C16: It's quite so different f-
22. A16: Yeah.
23. C16: from yours?
24. A16: My, because, no, I mean, if I go to my, my mom's place,
25. C16: Yes, you, you bring something, special thing?
26. A16: No,
27. C16: And you'll,
28. A16: No,

29. C16: You'll bring it back?
30. A16: I'll, em, oh, no. I'll bring food, I'll bring some.
31. C16: Because maybe, maybe, maybe the old lady thought it's very expensive, so should, "I should keep it".
32. A16: Yes.
33. C16: Yeah, how about your family?
34. A16: No, I mean, if my mom, if my mom comes to my place, and um, when I'm having a big, I'm having, I'm having a dinner. I've got my family. I have my sister come around with her husband, and my mom and my dad come over, and um, me and my partner, we'll sit down, we'll have a meal.
35. C16: Yes.
36. A16: And sometimes, I'll cook everything.
37. C16: You'll cook everything.
38. A16: And other times, mom will bring something, and my sister will bring something, and I'll bring, I'll do the main meal.
39. C16: Main meal, ok.
40. A16: Like I'll put dessert on tray, and then we'll sit down and we'll have our meal, but we'll use all of my plates and of my cups and, you know all of my stuff.
41. C16: Oh, oh, oh what I mean is that maybe the old lady think we are, we are new, new person, maybe their habit to bring a special thing.
42. A16: Yeah,
43. C16: Yeah.
44. A16: Oh, I see.
45. C16: Yeah, special thing, special spoon, and special spoon. But I mean, I think, the, the, the old lady in China should been, shouldn't bring them back.
46. A16: Should, no,
47. C16: Bring them back, because she will, she will, she will keep them to the, to her, to her son's home.
48. A16: Ah!
49. C16: Here it's quite different.

One of the recurrent linguistic features that emerged from C16's discourse is his reiteration of the word "different" as in "very different" (Turn 1, twice) or "quite different" (Turns 7 and 49) and "quite so different" (Turn 21). This linguistic feature can be regarded as a clue to his 'cultural shock' when he saw that the Australian lady's son "washed it [the beautiful silver spoon and cup] very clean, and let her mother bring back to home" (Turn 7). C16's 'cultural shock' was well-explained by his own remarks that "in China ... the mother and the son usually regard as ... the same family" (Turn 15), even after marriage, "Everything should be ours" (Turn 17), "Not only yours or mine" (Turn 19). Conversely, C16's remarks indicate that he activated the discourse scenario of a *jin mi* 'interlocking-entwining' relationship among family members.

The discourse scenario of a *jin mi* 'interlocking-entwining' relationship among family members provides C16 with the foundation of his argument with A16. A16 reasoned that the silver spoon was special for the lady (Turn 14), C16 could not agree with her. He insisted that the family network should outweigh the individual's special choice (Turns 15, 17 and 19). Even if the old lady wanted to keep the silver spoon, it might be because of the value of the silver spoon *per se* (Turn 31), rather than that the lady finding it special for herself. C16 then explained that what made the silver spoon special was not its significance with the lady, but the special occasion that the family were entertaining guests. Furthermore, C16 contended that the mother's special and valuable thing should be left to her son, who should keep it for her (Turns 45 and 47).

Excerpt 6.14

(A35, male, in his 50s; C35, female, in her late 20s)

(045 Side B)

1. C35: Another reason I want to go back is, my parents have, only, I'm the only child.
2. A35: Oh, really? Yes, well of course. Because the one, the one-child policy.
3. C35: Yeah. You know how much I miss my parents and I've, haven't been back for almost, for more one year. So I really miss them and I don't want them to live themselves when they're getting old.
4. A35: Yeah, how old are your parents now?

5. C35: My father is 55 (A35: Yeah) 56 (A35: Yes); my mother is 52(A35: Yes), 53 (A35: Yes, yes) ... Yes, family after all is the most important thing.
6. A35: Yes, yes.
7. C35: That's what I'm thinking of. I, I dare not to promise anything to my parents, but only thing I can promise is I, I can, I willing to do everything for you.
8. A35: Yes, yes.
9. C35: Just as you're willing to do everything for me.
10. A35: Yes, yes,
11. C35: Family like
12. A35: That's right, that's right, yeah. Um.
13. C35: And that's one thing I realised much more than I was in Huhai, after I coming here, I'm living alone, so that's, we're
14. A35: Yes, yeah, ohi. Do you sort of, do you mix up with other Chinese people?

The Chinese discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond' is also activated by C35 in her English discourse. C35's plan of returning to Huhai from Australia was partly made due to the fact that she was the "only child" (Turn 1) at home. As an only child, she was determined not to let them "live themselves when they're getting old" (Turn 3). Family to her is "the most important thing" (Turn 5). Her plan of returning and her determination to be with her parents was strengthened by her realisation that she was willing to do everything for her parents (Turn 7), as much as her parents were willing to do everything for her (Turn 9).

The discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond' is also indicated to be activated by her through her change of pronouns from "them" to "you" (Turn 7) and from "they" to "you" (Turn 9). On the surface, the change of pronouns is a linguistic issue, which might be subjectively interpreted as poor English. However, this excerpt shows, as does the whole recorded conversation, that C35 had a good command of English. She was praised by A35 earlier: "Gosh, where did you learn English? You speak so well!" (073 Side A).

It is argued here that the change of pronouns is a conceptual issue, involving a process of changing the perspective of observation. That is, by changing pronouns, C35

not only retained her role in the discourse as a speaker, observing the relationship between her and her parents, but also she became an observer participant. She conceptually participated in the close relationship between her parents and herself. That is, the relationship between herself and her parents was construed as an objective event, rather than a subjective event, which is a conceptual category (Section 3.5).

Alternatively, the change of pronouns by C35 could be interpreted as changing her perspective of her parents. C35 transferred her parents from ground to profile in her conversation with A35. C35's change of pronouns in this excerpt could be regarded as an exemplification of what Palmer termed perspective schema (1996: 178. Section 3.5).

Thus far, several salient linguistic features in the above four excerpts have been analysed for the clue of the discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond'. The discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond' motivated IC2 to feel desperate when her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer, and that her whole family was worried about each other. C7's English discourse about his father and his brother was also informed by the discourse scenario. Similarly, C16's perception of the silver spoon and the cup and C35's planning for her future were both guided by the discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond'.

Excerpt 6.15

(A25, male, in his 20s; C25, female, in her 30s)

(221 Side B)

1. C25: Oh (laughing)! Yes, in the, in the old, for me in my families, em, my, my parents hav-, I have one brother and two sisters (A25: Um), but when, as the generation like me, we have only one child. But one child is enough now, I think.
2. A25: Why?
3. C25: Oh, you know, em, because many families only have one child, peoples can always concern for the, for the education, so not only in, in school, in the weekend, the child must learn, stu-, learn dancing, singing, drawing and English and things like that. So, that' very (laughing)
4. A25: They must be lonely.

5. C25: Em?
6. A25: Speak of one child, I think that, if you're not careful, once in Australia, people say that single chil- single children like, em, if you were the only child (C25: Um), the, very selfish.
7. C25: Um, in China, yes. Many people talk about it, about the selfish of the new generation, but actually you know, for one family's only one children, um, one child, but we have big family, just like me. My, my son can, o- we often go, go together, so, my son has my sisters' sons and daughters, they have, they are brothers. So that's not. The lonely are not
8. A25: They're cousins.
9. C25: Yes. And you know, there're many, many ge- gen- population, peoples in China, in school and things like that, so, as time, time goes, as time goes by, many people now realize the selfish is not the big problem for the new generation.

The salient linguistic feature that emerged from the excerpt is C25's argument for having one child in her family. Besides some advantages that C25 perceived for the Chinese only child to have in education (Turn 3), she did not regard it a social issue that the only child would be selfish, which was raised by A25 at Turn 6. C25's argument was mainly based on her conceptualisation that the only child, such as her son, is embraced in the "big family" (Turn 7), connected with her "sisters' sons and daughters" (Turn 7), thus the cousins "are brothers" (Turn 7). Her argument against the view that the only child is selfish is also based on her conceptualisation that the only child growing up in a country with a big population, will interact with people in schools and other places (Turn 9) and thus will not become selfish (Turn 9).

C25's linguistic expressions for her arguments might reveal another discourse scenario of the Chinese *Family* schema, which is represented linguistically as *jin qin shi yi jia ren* (近亲是一家人 'Close relatives are in one's family'). In her discourse scenario of *jin qin shi yi jia ren* 'Close relatives are in one's family', many only children in China, like her own son, are unlikely to be lonely or become selfish, because they have brothers and sisters, who in the Anglo-Australian schema, are 'cousins' (Turn 8). It must be pointed out that, although C25 understood what "cousin" means linguistically, it was her

cultural conceptualisation that has modified the scope of the word ‘cousin’ to equate it with blood sisters and brothers. This conceptual phenomenon of changing the scope of ‘cousin’ to blood sisters and brothers bears evidence for the discussion of “control of scope” in Section 3.5.

It may be argued that the one-child policy, which has been practised in most areas of mainland China since the late 1970s, makes it necessary for Chinese only children to socialise with their cousins. Although this may be true, it is further argued here that this necessity, on the one hand, is primarily based on the cultural conceptualisation of regarding cousins as blood brothers and sisters, and on the other hand, actually consolidates the Chinese cultural conceptualisation through its practice.

The following excerpt displays the recurrent expression of cousins as blood brothers and sisters by two other mainland Chinese speakers of English.

Excerpt 6.16

(A35, male, in his 50s; C35, female, in her late 20s)

(078 Side B)

1. A35: Yes, yes, ‘cos it really, so it just exists in the cities. Yeah, which must be very uncomfortable for people, yeah, this sort of
2. C35: Yeah, I, yah I really feel like having a brother or sister, so I’m getting on very well with my cousins. We are like direct blood, like sisters and brothers.
3. A35: Yes, yes. Ah? That’s good! But it’s um, yeah, I mean it’s just, an amazing country.

It is apparent that C35, as an adult only child herself, shared the discourse scenario of *jin qin shi yi jia ren* ‘Close relatives are in one’s family’. In C35’s conceptualisation, the scope of ‘the family’ can be modified to include her cousins (Turn 2). The exclamations of “Ah?” and “That’s good!” and the change of conversation topic “But it’s um, yeah, I mean ...” in A35’s discourse (Turn 3) could be regarded as discourse indexicals which might reveal that A35 did not share C35’s conceptualisation of equating cousins as blood sisters and brothers.

IC1 in the interview also told the researcher that her daughter and her niece regarded each other as sisters. She said:

Excerpt 6.17

Interview data (IC1, female, in her early 40s)

The two girls get along so well that they never thought of their relation as cousinship instead of sisters. They can always learn from each other, help each other, and comfort each other. In this society, the only children in China may suffer more anxiety and loneliness without even a cousin as their sibling.

IC1's last sentence resonates with C25 in Excerpt 6.15. That is, by interacting with each other and conceptualising each other as siblings, only children in mainland China can solve the social problems of being lonely, anxious or being selfish. These problems are supposed to arise with the only child policy, as perceived by A25 in Excerpt 6.15. IC1's expression of "cousin as ... sibling" reveals not only her daughter and her niece's conceptualisation, but also her own, which equates cousins as blood sisters and brothers.

More linguistic features revealing the Chinese culturally-constructed discourse scenario of modifying the scope of 'the family' will be found in the next excerpt.

Excerpt 6.18

(A35, male, in his 50s; C35, female, in her late 20s)

(142)

1. A35: I was, I was there in 1976, or I was in Hong Kong in January 1976, and that was just when Chou Eilai died.
2. C35: Oh!
3. A35: Yes.
4. C35: Yeah?
5. A35: Do you know Chou Eilai?

6. C35: Yeah! My, my, the lea- the leader I worship all the time. (A35: Right) I love him.
7. A35: Yes, yes.
8. C35: Yeah, I cried for him several times when I watching the movies, em,
9. A35: He seemed quite different from Mao Tzetong, who was little, was he, was he still alive or was he?
10. C35: Pres, President Mao died one year later.
11. A35: Was it?
12. C35: Yeah.
13. A35: Right.
14. C35: Or half a year later.
15. A35: Yes, yes.
16. C35: Different. He is, he, Zhou Enlai is like a big brother to the whole nation. He is very kind. He is very, very excellent diplomat. Everyone likes him.
17. A35: And then, and then was, was it Deng Xiaoping who came after?

The salient linguistic feature in C35's English discourse is her expression that "Zhou Enlai is like a big brother to the whole nation" (Turn 16). As discussed above, the Chinese discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* 'interlocking-entwining family bond' gives rise to an offshoot understanding that a big brother is someone who cares for the whole family and is respected by the younger ones. C35 thus associated her beloved former Chinese Premier, Zhou Enlai, with a big brother (Turn 16). Conversely, C35 mapped her family discourse scenario to the top government official and expressed the best her admiration for him by calling him a 'big brother'. To a large extent, C35's remark also indicates that she activated a Chinese discourse scenario of modifying the scope of 'the family' to include non-family member government officials. This discourse scenario might be linguistically represented as *qin ru yi jia ren* (亲如一家人 '[People are] close to each other as if they were family members').

The expression of being a 'big brother' for someone in the western conceptualisation, however, elicits a different schema. The Macquarie Dictionary (2nd edition) defines a 'big brother' as "a dictator, esp. one who tries to control people's

private lives and thoughts [From a character in the novel ‘1984’, by George Orwell]” (p. 171).

It seems that although A35 was quite familiar with Chinese modern history with his trip to China, he did not continue with the topic of Zhou Enlai. His elicited schema of a ‘big brother’ diverted the topic to another Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping (Turn17), which brought to an end C35’s passionate description of Zhou Enlai.

Thus far, the four excerpts of 6.15, 6.16, 6.17 and 6.18 have been shown to instantiate the discourse scenario of *jin qin shi yi jia ren* ‘Close relatives are in one’s family’. That is, C25, C35, IC1 have been shown to activate the schematic knowledge that the family in China can be modified to include non-‘nuclear family’ members. In Excerpts of 6.15, 6.16 and 6.17, cousinship is featured prominently to be equated with blood brothers and sisters. In Excerpt 6.18, the modification of the scope allows the inclusion of a top government official into the family scope.

The Chinese discourse scenario of *qin ru yi jia ren* ‘[People are] close to each other as if they were family members’ recurs in a varied form in other excerpts. Those excerpts will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

6.5 Summary and discussion

Eighteen excerpts of intercultural communication or descriptions of intercultural communication were analysed in this chapter. The 18 excerpts have instantiated six activated discourse scenarios of the Chinese *Family* schema. The six activated discourse scenarios are:

1. The discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’. This activated discourse scenario leads C19 (Excerpt 6.1) and her husband to push their only son, regardless of the son’s own interests and potential. The same discourse scenario leads C10 (Excerpt 6.2) to envisage a life-long commitment to his baby daughter and a commitment to the daughter’s children. The discourse scenario also convinces C22 (Excerpt 6.3) and C36 (Excerpt 6.4), the two adult males, to comply with their parents’ decisions which were made for them, although they were against their own wishes and interests;

2. The discourse scenario of *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* ‘being concerned about and looking after the old’. This activated discourse scenario leads IC7 (Excerpt 6.6), the adult female in her late 20s, to attend to her parents’ request regarding her own personal photo-taking style while she was travelling overseas. The same elicited discourse scenario makes C37 (Excerpt 6.7) and C32 (Excerpt 6.8) comment frankly on some old, lonely Australians who they saw unattended by their families. Between their words in their English discourses were their compassion and concern for the old, lonely Australians;
3. The discourse scenario of *lao jiu shi lao* ‘The old is old’. This activated discourse scenario causes C32 (Excerpt 6.8) and C34 (Excerpt 5.22) to explicitly refer to their Anglo-Australian interactants as old. The same discourse scenario results in C11 (Excerpt 6.9) insisting that her parents were old, although they were in their early 60s. The discourse scenario also makes C9 (Excerpt 6.10) who was in her early 30s to state that she was old;
4. The discourse scenario of *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* ‘interlocking-entwining family bond’. This activated discourse scenario causes IC2 (Excerpt 6.11) to feel surprised and puzzled by her American interactant’s family schema. In IC2’s case, her mother’s breast cancer made her, a married daughter, feel desperate and her whole family worked together to assist each other. The same discourse scenario leads C7 (Excerpt 6.12) to profile his father in his talk with his interactant, while not giving prominence to his own individuality as a young man in his early 20s. The same discourse scenario guides C16’s attention to a cross-cultural experience that he observed in his home-stay family (Excerpt 6.13). C16 insisted that the son of the Australian lady should keep for the mother the silver spoon and cup that the mother brought with her from her home to her son’s place. This discourse scenario not only makes C35 (Excerpt 6.14) state that she missed her parents, but also affects her decision to return to Huhai after her study in Australia. Besides, her same discourse scenario generates a desire for her to look after her parents when they were getting old, rather than leaving them to live on their own. Moreover, C35’s change of pronouns from “them” to “you” and from “they” to “you” indicated a conceptual change in her perspective. By changing pronouns,

C35 conceptually participated in the close relationship between her parents and herself;

5. The discourse scenario of *jin qin shi yi jia ren* 'Close relatives are in one's family'. This activated discourse scenario makes C25 (Excerpt 6.15), C35 (Excerpt 6.16), IC1 (Excerpt 6.17) and their family members conceptualise cousins as equivalent to blood sisters and brothers, particularly in the context of the one-child policy. The discourse scenario provides a foundation for C25's and IC1's solution to the social problem that only children are likely to be selfish, anxious and lonely; and
6. The discourse scenario of *qin ru yi jia ren* '[People are] close to each other as if they were family members'. This activated discourse scenario structures C35 (Excerpt 6.18) to state that 'Premier Zhou is like a big brother'.

In discussion, it is worth mentioning that these six activated Chinese discourse scenarios contribute to the identification of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*. That is, these six discourse scenarios are all underpinned by the *Family* schema and substantiate the schema. As far as the data are concerned, the substance of the *Family* schema is identified to include such culturally constructed and culturally accepted knowledge as:

- Mainland Chinese parents are the core of the interlocking-entwining family relationships whose self-sacrifice and high position in the family hierarchy frequently generates filial piety from their adult children who are concerned about and will look after them;
- The family hierarchy is observed to entitle most mainland Chinese parents to make decisions for their young and adult children. Old people in Chinese families and in society at large are respected for their life experiences; and
- Mainland Chinese families embrace a flexible boundary for people to be included as family members.

In the context of intercultural communication, despite the fact that the family as a social organisation was experienced by both mainland Chinese and Anglo-Australian participants, the data have shown that the Chinese *Family* schema caused subtle

communication gaps between these two parties. For instance, C16 could not appreciate why his home-stay lady did not share her silver spoon and the cup with her son and took the trouble of bringing them back to her own place after using them at her son's place. A11 (Excerpt 6.9) might not realise that C11 was trying to pay respect to her parents by insisting that they were old in their early 60s. A34 (Excerpt 5.22) might not know that C34 was paying respect to her by telling her that his old home-stay lady was as old as she was. Similarly, A32 (Excerpt 6.8) might not understand that C32 paid respect to him by telling him that he was old and needed care from his children.

Discomfort occurred to mainland Chinese participants due to their embedded Chinese *Family* schema. Both C37 (Excerpt 6.7) and C32 (Excerpt 6.8) were uncomfortable seeing old Anglo-Australians living, taking buses or shopping on their own.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Data analysis (3): Chinese Cultural Schema of *Education*

7.1 Introduction to the chapter

The English word education is *jiao yu* (教育) in Chinese, which means ‘teaching [and] cultivating’. The accepted expanded version of *jiao yu* in Chinese is *jiao shu yu ren* (教书育人 ‘teaching books and cultivating people’). The analogy *shi nian shu mu, bai nian shu ren* (十年树木, 百年树人 ‘It takes ten years to grow trees, but a hundred years to cultivate a person’) may illustrate the cultivating responsibilities laid on Chinese schools or other institutions engaged in educating people. A Chinese metaphor equating teachers with *ren lei ling hun gong cheng shi* (人类灵魂工程师 ‘the engineers of human souls’) also reveals the cultural knowledge that teachers play a crucial role in cultivating the soul of Chinese people. Given the emphasis on the cultivating aspect of Chinese education, most mainland Chinese students are immersed in the system of education which has been examination-oriented. The examination-oriented education system has been related to the cultural knowledge of *xue er you ze shi* (学而优则仕 ‘A man takes office when he does well in his studies’. *The Analects*. XIX: 13, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 367).

This chapter presents the identified Chinese cultural schema of *Education*¹⁶ from the collected data. Thirteen excerpts of transcribed conversations and interview data are analysed. All the data are analysed in the light of cultural linguistics, making use of such analytical tools as discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals, as reviewed in Chapter Three. Similar to the Chinese cultural schemas of *Harmony* and *Family*, the embedded Chinese cultural schema of *Education* largely leads Chinese speakers of English to interpret and produce some discourse that may not be fully appreciated by their Anglo-Australian interactants. Different expectations embedded in culturally-constructed

¹⁶ Capital E and the italicised ‘*Education*’ are reserved for harmony in its culturally-constructed and schematic sense. That is, it is used in the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*.

discourse scenarios frequently lead Chinese speakers of English to interpret and produce some discourse that may not be fully appreciated by their Anglo-Australian interactants.

As a preamble to the data analysis, the emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Education* will be explored first. Instantiations of the *Education* schema in Chinese language are also discussed before presenting the data analysis. A section of summary and discussion contributes to the identification of the Chinese *Education* schema on the basis of activated discourse scenarios. Influences of the Chinese *Education* schema on intercultural communication will also be provided in the same section.

7.2 Emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of Education

The Chinese cultural schema of *Education* might be regarded as a body of schematic knowledge on the goals and functions of Chinese education, the status and roles of teachers and the significance of examinations. This schematic body of knowledge is frequently recognised and accepted in varying degrees by most mainland Chinese people. The idealised cultural knowledge about the goals and functions of Chinese education is at the core of the schema, giving rise to the knowledge of the status and roles of teachers and the significance of examinations. The emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*, like the emergence of the Chinese cultural schemas of *Harmony* and *Family*, is also the result of the interaction of a plethora of Chinese social and cultural factors over thousands of years.

Among the interacting factors that give rise to the emergence of the Chinese *Education* schema are two relevant factors that were discussed in the previous two chapters. The first factor is the social need for developing Chinese harmony in a collective and stratified society, and the second one is the duty of gaining honour and glory for one's family and ancestors. The appeal for Chinese interpersonal and social harmony was discussed in the form of the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*. The momentum for gaining honour and glory for one's family and ancestors as a filial duty was discussed in the form of the Chinese cultural schema of *Family*. The point to make here is that, although these two factors are indirect interacting factors for the emergence of the Chinese *Education* schema, they are related to Chinese education. That is, Chinese education, by means of its goals and functions, content of teaching and examination systems, reinforces the necessity of Chinese harmony among mainland Chinese people.

Chinese education also provides most mainland Chinese with a means of improving the social status of themselves and their families.

This chapter will focus on the interacting factors that are directly related to the emergence of the Chinese *Education* schema. Among these direct factors are traditional Chinese education, the status and roles of teachers and Chinese examination systems.

7.2.1 Traditional Chinese education and the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*

Traditional Chinese education, to a large extent, was Confucian education. Zhu (1992: 3) asserts that “[a]nyone who wishes to investigate traditional Chinese education must take a serious look at the influence of Confucius over the lengthy period of Chinese educational history”. Despite the fact that Confucianism is not the sole source of Chinese cultural knowledge, it has no doubt been a major source of cultural knowledge. Thus, Confucianism has inevitably exerted profound influences on the cultural understanding of Chinese education as much as on the Chinese cultural schemas of *Harmony* and *Family*. Zhang (1989 cited in Zhang, 2001: 3) maintains that “[t]he Confucian philosophy is the philosophy of educators”. Fan (1962 cited in Zhang, 2001: 3) also attributes much of Chinese education to Confucianism by regarding Confucianism as “the lifeline of the history of Chinese education”. Similarly, Yu holds that despite some criticisms of Confucian education, “Confucian education never disappeared entirely, as evidenced by the presence of the Confucian *shuyuan* (academies) in various parts of Asia inside and outside of the Chinese mainland” (Yu, 2002: 71).

Some other Chinese educational traditions, which have been derived from other schools of thoughts and religions, may also have some influence on the Chinese cultural conceptualisation of education. However, due to the influence of Confucian education, it is argued here their influences are marginal compared with the far- and wide-reaching influence of the Confucian education. In line with Ding (1990: 145), it is maintained here that other schools of thought and religions play a supplementary role to the Confucian education, which was the essential aspect of traditional Chinese education. Therefore, the following sections will contribute to the emergence the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*, mainly in accordance with Confucianism.

7.2.1.1 Goals and functions of traditional Chinese education

Chen (2001: 6) observes that traditional Chinese education was a well-planned process of moulding individuals according to the *li xiang ren ge* (理想人格 ‘ideal persona’). The *li xiang ren ge* ‘ideal persona’ was prescribed respectively by Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism. According to Gao (1990: 32), Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism holds a consistent interpretation of the *li xiang ren ge* ‘ideal persona’, given the different terms that the three schools have employed. As far as Confucianism is concerned, the *li xiang ren ge* ‘ideal persona’ was *sheng ren* ‘Sages’ or *jun zi* ‘Gentlemen’) who should be able to *wei zheng yi de* (为政以德 “rule his [their] state on a moral basis”. *The Analects*. II: 1, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994:12).

The *li xiang ren ge* ‘ideal persona’ had a strong bearing on Chinese official education in terms of the goals and functions of education. The function of traditional Chinese education, according to Chen (2001: 8), was to train people to be capable of ruling, moral-modelling, enlightening and adapting to society. Similarly, Zhu (1992: 4) also holds that the function of traditional Chinese education was “[t]he training of talent loyal to the government in power”. In other words, the function of Chinese official education was to teach students with morals and virtues so that they could either become a Sage, as a superior person to rule over people on the basis of morals and virtues, or to become a Gentleman, who could adapt to social hierarchies and behave with propriety for social harmony.

The educational tradition for the training of Sages or Gentlemen who would rule at different levels with morals and virtues is best represented in the proposal of *xue er you ze shi* (学而优则仕 “A man takes office when he does well in his studies”. *The Analects*. XIX: 13, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 367). The proposal was put forward by Zi Xia, one of Confucius’ disciples, who was recorded as 44 years younger than Confucius. The proposal of *xue er you ze shi* (“A man takes office when he does well in his studies”) has not only motivated individual Chinese to strive to be an outstanding student, but also largely outlined the goal of traditional education which was to become a superior person, so as to work for the government with morals and virtues. Chen (2001: 9) maintains that the *xue er you ze shi* (“A man takes office when he does well in his studies”) proposal embodies the trinity of Chinese politics, education and interpersonal ethics.

The function and goals of traditional Chinese education, to a large extent, were based on theories of human nature (Chen, 2001: 11). Two renowned Confucianists, Mencius (Section 5.2.4) and Xun Zi (Hsun Tzu: 310 -- 230 BC) of the late of Warring States (475 – 221 BC), maintained two opposing views on human nature. In the light of Mencius' view, human beings were born with good nature, that is, with *si duan* (四端 'four beginnings'). The four beginnings, according to Mencius, are "[t]he feeling of commiseration" as "the beginning of human-heartedness", "[t]he feeling of shame and dislike" as "the beginning of righteousness", "[t]he feeling of modesty and yielding" as "the beginning of propriety" and "[t]he sense of right and wrong" as "the beginning of wisdom" (Fung, 1966: 70).

Education, implied by Mencius, was to provide people with opportunities for the fullest development of the *si duan* 'four beginnings' so that the superior could rule with benevolence over common people who should become Gentlemen. His view of education might be reflected in *ren jie ke yi wei yao shun* (人皆可以为尧舜 "All men can become Yao or Shun [the two legendary sage-rulers]"). *Mencius*. VIb: 2, translated by Fung, 1966: 79). That is, the cultivation of the *si duan*, according to Mencius, was to prepare rulers with *wang dao* (王道 'Sage dao'). A *wang* 'Sage' is defined by Mencius as *yi de xing ren zhe wang* (以德行仁者王 "He who is virtuous and practices human-heartedness"). *Mencius*. IIa: 3, translated by Fung, 1966: 74). In other words, the function of Chinese education in Mencius' sense was to teach students morals and virtues so that they could become a Sage and *ren zheng* (仁政 'rule with human-heartedness and benevolence').

Xun Zi, another established Confucianist, in contrast, held that "human nature is originally evil" (Fung, 1966: 143). Xun Zi made a distinction between nature and nurture, and it was only through nurture that the evil nature could be rectified. That is, he upheld that *ren zhi xing, e; qi shan zhe, wei ye* (人之性，恶；其善者，伪也 "The nature of man is evil; his goodness is acquired training [nurture]"). *Xun Zi*: XXIII: 1, translated by Fung, 1966: 145). Xun Zi gave stress to nurture and reasoned that *xing zhe, ben shi cai pu ye; wei zhe, wen li long sheng ye. Wu xing ze wei zhi wu suo jia; wu wei ze xing bu neng zi mei* (性者，本始材朴也；伪者，文理隆盛也。无性则伪之无所加；无伪则性不能自美 "Nature is the unwrought material of the original; what are acquired are the

accomplishments and refinements brought about by culture. Without nature there would be nothing upon which to add the acquired. Without the acquired, nature could not become beautiful of itself'. *Xun Zi*: XIX: 15, translated by Fung, 1966: 145).

Due to the evilness inherent in human nature and thanks to his emphasis on nurture, Xun Zi asserted that education was not only essential and necessary, but also had to be imposed externally on people so that the evil human nature could be transformed into good Confucian values (Chen, 2001: 88). Xun Zi's view on compulsory education might be displayed from the very first chapter of *Xun Zi*, which is entitled *Quan Xue* (劝学 'Exhortation to Learning'). His urgency for learning is expressed as *wei zhi, ren ye; she zhi, qin shou ye* (为之，人也；舍之，禽兽也 'To pursue it [learning] is to be a human; to give it up is to be a beast'. *Xun Zi*. I: 8). Likewise, Xun Zi also provided such advice as *bu zhi ze wen, bu neng ze xue* (不知则问，不能则学 'to ask when not knowing, and to learn when not being able to [know]'. *Xun Zi*. VI: 12). Only in this way could a Gentleman *jian fu tian xia zhi xin* (兼服天下之心 'rule over people who would adore and obey him whole-heartedly'. *Xun Zi*. I: 8).

The acquired training in Xun Zi's sense could be regarded as nurturing. Proper nurturing could only be achieved on the basis of *yi* 'righteousness' and *li* 'propriety', 'appropriateness' (Chen, 2001: 90). Given the importance of *yi* (righteousness) and *li* (propriety, appropriateness), Xun Zi maintained that the level of *yi* (righteousness) and *li* (propriety, appropriateness) could only be accelerated through cultivation or education (Chen, 2001: 90). Xun Zi's view is reflected in his writing that *xue bu ke yi yi ... jun zi bo xue er ri can xing hu ji, ze zhi ming er xing wu guo yi* (学不可以已 ... 君子博学而日参省乎己，则知明而行无过矣 "Learning should never cease ... If the [G]entleman studies widely and each day examines himself, his wisdom will become clear and his conduct be without fault". *Xun Zi*. I: 1, translated by Watson, 1967: 15).

As such, the ultimate goal and the function of education, according to Xun Zi, was not much different from the goals and the functions of education proposed by Mencius, given that Mencius and Xun Zi upheld two opposite views on human nature. Regarding the general goal of Confucian education, Yao explains that:

The purpose of Confucian education is not only to transmit and develop knowledge, but also to deliver and apply values. Confucian learning is seldom meant to be merely a scholarly exercise. It has a wide practical extension and employs tools to help students put into practice the doctrinal understanding of family, community and society: the core of values fostering a spirit of self-discipline, family solidarity, public morality and social responsibility. (Yao, 2000: 281)

In sum, traditional Chinese education had “its usefulness to those in power at the time” (Zhu, 1992: 4). On the level of government, the usefulness of education was “utilitarianism” (Zhu, 1992: 4). On the level of individual Chinese, the usefulness of education was paving the way towards higher social status for oneself and for one’s family.

7.2.1.2 Major content of traditional Chinese education

In relation to the goals and functions of traditional Chinese education was the major content of education. In the first documented education institution in China, the Imperial College which was founded in the Zhou Dynasty (1100th BC to 221 BC) to teach young children of the royal families, the education curriculum was mainly composed of virtue-cultivation content. This is illustrated in *Bao shi ... yang guo zi yi dao, nai jiao zhi liu yi: yi yue wu li; er yue liu yue; san yue wu she; si yue wu yu; wu yue liu shu; liu yue jiu shu* (保氏...养国子以道, 乃教之六艺: 一曰五礼; 二曰六乐; 三曰五射; 四曰五御; 五曰六书; 六曰九数 ‘Master Bao ... reared the princes with Dao and then taught them with six arts: rites, music, archery, charioteering, reading and writing, and arithmetic’. *Zhou Li: Di Guan: Bao Shi*). Numeracy was included in the curriculum, but primary attention was given to the first five arts because they served the purpose of cultivating virtues and morals. The virtue-cultivating function of rites and music was frequently mentioned by Confucius. For instance, *zi yue: xin yu shi, li yu li, cheng yu yue* (子曰: 兴于诗, 立于礼, 成于乐 “Confucius said: Find inspiration in *The Book of Songs*, take the rites as your basis and cultivate your mind by music”. *The Analects*. VIII: 8, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 133).

Confucianists for thousands of years have put great emphasis on *lun li* (伦理 ‘interpersonal ethics’) and *dao de* (道德 ‘morals and virtues’), due to Confucius’ fervent advocacy for social harmony (Section 5.2.4). Confucius himself featured *lun li* and *dao de* in this teaching. *Zi yi si jiao: wen, xing, zhong, xin* (子以四教: 文, 行, 忠, 信 “Confucius taught his disciples four disciplines: Classics, social conducts, loyalty to superiors and faithfulness to friends”. *The Analects*. VII: 25, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 118).

Xun Zi outlined the curriculum of education in accordance with Confucianism. *Xue wu hu shi? Wu hu zhong? Yue: qi shu ze shi hu shong jing, zhong hu du li; qi yi ze shi hu wei shi, zhong hu wei sheng ren* (学恶乎始? 恶乎终? 曰: 其数则始乎诵经, 终乎读礼; 其义则始乎为士, 终乎为圣人 ‘Where should learning begin? Where should learning end? The answer is: As far as subjects are concerned, learning begins with reciting the Classics [of *The Book of History* and *The Book of Songs*] and ends with reading *Li Jing* [*The Book of Rites*]. As far as the objective of learning is concerned, learning begins with learning to be a Gentleman and ends with becoming a Sage’. *Xun Zi*. I: 8). *The Book of Rites*, as recommended by Xun Zi in the curriculum, was taught as *fa zhi da fen, lei zhi gang ji ye* (法之大分, 类之纲纪也 ‘the essence of norm and the foundation of particular behaviours’. *Xun Zi*. I: 8). Therefore, learning *The Book of Rites* is conducive to *dao de zhi ji* (道德之极 ‘the summit of morals and virtues’. *Xun Zi*. I: 8).

In the Han Dynasty (221-206 BC), Confucianism reached its peak as the sole orthodox state philosophy. In history, this is known as *fei chu bai jia, du zun ru zhu* (废黜百家, 独尊儒术 ‘suppression of hundred schools and the exclusive recognition of Confucianism’). The Confucian classics of *Shi Jing* (诗经 ‘The Book of Poetry’), *Shu Jing* (书经 ‘The Book of History’), *Li Ji* (礼记 ‘The Book of Rites’), *Yue Jing* (乐经 ‘The Book of Music’), *Yi Jing* (易经 ‘The Book of Changes’) and *Chun Qiu* (春秋 ‘Spring and Autumn Analects’) were recommended by the Han-Dynasty Confucian theorist Dong Zhongshu (179 BC - 104 BC) as the core content of teaching (Chen, 2001: 601).

Confucian education was also adopted by neo-Confucianism. Neo-Confucianism evolved from the synthesis of Confucianism, Taoist cosmology and Buddhist spirituality

and developed into two schools. However, it is *li xue* (理学 ‘the School of Principle/Laws’), initiated by Cheng Yi (1033-1108) and developed by Zhu Xi (1130-1200) of the Song Dynasty (960 – 1279), that has “remained the most influential single system of philosophy until the introduction of Western philosophy in China in recent decades” (Fung, 1966: 294).

Neo-Confucianism strongly recommends the book *Da Xue* (大学 ‘The Great Learning’) by Zeng Zi (Tseng Tzu: 505 – 437 BC) as one of the four classics in education. The other three classics as far as neo-Confucianism was concerned are *Zhong Yong* (中庸 ‘The Doctrine of the Mean’), *Lun Yu* (论语 ‘The Analects’) and *Meng Zi* (孟子 ‘Mencius’). Zeng Zi was one of Confucius’ chief disciples and *The Great Learning* emphasises Confucian virtues, which were justified by Wang Yangming (1472-1528), Zhu Xi’s keen follower, as the eternal *li* (理 ‘the principle’) of the universe.

The Great Learning is about the learning of Confucian morals and virtues. The very beginning of *The Great Learning* states that *da xue zhi dao, zai ming ming de, zai qin min, zai zhi yu zhi shan* (大学之道, 在明明德, 在亲民, 在止于至善 “The teaching of *The Great Learning* is to manifest one’s illustrious virtue, love the people, and rest in the highest good”. I: 1, translated by Fung, 1966: 181). Commentaries on the Four Classics provided by Zhu Xi were the compulsory syllabus for preparation for Imperial examinations from the Song Dynasty until the beginning of the 20th century. The Imperial examination system will be explained and discussed in Section 7.2.3.

Traditional Chinese education continued during the *yang wu yun dong* (洋务运动 ‘the Westernisation movement’). *Yang wu yun dong* ‘The Westernisation movement’ was launched after the mid of the 19th Century by Chinese intellectuals when China was defeated in the Opium War (1839- 1842) by ‘western cannons and well-equipped fleets’. Western victory was understood by some Chinese intellectuals as resulting from the development of science and technology. The aim of the Westernisation movement was thus “to modernise in order to preserve the rule of the Qing government” (Wang, 1996: 1). The utilitarianism of the *yang wu yun dong* was reflected in its working principle, which was *zhong xue wei ti, xi xue wei yong* (中学为体, 西学为用 ‘Chinese learning as a fundamental structure; Western learning for practical use’).

Thus far, the above documentation has shown that the core content of traditional Chinese education was the Confucian classics, because the essence of traditional Chinese education hinged on the notion that moral cultivation was the paramount means of shaping people to become appropriate members of the established hierarchical society. “The whole curricular content exhibited a kind of intermingling of moral and intellectual education” (Zhu, 1992: 9). That is, knowledge embodied in the classics, which was required for the maintenance of harmonious society, was largely equated to all intellectual knowledge. “Through the process of absorbing knowledge, the student gradually adopted the style of a superior person in speech, behavior, consciousness and personal manners” (Zhu, 1992: 9).

Despite the fact that traditional Chinese education is no longer in practice, it has exerted an implicit, but profound and persistent influence on contemporary Chinese education. Most mainland Chinese people, generation after generation and through a variety of interactions and media, might have developed the conceptualisation of what Chinese education should be. This conceptualisation of the nature of Chinese education might be best represented linguistically as *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’. The Chinese culturally constructed conceptualisation of *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’ constitutes an aspect of the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*.

The Chinese *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’ conceptualisation functions like a blueprint, governing nationwide educational activities and influencing teaching agendas. The people-cultivation aspect of Chinese education gives rise to the culturally-constructed understanding that Chinese teachers are indispensable moral cultivators and moral models in the process of transmitting knowledge. This cultural understanding leads to another cultural phenomenon of Chinese parents and students paying high respect to teachers.

7.2.2 Teacher roles, status and the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*

It must be pointed out at the beginning of this section that the English word teacher is not equivalent to *jiao shi* (教师 ‘teaching master’) in Chinese characters. Firstly, *jiao shi*, alternatively used as *lao shi* (老师 ‘old master’), or *xian sheng* (先生 ‘early born: master:

teacher in the traditional fashion’), is a term used to refer to all the teachers collectively in China from kindergartens to universities. The hierarchical nature of the Chinese teaching society is not reflected by this term. University professors and mentors are more commonly referred to as teachers than as professors. Secondly, in Chinese pragmatics, ‘teacher’ is a term of address. Surname + *Lao shi* ‘Teacher’, or simply *lao shi* ‘teacher), in Chinese is a term of address appropriate and acceptable to any teacher. For instance, such greetings are made by Chinese students to their English teachers as “Good morning, Teacher!” , “Good afternoon, Teacher Wang!” Thirdly, as a term of address, *lao shi* ‘teacher’ is an honorific used to express respect from the speaker. This honorific can be extended to established writers, directors, TV or radio program hosts and hostesses or other artists and scientists who are well-known. The professional titles of these artists and scientists may not have the same honorific effect as *lao shi* ‘teacher’ has.

The role of Chinese teachers was articulated by Xun Zi (Section 7.2.1.1). Xun Zi gave teachers a status paralleling Nature (天地 ‘Heaven-earth’), ancestors and sovereignty and as one of the roots of *li* ‘propriety’. This is recorded in *li you san ben: tian di zhe, sheng zhi ben ye; xian zu zhe, lei zhi ben ye; jun shi zhe, zhi zhi ben ye* (礼有三本: 天地者, 生之本也; 先祖者, 类之本也; 君师者, 治之本也 ‘There are three roots of *li*: Heaven and earth are the root of birth. Ancestors are the root of human beings. Sovereignty and teachers are the root of disciplines’. *Xun Zi*. XIX: 4). Teachers were so indispensable due to their contribution to the cultivation of morals and virtues that Xun Zi claimed that *guo jiang xing, bi gui shi er zhong fu, gui shi er zhong fu, ze fa du cun* (国将兴, 必贵师而重傅, 贵师而重傅, 则法度存 ‘If the country wishes to prosper, it will value teachers and stress the role of instructors. Only by valuing teachers and stressing the role of instructors can the laws and regulations survive’. *Xun Zi*. XXVII: 97). Xun Zi also maintained that *shi zhe, suo yi zheng li ye* (师者, 所以正礼也 ‘Teachers are those who exist for the regulation of *li* [propriety]’. *Xun Zi*. II: 11).

Due to the elevated status and the crucial role that teachers had in Xun Zi’s philosophy, Xun Zi requested that students must express their respect to teachers verbally. *Yan er bu cheng shi wei zhi ban, jiao er bu cheng shi wei zhi bei* (言而不称师谓之畔, 教而不称师谓之倍 ‘It is rebellious if students talk without referring to their teachers. It

is deviating if students teach without referring to their teachers'. *Xun Zi*. XXVII: 82). Moreover, paying reverence to teachers was a virtue that was associated with Gentlemen. *Jun zi long shi er zhong qin you* (君子隆师而亲友 'Gentlemen should revere their teachers and establish intimacy with their friends'. *Xun Zi*. II: 1). Those people who violated the norm of respecting teachers, according to Xun Zi, were isolating themselves. *Ming jun bu na, chao shi da fu yu zhu tu bu yu yan* (明君不内，朝士大夫遇诸涂不与言 'Sages would not accept these people, and government officials would not talk to them when they happen to meet these people on the road'. *Xun Zi*. XXVII: 82).

Another well-known Chinese philosopher who spoke highly of the role of teachers was Han Yu (768 - 824). Han Yu is regarded by historians as a pioneer of a Confucian intellectual revival which culminated in the Tang Dynasty (618 – 907) before the rise of neo-Confucianism. Han Yu stressed the necessity of learning from teachers. He reasoned that *gu zhi xue zhe bi you shi* (古之学者必有师 'Since ancient times scholars have been learning from teachers'). He also prescribed the role of teachers as *shi zhe, suo yi chuan dao, shou ye, jie huo ye* (师者，传道，受业，解惑也 'Teachers [are responsible] for transmitting *dao* [Confucian morals], imparting knowledge and resolving doubts'). Underlying the necessity of learning from teachers were Han Yu's arguments that human beings were born without knowledge. Without knowledge, men would have doubts. That is, *ren fei sheng er zhi zhi zhe, shu neng wu huo?* (人非生而知之者，孰能无惑? 'Since men were not born with knowledge, who could be without doubt?'). In order to resolve one's doubts, men must learn from teachers. Otherwise, doubts would become puzzles and one can never get over the puzzlement. That is, *huo er bu cong shi, qi wei huo ye, zhong bu jie yi* (惑而不从师，其为惑也，终不解矣 'Having doubts but not learning from teachers, the doubts will never be resolved'). All these sayings on the role of teachers and the necessity of learning from teachers in this paragraph are documented in the article *On Teachers* by Han Yu.

Briefly, the above section has shown that the roles and status assigned to Chinese teachers are interrelated with the *jiao shu yu ren* 'teaching books and cultivating people' cultural conceptualisation. The assigned roles and status reinforce the schematic knowledge that teachers are moral models as well as knowledge transmitters so as "to

transform the young into people with a highly developed social conscience and to inculcate in them the code for living already accepted by their elders” (Hu and Grove, 1991: 79). Meanwhile, the assigned roles and status have become an internal motivation for most Chinese teachers. Most mainland Chinese teachers in their profession have developed a conceptualisation of *wei ren shi biao* (为人师表 ‘Teachers are the paragons of virtues and learning’). That is, most Chinese teachers would work to deserve the respect paid to them by their students and the students’ parents, or by the whole society, so to speak.

7.2.3 Examinations and the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*

Examinations at various levels are an important aspect of Chinese education. This educational tradition is related to the conceptualisation of the nature of Chinese education. Since the nature of Chinese education is recognised by most mainland Chinese as *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’, success in examinations is recognised as marking the success in the education of *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’. That is, students who are successful in examinations are conceptualised as having intellectual knowledge and morals and virtues. Thus, in traditional Chinese education, the success of learning was measured by “‘the mastery of the classics for utilitarian purposes’ by reference to ‘classical techniques’ ... that is, the techniques of power needed by the government of the time to maintain its rule” (Zhu, 1992: 4).

The importance attached to examinations in Chinese education is also derived from the Confucian principle which holds that government officials should be recruited on the basis of merit rather than family background. *Xue er you ze shi* “A man takes office when he does well in his studies” (Section 7.2.1.1) reflects this philosophy. Confucius himself was an example of an inspirational scholar who attempted to make a political difference in the then government through his own learning. However, due to the wars and turmoils of the Spring and Autumn (770- 476 BC) period and the governments of Warring States (475 – 221BC) period, he was not adequately accepted by governments. In his life time Confucius was never promoted to an official position that could acknowledge and reward him for his knowledge.

Ke ju kao shi (科举考试 ‘The Imperial examination system’), which embraced a variety of official examinations, started in the Han Dynasty (206 BC to AD 220) and lasted until 1905. It was abolished under pressure from some leading Chinese intellectuals of the Qing Dynasty (1644 – 1911) who were influenced by Western science and technology. The Imperial examinations were designed to serve the function that, through uniformity of content, the local elite and the ambitious would-be elite across China were indoctrinated with the same Confucian virtues and morals. Conversely, the Imperial examination system served to maintain cultural unity and consensus on Confucian values.

There were four levels of the examination system ranging from the lowest level of *tong sheng* (童生) to the highest of *jin shi* (晋士), with *xiu cai* (秀才) and *ju ren* (举人) ranked as the second and the third. Immersed in the Chinese educational context, for seven centuries Chinese students of all ages could spend 20 to 30 years memorising Confucian classics and Zhu Xi’s commentaries when preparing for examinations at different levels. As far as common people in China were concerned, success in the examination system was the only path to changing one’s social status, and education was thus the only key to social mobility. Many Chinese men who were determined to succeed, regardless of their age, would for years *liang er bu wen chuang wai shi, yi xin zhi du sheng xian shu* (两耳不闻窗外事, 一心只读圣贤书 ‘Close two ears to things outside the window, whole-heartedly read books by sages and men of virtue: Devote themselves fully to the rote-memorisation of the Confucian classics, isolating themselves from other activities’). If a family member passed the provincial examination and become a *ju ren* (举人 ‘a successful candidate in the imperial examination at the provincial level’), his entire family would be elevated to social status of the scholar gentry and have prestige and privilege. Success in the examinations thus “created a class of degree holders whose status gave them positions of influence in their home communities ...” (Cohen, 1994: 91).

The Chinese imperial examination system also paved the way to *guang zong yao zu* ‘honouring one’s ancestors and glorifying one’s forefathers’ and to gain “face” (meaning “dignity” in Yu, 2001: 15) for family and ancestors. Honours and dignities were firstly generated by the moment when the name of the successful candidate was read out aloud and then posted on golden paper by imperial guards. The noise attracted

the candidate's neighbours and relatives who expressed congratulations and admiration to the candidate and his family. One of the happiest moments for Chinese men in historic times was *jin bang ti ming* (金榜题名 '[the moment] when one's name appeared on the golden list'). As a result of the success in imperial examinations, the candidate's family would share his future power as in *yi ren de dao, ji quan shen tian* (一人得道, 鸡犬升天 'A man attains the Tao, his chickens and dogs ascend to heaven: When a man gets the power, all his families, relatives and friends benefit from it').

Although the imperial examination system was abolished about a hundred years ago, the significance of examinations in the Chinese education has not been reduced. Firstly, the national tertiary entrance examination system, which was resumed in 1977 after the Cultural Revolution (1966 – 1976. Section 6.1), embodies students' effort and parents' *wang zi cheng long, wang nu cheng feng* (望子成龙, 望女成凤 'longing for one's son to become a dragon and one's daughter to become a phoenix: longing for one's children to be successful'). Success in the national entrance examinations paves the first step of *li yu tiao long men* (鲤鱼跳龙门 'carps jumping over the dragon gate: climbing up the social ladder to change ones' social identity'). To a large extent, the national tertiary entrance examination system functions as a curriculum, affecting not only the major content of teaching and learning, but also teaching methods and learning strategies. The intense competition for the national examination gives rise to a metaphor of *qian jun wan ma guo du mu qiao* (千军万马过独木桥 'thousands of cavalymen and infantrymen crossing a single-plank bridge').

Secondly, the system of *gong wu yuan kao shi* (公务员考试 'public servant examinations'), which was initiated in the early 1990s aiming at improving the Chinese administrative reform, serves practically the same function as the system of traditional Imperial examinations. Similar to the system of traditional Chinese Imperial examinations, the public servant examination system is also used to recruit Chinese civil servants. The principles of transparency, fairness, competition and merit underlying the system of public servant examinations resemble the Confucian principles of the Imperial examination system.

The social significance attached to Imperial examinations, national entrance examinations, public service examinations as well as all kinds of school examinations has given rise to another aspect of Chinese cultural schema of *Education*, which is that “tests are frightfully important because ... they are viewed as the absolute determinants of a student’s future” (Hu and Grove, 1991: 81). Successful students are conceptualised as the fruits of the Chinese education of *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’. The higher the level of the examination that a student can pass, the more respect he or she will gain from society. This cultural conceptualisation functions as a goal, motivating most mainland Chinese students to study diligently not only for themselves to improve their own social status, but also for their parents to improve the family’s social status. This role of the Chinese *Education* schema is consistent with research which shows that schemas “have the potential of instigating action” (D’Andrade, 1992: 29).

The social significance of Chinese examinations has also given rise to the practical aspect of Chinese education. The practicality of Chinese education is related to the understanding that knowledge that is likely to appear in examinations is of vital importance in teaching and learning. This practicality is a legacy of traditional Chinese education. Confucian classics, which were the major content of Imperial examinations, were the focus of teaching and learning in traditional Chinese education. Subject knowledge, which is the major content of contemporary Chinese examinations, is the focus of teaching and learning in contemporary Chinese education (Hu and Grove, 1991: 81). That is, due to the national need for the development of science and technology, in contemporary Chinese curricular, subject knowledge has taken the illustrious position previously occupied by Confucian classics. Focus on the teaching of subject knowledge in contemporary Chinese education now overrides the focus of teaching morals and virtues as they were taught in traditional Chinese education. This practicality in Chinese education is represented linguistically as *ying shi jiao yu* (应试教育 ‘examination-oriented education’). As a result of the examination-oriented education, the teaching of Chinese morals and virtues in contemporary Chinese education, although never ignored, is largely carried out implicitly through the teaching of subject knowledge.

Thus far in the above three sections it has been shown that the emergence of the Chinese cultural schema of *Education* is related to the cultural experiences of traditional

Chinese education, prescribed roles and status of Chinese teachers and social significance attached to examinations in Chinese education. Embedded in the Chinese cultural schema of *Education* is the culturally-constructed knowledge that 1) Chinese education is composed of teaching books and cultivating people, although the focus of either teaching books or cultivating people has undergone changes due to the change of focus in examinations, 2) teachers, who are knowledge transmitters and moral models, deserve high respect from society, 3) success in education in general, or in examinations in particular, indicates that students are not only well-equipped with subject knowledge, they are also expected to have Chinese morals and virtues that they have learned through the learning of subject knowledge and 4) success in examinations not only brings decent income and high social status to an individual student, but also brings fame, honour and glory to the student's family.

7.3 Instantiations of the Education schema in Chinese language

There are many common expressions in Chinese language instantiating the schematic knowledge that society pays high respect to Chinese teachers. *Zun shi zhong jiao* (尊师重教 'Respect teachers and revere their teachings') is a saying which appears commonly in both formal and informal contexts. The saying *yi ri wei shi, zhong shen wei fu* (一日为师, 终身为父 'A teacher for one day is the *father* for the whole life') personalises the respect paid to Chinese teachers. Notably, the father here is the father in the light of the Chinese *Family* schema, who should be conceptualised as a head, and who deserves high respect in accordance with the filial piety. Frequently teachers are portrayed as mothers, sisters or brothers for the care that they have provided for their students. Including teachers into one's family is often regarded by most mainland Chinese as a high respect which can be paid to teachers (Section 6.3.3).

Teachers are also respected for their contribution to society. The self-sacrifice of a candle is often mapped onto teachers in the saying of *ran shao zi ji, zhao lian bie ren* (燃烧自己, 照亮别人 '[Teachers] are burning themselves and giving light to others'). Devotion to education by most Chinese teachers is depicted as *chun can dao si si fang jin, la ju cheng hui lei shi gan* (春蚕到死丝方尽, 蜡炬成灰泪始干 'Spring silk-worms will weave to their last silk before they die. Candle sticks will consume to their last wick

before they burn to ash’). Although the saying is originated from a love poem by Li Shangyin (813 – 858) of the Tang Dynasty, it is often mapped onto devoted teachers in Chinese language.

Teachers are remembered by their students for their life-long influence that they exert on their students. The remembrance of teachers starts with appreciation of teachers’ hard work. For instance, teachers in Chinese language is equated with *xin qin de yuan ding* (辛勤的园丁 ‘diligent gardeners’). They should be rewarded by their students’ achievements which are ‘the fruits of their labour’ -- *tao li man tian xia* (桃李满天下 ‘Students are teachers’ peaches and plums growing all over the world’). Most mainland Chinese students attribute part of their success to their teachers and remember them for their help. The saying *en shi nan wang* (恩师难忘 ‘Benefactor teachers are unforgettable’) expresses the link between Chinese teachers and students.

Teachers’ roles are frequently instantiated as *yi shen zuo ze* (以身作则 ‘setting a good example for students to follow with his/her own conduct’). The role of moral models leads to a teaching approach which asserts that effecting teaching should be *yan chuan shen jiao* (言传身教 ‘Teaching by personal example as well as verbal instructions’). This approach is also known as *xiao zhi yi li, dong zhi yi qing, dao zhi yi xing* (晓之以理，动之以情，导之以行 ‘To instruct with principles, move with emotions, and guide with teachers’ own actions’). This personalised approach is believed to be more effective than mere verbal instructions which is instantiated as *shen jiao shen yu yan chuan* (身教胜于言传 ‘Personal examples are better than precepts’). The personalised approach also enjoins Chinese teachers to play the comprehensive roles of moral guardians, congenial patrons and moral models, in addition to being knowledge holders and knowledge transmitters. Chinese teachers are thus expected to *xue er bu yan, hui ren bu juan* (学而不厌，诲人不倦 “[S]tudy hard and never feel contented. Teach others tirelessly”). *The Analects*. VII: 3, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 104).

Related to their role as moral cultivators and to the high social status that is prescribed to them, Chinese teachers are conceptualised as authoritative in class and are responsible for initiating interactions in class. A popular teaching principle *bu fen bu qi, bu fei bu fa* (不愤不启，不悱不发 “I will not instruct my students until they have really

thought hard but failed to understand”. *The Analects*. VII: 8, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 107) reveals the authority that Chinese teachers have over their students. Students are not supposed to interact freely with teachers on the basis of equal status. Besides, Chinese teachers’ classroom authority is also reflected in *ju yi yu bu yi san yu fan, ze bu fu ye* (举一隅不以三隅反，则不复也 “If I give them one instance and they cannot draw inferences from it, I will not teach them any more”). *The Analects*. VII: 8, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 107). This cultural tradition may explain the genesis of the renowned Chinese teacher-centred approach and accounts for Chinese students frequently being seen as followers and not asking many questions in class (e.g. Cortazzi and Jin, 2002).

There also exist many sayings on student beliefs about books and on their common learning strategies. These sayings are all related to the Chinese *Education* schema. Books are conceptualised as sacred and most Chinese students, for example, are familiar with the maxim of *wan ban jie xia pin, wei you du shu gao* (万般皆下品，惟有读书高 ‘The worth of other pursuits is small, and the study of books exceeds them all’). This saying is from *shen tong shi* (神童诗 ‘Poem on Gifted Children’) by Wang Zhu of the North Song Dynasty (960 – 1127). Books are believed to contain *dao li* (道理 ‘dao principles: Confucian morals and virtues’) and through reading books, students can *zhi shu da li* (知书达理 ‘understand books and know moral principles’). Most Chinese students also have the beliefs of *kai juan you yi* (开卷有益 ‘Opening books is beneficial’) and *du shu po wan juan, xia bi ru you shen* (读书破万卷，下笔如有神 ‘After reading ten thousand books, your writing will be guided with inspiration’). This saying is from a poem by Du Fu, a famous poet of the Tang Dynasty (618 – 907). To achieve effective learning, Chinese students prefer teachers who are strict with them, as represented in the expression *yan shi chu gao tu* (严师出高徒 ‘An outstanding apprentice/student is produced by a strict teacher’).

Relative to beliefs about books, re-reading is a recommended learning strategy as represented in *xue er shi xi zhi* (学而时习之 ‘Learning by re-reading regularly’) and *wen gu er zhi xin* (温故而知新 ‘Re-reading old knowledge is the prerequisite of gaining new knowledge’). Thinking or self-reflection is another learning strategy as in *xue er bu si ze wang* (学而不思则罔 “It throws one into bewilderment to read without thinking”). *The*

Analects. II: 15, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 20). For example, one of Confucius' favourite disciples Zeng Zi, author of *The Great Learning*, absorbed his master's teaching through additional self-reflection. *Wu ri san xing wu shen ... chuan bu xi hu?* (吾日三省吾身 ... 传不习乎 "Every day, I examine myself once and again ... Have I diligently reviewed the instructions from the Master?" *The Analects*. I: 4, translated by Lai and Xia, 1994: 3).

However, re-reading and self-reflection are not sufficient to produce ideal students. Students should also be determined, since *dao li* contained in books is vast and requires diligence as expressed in the motto *shu shan you lu qin wei jing, xue hai wu ya kuo zuo zhou* (书山有路勤为径, 学海无涯苦作舟 'Diligence is the path to the book mountain, and pain is the boat for the knowledge ocean'). Accordingly, most Chinese students believe in diligence, that is, *zhi yao gong fu shen, tie chu mo cheng zhen* (只要功夫深, 铁杵磨成针 'If you work at it hard enough, you can grind an iron rod into a needle'), and they know the stories of some ancient Chinese scholars who *tou xuan liang, zhui ci gu* (头悬梁, 锥刺骨 'hung up their hair to the ceiling and pierced their leg with an awl') to prevent themselves from falling into sleep when studying. Thus study demands perseverance. Besides being determined, diligent and persistent, most Chinese students also set the goal of *jing yi qiu jing* (精益求精 'making constant improvement to be better on top of being good'). They also believe that the strategy of *quan shen guan zhu* (全神贯注 'putting one's whole heart [into learning]') is effective.

In the context of believing in determination, diligence and perseverance, most Chinese students tend to be self-critical if failure occurs in their learning. They are often not ready to attribute their learning failure to teachers, but see the failure as their own responsibility. Moreover, any open discussion with a teacher for a solution may suggest that the teacher has failed to teach effectively and the student would want to save the teacher's face. This belief is represented in *shi fu ling jin men, xiu xing zai ge ren* (师傅领进门, 修行在个人 'After the master/teacher has initiated the apprentice/students, the development of skills depends on their own efforts').

In sum, Chinese schematic knowledge about Chinese teachers, their roles in education, teaching methods, teachers' influences on students, students' learning

strategies and beliefs is shown to be widely instantiated in Chinese language. Most mainland Chinese speakers are inclined to get access to the schematic knowledge through its various instantiations. Likewise, the instantiated Chinese *Education* schema makes its abstract knowledge more likely to be activated by its cultural members.

7.4 Data analysis

Following the same data analysis procedures as explained in the previous two chapters, the analysis below will make use of discourse scenarios and discourse indexicals.

Discussion of all the instantiated Chinese discourse scenarios on the basis of the collected data in this chapter will lead to the identification of the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*.

Excerpt 7.1

(A19, male, in his 50s; C19, female, in her 30s)

(397)

17. A19: ... I've got a son and my daughter (C19: Um). My son was quite able (C19: Right) in high school, very good (C19: Um) and at the end of Year 11, he said he wanted to leave school.

18. C19: Why?

19. A19: He wanted to go. He wanted outside work (C19: Right). He didn't want inside work (C19: Right, yeah) and for outside work, you really need to go to something like TAFE [Technical And Further Education] college (C19: Right) and he is

20. C19: And what's your, you know, what's your?

21. A19: I'm delighted.

22. C19: Oh, you are delighted (in an amazed tone and laughing)!

23. A19: Because that's what he really wanted (C19: OK). And after that, I mean it's so hard for young people to know what they want (C19: Ah). I mean, but we were called to school to meet his student counsellor, the subject adviser and, who's horrified that a person who has the ability to go to the university (C19: Yes) was going to leave school.

24. C19: And choose to leave school.

25. A19: Yeah, I said you must listen to the boy, what does he want.
26. C19: Oh. Yeah.
27. A19: It's not what the adults.
28. C19: I think you're so open, you know, you agree he took his choice.
29. A19: I always listen to the kids, I always believe them.
30. C19: Oh. Right.
31. A19: They have a right to be heard, and their opinions count.
32. C19: Right. And now what's, what's your, your, your son' place?
33. A19: He is, he went through, he got a plumbing apprenticeship. He went through TAFE, he got his apprenticeship, he did all his developed plumber (C19: Um), and very quickly became a plumber supervisor, got promoted (C19 laughing). Then he went back to TAFE and studied and became a building supervisor (C19: Ah), and at the age of 31 he's a now a building supervisor.
34. C19: OK, and that
35. A19: His ability
36. C19: He's, his enjoy, he enjoyed what he did?
37. A19: He does. He's making his way up the ladder (C19: Right) with his ability.
38. C19: And till now, you also, you and he, or, think, he made a good choice?
39. A19: The best choice!
40. C19: Oh (laughing)?
41. A19: Absolutely.
42. C19: Yeah?
43. A19: And he's, and he, you know, he's going far. He would do well (C19: Right), because he has the ability (C19: Right). But what the school counsellors don't accept is you can do very well (C19: Um) without going to university (C19: Right, yeah). And a friend of my father's years ago said, he was, he left school at 14 and ended up owning a big factory (C19: Ah). And he said you'll never see Rolls-Royce in the car park of a university (C19: Right) and that's his answer to whether you need university education (C19: Right). He went back, he went to technical college, doing engineering and all sorts of thing and ended up very well

in his own business. And I think that's a very good example of, um, professors' cars are always quite nice, but never the big, expensive ones.

44. C19: Right, yes.

45. A19: Although they get paid well.

46. C19: True, yeah but, compared with, you know, people,

47. A19: doing your own business,

48. C19: Um, um. But the Chinese parents are quite different from you, if my son told, tell me, oh, I want to go to, you know, just be a worker or (A19: Yeah) something, I will be, I will be shocked.

49. A19: Would you (laughing)?

50. C19: Because all the Chinese people, whether they are educated or not, they wish their children can go to university (A19: Yes, they [not clear] you). And we believe only the people go to the university get good education, then can get a good job.

51. A19: Yes. So when my daughter was (446) ... (550)

52. C19: Also me, I need to push my son. I have one son.

This excerpt is the preceding section of Excerpt 6.1. The salient and recurrent linguistic feature in C19's discourse is that she, as a mother, expressed her concern about A19's son's school leaving. She asked why A19's son made his own decision to leave school at a young age (Turn 2), what the father's opinion was towards the son's leaving school (Turn 4), whether the son enjoyed his experiences from being a plumber apprentice to becoming a building supervisor (Turn 20) and whether the father, as a hindsight, still thought the son's decision was a good one (Turn 22). C19's two consecutive questions at Turns 24 and 26, which asked for conformation and clarification respectively after A19's statement that the son had "made a best choice" (Turn 22), also revealed that she was surprised by A19's and his son's decision making regarding his son's educational experience. Indeed, C19's surprise was revealed earlier in her comment on A19's delight in his son's early school-leaving (Turn 6) and in her praise of A19 as an open-minded father (Turn 12). It might seem to C19 that it was so unusual for a father to support his son's school-leaving decision that the father deserved praise for his unusual openness.

C19's linguistic feature in this excerpt of intercultural communication indicates that C19 activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* (孩子的教育是人生大事, 父母不能不管 'Children's schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it'). This discourse scenario could be regarded as associated with the discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]'. Alternatively, the discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* 'Children's schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it' can be regarded as a variation of the discourse scenarios of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]' in the context of education.

C19's discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* 'Children's schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it' also structured her to articulate her view that if her son told her that he would be a worker or doing some job without the requirement of a degree, she would be shocked (Turn 32). She would push her son to go to university (Turn 36). C19's reason was that "we believe only the people go to the university get good education, then can get a good job" (Turn 34). In other words, C19's conceptualisation might be that any job that did not require the foundation of university education was not a good job.

C19's emphasis on university education was based on her implicit cultural knowledge that university education produced high social status as well as a good job. It might seem to C19 that a good job that only produced good income might not be regarded as truly a good job. C19's profiling of receiving tertiary education indicates that she activated another Chinese discourse scenario of *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* (考大学是学生的正经事 'Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students'). That is, although she was well aware that TAFE colleges could prepare building supervisors and successful businessmen who earned more money than university professors (Turn 30), C19 insisted on the significance of university education. C19 might have drawn on her knowledge of Chinese education, believing that the more education one received, the higher the social status he or she would obtain.

C19 might have activated both the discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it’ and the discourse scenario of *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’ when making the remark about pushing her son to go to university. C19’s involvement in her son’s education includes making educational decisions for him, which was previously analysed in Excerpt 6.1. It also included imposing her and her husbands’ wishes on their son and pushing him to study, even if their wishes were against her son’s potential.

Regarding Chinese parents’ involvement in their children’s education, a mainland Chinese informant (IC4) provided the following excerpt of the interview data via email:

Excerpt 7.2

Interview data (IC4, female, in her early 40s)

When I worked in Canberra, I had a Chinese colleague. She came to Australia from Shao’an long time ago, about 10 years ago. She raised her daughter single-handedly. Her daughter went to school in Australia and was a good student. She had a good score in her entrance examination. After the examination, the daughter told her mother that she wanted to defer for one year or two before going to the university. She didn’t want to go to university straight away. Like many of her Australian friends, she wanted to work first. The mother was very anxious and preferred the daughter to go to university straight away. But the daughter said she would like to earn some money to support the family first. But the daughter’s reasoning made the mother very angry. The mother said ‘if you really love your mother, don’t stop. Go to university without any delay’. The daughter listened to her mother and went to the university.

The Chinese mother must have activated her discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole

life. Parents must get involved in it' when talking to her adult daughter. The mother's involvement in her daughter's western education might be underpinned by her Chinese cultural conceptualisation that tertiary education benchmarked not only a person's intellectual level, but also the social status of the person and the social status of the family. That is, the mother's concern for her daughter and the family social status overrode her financial concern, and made her ignore her daughter's own agenda of development.

The mother's successful exhortation to her daughter's non-stop tertiary education largely marked the success of her involvement in her daughter's education. That is, her daughter, even given her education in Australia and the influence of her Australian peers, had to acknowledge and accept her mother's involvement in her own education.

When this interview excerpt was presented to an Anglo-Australian informant (IA4) for comment, IA4 reacted strongly. He said most Anglo-Australian mothers would not say what the mainland Chinese mother said to the daughter, because in Anglo-Australian culture would be considered as emotional blackmail. IA4 defended the Chinese daughter, saying that she had a good reason of deferring her study for a year or so. She was entitled to make her own decisions. She was thinking of supporting the family financially. IA4 also said that in most Anglo-Australian families, parents would give advice to the adult child. However, it was the child who would make the final decision. Besides, IA4 also said an Anglo-Australian daughter might say to her mother that "if you really love me, mum, let me do what I want to do".

IA4 did not comment directly on the Chinese mother's involvement in her daughter's education, but on the involvement in the daughter's decision making. The Chinese mother-daughter story must have activated his Anglo-Australian cultural schema of treating adult children as independent individual. That is, as an independent individual, the adult daughter should have her freedom in making decisions, including her decisions on her own education.

Excerpt 7.3

(A38, male, in his 50s; C38, female, in her late 30s)

(106)

1. A38: Yeah, I think teachers are aware very much these days that education has become a commodity that you sell and, I was making this point, when I was growing up in Ireland, um, we were given education.
2. C38: Given education?
3. A38: We were given it. Now I find it around the world, nobody gives education any more, they sell it. It has become a commodity like stocks, shares, property, or, (C38 laughing) this is particularly true, I find Asians, particularly Chinese people who see their sons and daughters coming here to learn as an, an investment.
4. C38: Um.
5. A38: In many ways it's a financial investment. I understand the sacrifices that the parents make when they do send their kids here. Um
6. C38: What can you, ah, perceive the sacrifice?
7. A38: I can see possibly that parents will often go without eating, so that they can have the money to send Yang, or Chan, or whatever.
8. C38: So the parents [not clear]
9. A38: OK, yeah, yah, yah.
10. C38: Ok.
11. A38: And sometimes, I worry that perhaps young people themselves don't appreciate it, perhaps the sacrifices that their parents make. I mean I hate to say this, but I will be honest. There're several students I've met in the school that I think I should go and phone their parents, and say "Are you aware of the money that's being wasted here? The time that's being wasted?" Because for a lot of young kids who come from China, it's a release, it's party time, it's freedom, it's Australia, it's sunshine, it's beaches, it's tha- that. They come originally with the focus of studying and education and university entry, but often when they find the reality is that it involves the actual amount of work, many of them are very intimidated by it. And you see them suddenly start to slip away, and

12. C38: But how, I mean, how come there's such a gap between their expectations of education in Australia and the reality now they have, sort of, experienced?
13. A38: My honest opinion?
14. C38: Yeah.
15. A38: Lies.
16. C38: (Laughing) who lies?
17. A38: Who lies? I'll tell you who lies. Agents who are responsible for bringing students to this country. They're not interested in students. They're not interested in education. They're not interested in Australia. They're interested in a profit, a commission, a fee. And my humble opinion?
18. C38: (Laughing)
19. A38: Um, I suspected that many agents are telling students in China that they're much stronger in language than they actually are. This is why when they come here, many, we'll say to the students, "Well, we'll give you a test, we'll listen to your oral facility, um, we'll decide what level we think you should be at if you want us to facilitate a successful outcome for you. We'll say, um, we'll say "Ok, I think you should do E KAS, say" and they say "No, I want to do E LAX, university entry", "Why?" "Um because I can't waste time. I need to get the university degree in the next three years" "But your English isn't really right for E LAX" "No, I want to do E LAX". Um, even parents would push them, said "Get this thing over and done with quickly. Get in. Get a degree. Get out again". Um, and for that reason, very often, we find students here, not always, but enough to be a worry, students who parachute into courses for which they are not prepared or capable (C38: Um). They start well with very good enthusiastic attitudes (C38: Um). The reality of how difficult it is suddenly slowly dawns upon them (C38: Um). Then you start finding your attendance starts becoming a little bit iffy (C38: Um). And that's the age you really need to counsel them. And they only have two choices, either leave now and go down to something, because there's nothing worse in life and I know this particularly for Asian people, but for me, it's also a sense of failure at the beginning of something. Just like you, just like Asian people, we also lose face (C38 laughing). And but again that's another driving

factor that worries me about Asian students in this country, they will stick at something, even though they're failing it, even though they're making a superhuman effort, and they're still not getting there. They will stay.

20. C38: Why?

21. A38: Because (C38: Yeah?) to leave is to lose face.

22. C38: So this sense of failure is stronger with Asian or Chinese students than,

23. A38: It's not the failure that bothers them. It's the perception of other people that they have failed. The sense of the failure inside, I think, they already know. "I'm not going to pass this. This is too hard".

24. C38: What other, other people think.

25. A38: What other people will think of them. And I was told this was very strong among Asian people, the sense of image, face. ... You must never be embarrassed or you must never do anything to embarrass yourself, or your family. Even if it is the important thing to do, even if it's the right thing to do. Example, I had a girl XX, who was in my E LAX, pre-university course (C38: Yeah). Now it took me almost a semester to persuade her to move out of E LAX, and go down to E KAS. She was struggling, her oral, um, facility was not very good, her vocabulary was very, very limited, and grammatical structure, syntax was dreadful. But she hung on like superglue (C38: OK) and would not leave that course until it became very evident towards the end. "You're going to fail the whole semester. Leave now". And I remember looking at her face the day she made a decision that she was going to leave the course. She was quite upset. I don't think she was upset leaving me or leaving the other students, but I think having lost face, particularly in front of her parents (C38: OK). You know that telephone call. When you phone home, you say "Mom, dad, the course was too hard. I am failing. I am going to go doing to another course" (C38: OK). You know. This is of course also a big problem, which bothers me. I have never met any of the parents of the students who come here. But I've occasionally, but not many. But I worry, unceasingly, about the expectations of these modern Chinese parents (C38: Um). I have students come to me who are very weak. And I said "What are you going to do at the university?" Most of them would start their response with the same words: "Not what I want to

do at the university. What my parents want me to do at university is medicine, law, commerce, economic, da, da, da”. It is a great worry when young people are putting the rest of their lives on the line to keep their parents happy, because their parents have a perception that my child will be a success. That means from day 1 a lot of pressures put upon young people, you know, and then when they get sent here ...

This excerpt is presented here to illustrate A38’s observation of some of his mainland Chinese students and of their parents’ involvement in the students’ education. A38 was an ESL teacher in an adult college, Perth. In A38’s conceptualisation, the high degree of Chinese parents’ involvement, ranging from financial support to high expectation of their children, was the source of his worries (Turns 11, 19 and 25). It seemed that his worries might be caused by his lack of the Chinese discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it’. For instance, A38 perceived mainland Chinese parents’ involvement in their children’s education as depriving the children of life choices, because they “are putting the rest of their lives on the line to keep their parents happy” (Turn 25). In contrast, many of his mainland Chinese students and their parents might have taken parents’ involvement in adult children’s education as appropriate and legitimate. That could be the reason why some parents were observed to go without eating so that they could save and send their children to study overseas (Turn 7), and why some mainland Chinese students were observed not to appreciate their parents’ sacrifices (Turn 11).

A38 also observed that many of his mainland Chinese students were working under great pressure. It might be that the built-in Chinese discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it’ frequently turned some mainland Chinese parents’ financial and emotional involvement in their children’s education into pressure on them, particularly, when these Chinese students had difficulties in coping with learning in a new culture and in a new language. This kind of pressure, together with these students’ cultural knowledge of respecting and obeying their parents, or with the

discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]', made these mainland Chinese students persevere in their learning with "a superhuman effort" (Turn 19) or "like superglue" (Turn 25).

Two quotations provided by A38 were illuminative. At Turn 19, A38 quoted what some mainland Chinese parents would say to their overseas-studying children to push them to do what they were not able to do in their learning. At Turn 25, A38 quoted what some of his weak mainland Chinese students said to him in response to his query on what these students planned to do at university. The acceptance of their parents' involvement in these adult mainland Chinese students' education was clearly shown in this quotation.

Excerpt 7.4

(A4, female, in her 40s; C4, male, in his 40s)

(064)

1. C4: Just before Christmas I bought a house and it's, the ceiling is high, and quite nice, and
2. A4: Where, where is your house?
3. C4: Phillip.
4. A4: Oh, south of the river?
5. C4: Yes.
6. A4: Yes. I really don't know Phillip, I mean I know where it is, but
7. C4: You know Callistal Senior High School?
8. A4: Yes. It's funny though, because I don't drive, (C4: Um), so I don't tend to, like, you know, go to lots of place. I live in Mount Eden, I do a PhD in Mount Eden. My son is in Mount Eden High.
9. C4: Quite convenient.
10. A4: And my daughter is in Highhill. She doesn't go to Mount Eden, she goes to Highhill. So I tend to, sort of, do a lot of, and my parents are in Blueriver, so everything is in this quite small sort of circle.

11. C4: I have to live there, because my daughter is in Callistal High school. Before coming to Western Australia, I heard from my friend that the Callistal High school and Ho-, is that Hollstair?
12. A4: Hollstair.
13. C4: Yeah, are the top level.
14. A4: Oh? Yeah.
15. C4: Top level state high school, so I went there and rent a house, oh, rent a duplex, you know, so that my daughter can enrol in that school, quite good.
16. A4: Em, I really don't know anything about Callistal, I know about Hollstair, except it's not going any more.
17. C4: Callistal High school is ranked top, number one high school last year. This year it is also in top three in whole Australia. So it's a very good school.
18. A4: So what year is your daughter in?
19. C4: Twelve.
20. A4: Ah, she is doing her TEE [Tertiary Entrance Examination].
21. C4: Yeah, just this week is the, yeah
22. A4: Is the Mock exam, is it?
23. C4: Yeah, that's right.
24. A4: My son is in Year 12, but is not doing TEE, he is
25. C4: Ah?
26. A4: He is doing more arts sort of subjects, video and photography, drama and he has to do English, he is doing cooking.
27. C4: Ah.
28. A4: Ah, science, that's right.
29. C4: Science, that's right.
30. A4: But he is not a clever boy, so he (C4 laughing), no, that's true, he is not (laughing), I'm not blaming, so, you know, so there's no point in putting him under that pressure to, you know, to do TEE,
31. C4: Yeah?
32. A4: It's, you know,
33. C4: Yes.

34. A4: 'Cos it's lot of pressure, it's, it's lot of work
35. C4: Yeah, yes, yes, but in that school, most, most students do TEE, because, I heard from other friends that above two thirds of the students, are, other, are from other countries or from countries of originally, so like Indian, like Chinese, Japanese.
36. A4: That's good.
37. C4: Very competitive.
38. A4: Yes. I mean Mount Eden's got a very high
39. C4: Yeah, I heard that this one is also very good.
40. A4: Yes, yeah, good for languages, very good for languages, and I like it because it's got a very, like it's got a broad cross section of people from all around the world, as has the Highhill, and that's one of the reasons why I like those schools.
41. C4: Highhill is around here?
42. A4: Highhill, ah Highhill, that way down, down Abraham Street, and it's on City Street, and it's the only, in the city, it's not, is the only in the city, the state school left.
43. C4: Ah.
44. A4: Yeah, a primary school, 'cos there used to be a primary in East Perth years ago, and that closed down and Jenny went to Highhill and now, and we just really like it there. It's an ESL school, English as a second language so
45. C4: Oh, yeah.
46. A4: so we get a lot of people from all over the world, and, you know, get lot of refugee children.
47. C4: Oh, yeah.
48. A4: And I think it's really important for our children to
49. C4: Some, some are refugee children?
50. A4: Always have refugee children, had lot of in, before our children went there, there was Cambodian, (C4: Cambodian) and Vietnamese (C4: Vietnamese), from that type, you know, refug-
51. C4: Oh, yeah.

52. A4: boat people coming in that (C4 laughing), and now of course we've got people from you know, Afghanistan.
53. C4: Oh, yes (laughing)!
54. A4: Really, all, just all over the world, yeah, and African, and lots of African.
55. C4: African, yeah.
56. A4: African popu- high African population now
57. C4: Oh, yeah.
58. A4: as well, and I think it's really important for (C4: That's right) for our children to be just aware of some, you know, 'cos one thing seen on the news, you know, and it's another thing (C4 laughing) then, actually socialising with people from other countries.
59. C4: Yeah.
60. A4: And I think it's really important that they do that, because we were trying to bring up our children with the truth, this is Aboriginal land, this is not, this is not white people's land. This is Aboriginal land.
61. C4: You educate your kids like this way?
62. A4: Yes.
63. C4: Oh yes, that's good (laughing)!
64. A4: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely.

This excerpt shows that despite the fact that both C4 and A4 were concerned about and involved in their children's education, their salient linguistic features displayed that they had different means and different degrees of involvement. There were two salient and recurrent linguistic features that emerged from C4's conversation in this excerpt. Firstly, C4 profiled Callistal High School in his talk. He introduced the location of his living area through the high school (Turn 7). His decisions for choosing an area for renting (Turn 15) and for buying a house for his family were also related to the high school (Turn 11). Before he moved to Western Australia, he sought information about "very good" high schools which included Callistal High School (Turn 11 and 39). He also emphasised the ranking of the Callistal High School four times in this excerpt of conversation (Turns 13,

15 and 17) and pointed out that most students did TEE in the school (Turn 35) and that it was a very competitive school (Turn 37).

C4's explicit emphasis on choosing a well-reputed and competitive high school for his daughter could be structured by the Chinese discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* 'Children's schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it'. His involvement in his daughter's education was revealed from his endeavours of seeking information about different top schools for his daughter before arriving in the state of Western Australia, choosing the Callistal Senior High School because it was a very competitive school with many students of Asian background. Investing in a house which was in the neighbourhood of the high school might also reveal this conceptualisation that education was vital to his daughter and his family.

The second salient and recurrent linguistic feature that appeared in C4's discourse was that C4 embarked on minimal utterances after A4 told C4 that her son was not going to take the TEE (Turn 24). At Turns 25, 27, 29, 31 and 33, C4 produced truncated utterances mainly to follow A4. C4's economy in utterances at these turns, when compared with his previous initiations and elaborations at Turns 1, 7, 11, 15 and 17 might show that he had some reservations. His reservations might be structured by the Chinese discourse scenario of *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* 'Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students'. As far as C4 was concerned, like C19 in Excerpt 7.1, taking the TEE (Turn 35) and studying with competition (Turn 37) were integral parts of schooling. According to his conceptualisation of education, C4 may have thought that it was a waste for a student who had 12 years schooling but not to attempt the tertiary entrance examination. Discourse indexicals at some of the turns also revealed his examination-oriented schematic knowledge of schooling. For instance, at Turn 25, his questioning utterance of "Ah?" might show his surprise when he heard that A4's Year-12 son was not going to do the TEE. The second questioning utterance of "Yeah?" at Turn 31 might show that he was wondering why A4 would not put her son under pressure to do the TEE (Turns 30 and 34).

Given his different opinions, C4 was also structured by his discourse scenario of *sui he* 'following [others for] harmony when disagreement appears' (Section 5.4), and

would not argue openly with A4. His minimal contribution could be regarded as a strategy of expressing his reservation. This strategy recurred at Turns 45, 47, 51, 53, 55, 57 and 59. C4 limited his linguistic behaviour to minimal utterances at these turns, which might reveal again that he had a different conceptualisation from A4 regarding what students should focus on in schools. C4 activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *yi xue wei zhu* (以学为主 ‘explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge’) when expressing his reservation about A4 choosing an ESL primary school for her English-speaking daughter (Turn 44). This discourse scenario is the shortened scenario of *yi xue wei zhu, jian xue bie yang* (以学为主, 兼学别样 ‘explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge and paying attention to other kinds of knowledge concurrently’). *Jian xue bie yang* (兼学别样 ‘paying attention to other kinds of knowledge concurrently’) is frequently overlooked in the Chinese linguistic instantiation.

C4’s question at Turn 49, which might function as asking for confirmation and for clarification in pragmatics, revealed that he might be concerned about A4’s daughter’s subject knowledge learning in an ESL school with refugee children. ESL schools and refugee students might have activated C4’s knowledge that the school that C4’s daughter attended used a curriculum which focused on improving refugee students’ English, and that the depth of subject knowledge imparting might be limited by the level of English that refugee students had. C4’s question at Turn 61 might illustrate that C4 did not share A4’s conceptualisation that the focus of education was on “bring[ing] up ... children with the truth” (Turn 60), which involved raising children’s awareness of refugee people from other countries, children’s socialising with them (Turn 58) and the Aboriginal people’s ownership of land (Turn 60). C4’s laughter at Turn 63 disclosed his doubts about A4’s view. Thus A4 repeated herself and intensified the degree of her belief (Turn 64).

It is shown from A4’s discourse that A4 was also involved in her children’s education. However, A4 had two different ways of involvement in her children’s education. A4’s involvement in her Year-12 son’s education was achieved through her understanding of her son’s low aptitude in some TEE subjects (Turn 30) and her support of her son’s choice of not taking the TEE. A4 did not regard it necessary for her to put her son under pressure, because taking the TEE was a “lot of work” (Turns 30, 32 and 34). A4’s involvement in her primary school daughter’s education resembled C4 in terms

choosing a school for her daughter. Given that A4's two children might have different levels of intelligence, her different ways of being involved in her children's education indicates that she treated her Year-12 son as an adult, whose individuality was respected.

In contrast, C4 treated his Year-12 daughter differently from A4 treating her Year-12 son. C4 treated his Year-12 daughter in a similar fashion to the way that A4 treated her primary school daughter. These difference and resemblance between C4 and A4 might reveal C4's ingrained *Family* schema which was discussed in Chapter 6. In other words, it might be the discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]' that structured part of C4's discourse in this excerpt regarding his support to his daughter.

Excerpt 7.5

(A5, female, in her late 30s; C5, female, in her late 30s)

(034 Side B)

1. A5: Yeah, like, not this race of people are bad (A5 and C5 laughing); these ones are good (A5 and C5 laughing). Don't mix these ones, you know.
2. C5: Don't go ex- don't go extreme (laughing).
3. A5: Exactly, yeah, exactly. Yeah. My, my son, son's at Knot Valley High School. Ok, so, that one's got a lot of mix of people, you know, which is you know really interesting, because, um, it's got lots of, you know, it's got drug problems, it's got, it's got all sorts of problems, and my son comes home to me, and he would say, "if I want anything Mom, if I want a video", he says "if I want drugs, this is, it's all there!" This is like you get these without being asked and I'm going "What kind of school is this?" (Laughing) You know, it's like ok, well, maybe he will grow up, you know, a little bit wiser, after going to that sort of school. You know. But I mean in China, do you find there're problems with drugs?

This brief excerpt is presented here to demonstrate that A5 shared a similar conceptualisation with A4 regarding the focus of students' learning in schools. A5's son was in a school with problems such as drugs and [violent] videos. Although A5 was

concerned about the status quo of the school, she did not make consider transferring her son to another school. A5's conceptualisation was that her son would grow wiser after learning from life experience (Turn 3) in the school. In other words, the discourse scenario of *yi xue wei shu* 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge' was not profiled in A5's conceptualisation.

Excerpt 7.6

(A25, male, in his 20s; C25, female, in her 30s)

(221 Side B)

10. C25: Yes, in the, in the old, for me in my families, em, my, my parents hav-, I have one brother and two sisters (A25: Um), but when, as the generation like me, we have only one child. But one child is enough now, I think.
11. A25: Why?
12. C25: Oh, you know, em, because many families only have one child, peoples can always concern for the, for the education, so not only in, in school, in the weekend, the child must learn, stu-, learn dancing, singing, drawing and English and things like that. So, that' very (laughing)
13. A25: They must be lonely.
14. C25: Em?
15. A25: Speak of one child, I think that, if you're not careful, once in Australia, people say that single chil- single children like, em, if you were the only child (C25: Um), the, very selfish.

This excerpt is the replication of a part of Excerpt 6.15. C25's utterance at Turn 3 about some Chinese families' concern of their one child's education indicates that she activated the discourse scenario of *yi xue wei zhu* 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge'. Although singing, dancing and drawing are skills rather than subject knowledge, most mainland Chinese parents, including C25, would equate their learning with the learning of English, which is one of the most important subjects in schools. Affording extra hours of tutoring these skills and subject knowledge over weekends was regarded by C25 as a luxury of the one-child family. By featuring this luxury first thing in

her argument that “one child is enough” (Turn 1), C25 highlighted the importance of learning.

This discourse scenario was not shared by A25, who, like, A19, A4 and A5, might focus on creating an environment so that children can learn to socialise with people and not to become lonely (Turn 4) or selfish (Turn 6).

Excerpt 7.7

(A10, female in her early 40s; C10, male, in his early 30s)

(223)

1. A10: In Malaysia children were very, like, like four, five, six years old (C10: Yeah), and they were going to school, just the regular school, which is a morning school or the afternoon school (C10: Oh, yeah). And they also went to additional tutoring (C10: Yes), mostly it was Mandarin, and other tutoring, also they were going hours and hours and no play time at all.
2. C10: It's, it's not good for kids, actually. But it's
3. A10: I'm glad you said that (laughing).
4. C10: It's our tradition. I think, in Sydney or Melbourne is also very common in the Chinese circle
5. A10: Yeah.
6. C10: to push the kids to learn more at the very early stage.
7. A10: Yes, it's, there're pressure for them.
8. C10: It's useless, I think.
9. A10: Is it? Yeah. Well.
10. C10: Because you can learn more at the early stage, but
11. A10: Yeah.
12. C10: doesn't help.
13. A10: Yeah, it just doesn't seem to be very, very pleasant for them.
14. C10: Maybe at the younger stage, looks very smart.
15. A10: Yeah. No, that can't sustain (laughing).
16. C10: At the tertiary level, probably all the students will be the same.

17. A10: Precisely. It's like children when they learn to walk. Some walk at 9 months, some walk at 15 months. But when they're 5, they all walk.
18. C10: In Chinese, it's very common, especially for the un-educated parents, they think that's good for their kids, so they can learn more. Sometimes it's help (A10: Right), because, I think all the kids tend to be lazy, if you don't push.
19. A10: They won't do it.
20. C10: They just waste time. But don't too much (A10 and C10 laughing).
21. A10: Well, that's right, so it's the balance.
22. C10: Yes.

Both A10 and C10 observed that many overseas Chinese living either in Malaysia or Sydney and Melbourne supported their children learning subject knowledge as their extra-curriculum activities. What marked C10's discourse as salient and recurrent were his constant struggles between his rationality that it was not good (Turn 2) and useless (Turn 8) for parents to push their children to learn at this early age and his acknowledgement that pushing children to learn was a Chinese tradition (Turn 4) and that children had to be pushed to learn (Turn 18). C10's rationality could be derived from his own learning experience as a mature student but his acknowledgement of the Chinese tradition might be the result of the activation of the Chinese discourse scenario of *yi xue wei zhu* 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge'. The Chinese discourse scenario of *yi xue wei zhu* 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge' caused him to speak against children being lazy and wasting time. That is, C10 might regard children engaging in activities other than learning as being lazy or wasting time. C10's judgement was made in line with his deep-seated discourse scenario of *yi xue wei zhu* 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge'.

In comparison, A10 focussed on pleasant experiences in childhood (Turn 13). Too much learning at a young age might make children feel "very, very unpleasant" (Turn 13). A10's focus on pleasant life experiences was similar to A25 in Excerpt 7.6 who focused on creating an environment so that children could develop their social skills. A10 and A25 did not activate discourse scenario of *yi xue wei zhu* (explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge) in both Excerpts 7.6 and 7.7.

Thus far, six of the above seven excerpts displayed some mainland Chinese parents' conceptualisation of education. The three activated discourse scenarios of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* 'Children's schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it', *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* 'Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students', of *yi xue wei zhu* 'focusing on learning subject knowledge' construct the constituents of the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*.

It is understood here that mainland Chinese parents could not speak for childless mainland Chinese students in terms of conceptualisation of Chinese education. However, those childless, single but adult Chinese participants who attended universities in Australia as international students did not reveal their own views on their own education. Those Chinese participants who initiated the topic of education were C19 (Excerpt 7.1), C25 (Excerpt 7.6) and C10 (Excerpt 7.7), who were parents themselves while studying in Australia. They profiled their children's education rather than their own education in their conceptualisation due to the Chinese *Family* schema. Another reason for the lack of data from adult but single Chinese participants could also be related to the Chinese *Family* schema. Take C22 (Excerpt 6.3), C36 (Excerpt 6.4) and some mainland Chinese students observed by A38 in Excerpt 7.3 for instance. They all expressed that their parents were involved in their education in one way or another. That is, it might be that since they understood that their parents were involved in their education, they might not foreground their own education in their conversation with their Australian interactants. These Chinese student participants would be much more concerned with getting attuned to the Australian education system, which, to a large extent, backgrounded their Chinese education in their conversations¹⁷.

Excerpt 7.8

(A34, female, in her 60s; C34, male, in his 30s)

(462)

1. C34: But in China

¹⁷ Dean (2003: 40) and Gallagher (1998: 70-71) document some mainland Chinese students' views on how Chinese teachers teach.

2. A34: It's different.
3. C34: We teach, when I teach the history class, I organised all the straight line, such as the, time, what happened, the people, the events, the results, the reason, everything together.
4. A34: Then we go the next step, what trends does it show? What is happening to the people? Because this, and this, and this happened.
5. C34: And what's the result? (A34: Yes) What's the meaning? (A34: Yes) and what's the influence for the, another event (A34: Yes)? So every, every class I have to prepare all the, all the course (A34: Um) and find the answer. When the exam, when the students are in exam, they have to answer what happened, the time, 1976 (A34: Yes), what's the events? Who have been involved in the events?
6. C34: Oh, no, these things, the answers to your questions would be incorporated into the student essay (A34: Ah). I'll ask the cause of the Boxer Revolution, the Boxer Rebellion (A34: Ah). They must put in, into the essay, but they don't make itself an essay.
7. C34: But in China, every student have to remember all the time and the events and
8. A34: Well, we, there're lots of rote-learning, and in many, many of the arts subjects in Australia, but the best, the best marks I've given to people, not who get every fact correct, but who organise and answer the question.
9. C34: In, in your way, your students can, can feel interest, and they feel criticism in this course.
10. A34: Yes, yes, yes.

Both C34 and A34 were history teachers before they met for the conversation. However, they had different accounts of what they did in their history class. Whilst C4 delineated all the factual questions that he used to ask his students in his class (Turns 3 and 5), A4 explained how she used to challenge her students to “organise” the factual questions into essays (Turns 6 and 8). Four clues in C4's account revealed his Chinese conceptualisation of teacher roles. At Turn 3, he said in his teaching he “organised all the straight line” of time, event, people involved, reasons and results of the event. At Turn 5, he said he

“prepared” all the answers to the questions such as the meaning and the influence of an historical event in the course. At Turns 5 and 7, he also sketched students’ task of “remember[ing] all the time and the events”. At Turn 9, he also identified what A4 did in her class as “your way”, indicating that he did not share the role that A4 played in her class. The four clues revealed that his utterances were structured by a discourse scenario of *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* (传授知识是教师的主要任务 ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’). That is, transmitting knowledge as his key role required him to chunk history to factual knowledge and present it to his students in detail.

A4 did not have the discourse scenario of *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’ and cross-communicated with C4 in the first half of the conversation. In the middle of C4’s talk at Turn 5, she resonated with C4 with utterances of “Yes”, thinking what C4 taught to his students was the preliminary step for the preparation of students’ own argumentation. However, when she realised that all the questions that C4 asked must be answered by the teacher, she corrected herself with “Oh, no” (Turn 6) and explained that presenting historical facts as knowledge to students was not enough. Teachers should ask students to organise and incorporate historical facts into essays.

Excerpt 7.9

(A5, female, in her late 30s; C5, female, in her late 30s)

(003 Side B)

1. A5: ... ‘cos I find in that way I learned. And I, I grow and I change the way I look at the things, ‘cos sometimes I don’t think of, you know, you know, what the reader (C5: Yes) was suggested, you know, and like, there was something I was reading just recently about, um, about what’s happening in, in the Middle East and America and I was reading about that and somebody had written in and was saying that every time that America had sat in, then the, um, the, the new government that’s coming eventually, they ended up with a dictator, which’s been very, very bad like Pol Pot, um, I’m just trying to think some other ones. And I thought “Oh, I never thought about that”. You know, so every time they’ve come

in, they would wipe out what they thought was bad (C5: Yes), then soon after another that was even worse coming in, you know. So I thought “Wow, that’s an interesting thing. I never, never considered it”.

2. C5: I, I think everything has two sides, right?
3. A5: That’s it. Yeah. Yeah.
4. C5: But in, in the other way, because I’m a teacher, yeah, I, I just think, being a teacher in China is the difficult thing, you see (A5: Yeah). You see, you have to, to be the authority person, right? (A5: Yeah) You can’t, you can’t tell things wron- differently, but in fact the world is full of varieties, you see, right?
5. A5: Yeah, yeah, yes, yes.

What A5 said about the diversity of views of dynamic world affairs (Turn 1) elicited C5’s conceptualisation of the roles and status of teachers. At Turn 4, C5 firstly identified herself as a teacher, although she was a lecturer in a university in China (Section 7.2.2). Then she expressed her dilemma that as a teacher, “the authority person” (Turn 4), she was faced with a challenging task. That is, on the one hand, she could not tell her students some views which might be categorised as different from the established views, and on the other hand, she was fully aware that “the world is full of varieties” (Turn 4). In other words, in C4’s conceptualisation, because whatever teachers teach in class should be taken in by students as the authoritative view, there was not much room left for her to express two-sided views. Conversely, two-sided views from teachers might be regarded by students as uncertain or as unorthodox, which might shake the authoritative status of teachers. C4’s dilemma which emerged in her discourse indicates that she activated a Chinese discourse scenario of *jiao shi quan wei* (教师权威 ‘Teachers [are] authoritative’).

Notably, this discourse scenario of *jiao shi quan wei* ‘Teachers [are] authoritative’ is different from, but related to the discourse scenario of *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’. Due to the key task of transmitting or imparting knowledge, mainland Chinese teachers are conceptualised as knowledge holders. Knowledge, which was related to the knowledge of Confucian morals and virtues in traditional Chinese education, gives rise to the cultural schematic understanding of Chinese teachers as paragons of virtue. Paragons of virtue are not

challenged frequently and openly in Chinese culture. The culturally protected position of knowledge holders is likely to lead teachers to be classroom authorities. That is, classroom teachers of all levels in mainland China are associated with an authoritative status.

Teachers' authoritative status is also reflected in the following data excerpt which was observed and written down by the researcher in 2002 in a school in Perth where the researcher had an office. The conversation was between a new immigrant mainland Chinese mother (in her 40s), her 14-year-old son and an Anglo-Australian teacher (male in his 50s).

Excerpt 7.10 (from a pilot study)

1. Mother to the teacher: Could, could you tell him what you expect from Da Wei?
2. Teacher: Da Wei, you're a bright kid. How much effort do you think you put to your work?
3. Boy: I don't know. 50% maybe.
4. Teacher: You've done pretty well with your 50% while some other kids may use 80% of their effort. So I'm sure you'll give us more in the new semester with your focus.
5. Mother: Good. Da Wei. Work harder and don't let down Mr Laker.
6. Teacher to Boy: Don't let yourself down. It's fine with me.

The immigrant mother came to Australia with her in-built Chinese cultural conceptualisation of teachers' status. In an effort to help her son learn better in the new environment, she asked the teacher to express to the boy his expectations of him. In accordance with her cultural conceptualisation, the boy would listen to the authoritative teacher and use the teacher's expectations of him as an encouragement. Not letting down the teacher was conceptualised by the mother as the boy's study goal, which would guide his future learning behaviour. The mother communicated her cultural conceptualisation to the boy and to the Anglo-Australian teacher, who however, did not conceptualise himself as the authoritative figure. Instead, the Anglo-Australian teacher profiled the boy as an

autonomous learner, who should not let himself down. As far as he was concerned, the Anglo-Australian teacher did not view his role as that of a motivating authoritative teacher. In other words, the Anglo-Australian teacher might conceptualise himself as a learning facilitator, whose status should not be judged beyond this role.

Excerpt 7.11

(A39, female, in her 20s; C39, female, in her 30s)

(090 Side B)

1. A39: In Chinese universities, I don't know, if you, for example, if my lecturer, we will be seen that, and it's almost like a discussion with the tutor or lecturer, and, especially if you disagree with whatever, this or that. Will that sort of situation occur in China? Or the students just not respond, like, just be quiet, and just take note?
2. C39: Very quiet, no, not much response.
3. A39: Let's say, is there much interaction even if they don't agree with the lecturer? Is there any interaction with the lecturer, or they just listen to the teacher?
4. C39: We listen to the teacher. If we don't agree, definitely we keep to ourselves. We may come to the lecturer during the break and say "Oh, I have another view", you know. It's very, very rare to see someone, you know, spot out himself and speak out in public. That's very, very, very, tsa [the noise]. We don't, we don't like that idea. It's too, you know, highlighting yourself, as if, too much highlighting yourself showing off. And, normally people feel a bit nervous and hesitant to speak in public in China, yeah, 'cos you're so different from others, yeah, yeah, so we don't do that. Very quiet classroom. Whenever, I mean, most of the foreigners have observed that when they ask students to ask questions, there won't be questions from class, but during the break, lots of students come to the teacher, ask this and ask that. And the foreign experts feel offended. They say, "Oh, break is my time to rest. Why do you ask me with all these questions? What are you doing, you know, during class when I ask you to ask?"

C39 activated the discourse scenario of *jiao shi quan wei* ‘Teachers [are] authoritative’ when giving the account of quiet tertiary-level Chinese classrooms. According to C39, two factors contributed to the class quietness. Firstly, most mainland Chinese students would listen to the teacher [lecturer], who would take the role of and would be expected by students to take the role of transmitting knowledge in lectures. Secondly, when mainland Chinese university students had different views from their lecturers, they would often keep to themselves or come to the lecturer during the break (Turn 4). Negotiating with teachers during class breaks, with both Chinese teachers and foreign teachers, in C39’s opinion, was an appropriate cultural behaviour. In C39’s view, this appropriate behaviour was related to the Chinese culture that discouraged “highlighting yourself”, “showing off” or “being different from others”. It is argued here that approaching teachers during class breaks also reflected students’ conceptualisation of not challenging teachers’ authoritative status. That is, by not challenging teachers and lecturers in public, most mainland Chinese students draw on their cultural knowledge that teachers are knowledge holders and classroom authorities.

Excerpt 7.12

Interview data (IC6, female, in her early 20s)

Our comprehensive English teacher was already in her forties, but looked pretty young. She was kind and warm-hearted. We all liked her very much. She had been getting along very well with us, just like our own sister and good friend. At the beginning of our university study, she brought a lot of fresh air to our class, gradually, made us more cheerful, more active, and more creative than before. Our teacher was very knowledgeable, giving us all that she knew, teaching us not only how to study, how to improve our oral English and written English, but also teaching us how to be a human. We learned a lot knowledge that we couldn’t learn from books, and this opened our eyes, broadened our mind, made us rich. We were all very impressed not only by her knowledge, but by the attraction of her personality so that we all worshipped her. And she usually encouraged us, taught us to build up self-confidence.

When I look at her smiling face, looked at her eyes, my body would be full of energy which made me filled with confidence. She really was a good teacher and our good friend ... I will study harder and harder to be a teacher as good as her in the future.

This data excerpt about a Chinese university teacher [lecturer] who taught comprehensive English was contributed by a mainland Chinese student studying in Perth. After the informal interview in which she told the researcher her stories about China, she was asked to write down a paragraph about the teacher she referred to during the interview. Firstly, her account of the teacher was related to the activated discourse scenario of *qin ru yi jia ren* 'People are] close to each other as if they were family members'. Section 6.4). That is, like C35 in Excerpt 6.18, IC6 also extended the scope of family to include her English teacher as a sister. IC6's account was also resulted from the activated discourse scenario of *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* 'Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers', that is, IC6 featured her teacher as a very knowledgeable person, who imparted her knowledge to students unconditionally. IC6 and other students were all impressed by the teacher's knowledge.

To a large extent, IC6's account was structured by the discourse scenario of *jiao shu yu ren* 'teaching books and cultivating people'. That is, she liked the teacher not only because of her knowledge, but also because the teacher taught her and her classmates 'how to be a human [person]'. Her account also displayed the motivating power engendered by the authoritative, but kind teacher. That is, IC6 would be full of energy and confidence when interacting with the smiling authoritative teacher and she would model herself on the teacher for her own future career.

Excerpt 7.13

Interview data (IC5, male, in his 40s)

I think there are various facets of the teacher's role. One of the roles is to impart knowledge to students ... Nowadays, Chinese universities become commercial in management and enrolment. Thus, the teachers'

qualification seems to get higher, while the quality of teachers and professionalism fade in certain extent. Unlike the older generation of teachers and classical scholars, many of teachers today do not care much about how to nurture students' souls, encourage their students to think, ignite their potential imagination, and plough the seeds for the future dreams.

IC5, a Chinese university lecturer doing his study overseas, reflected on Chinese education. IC5 observed some changes occurring to Chinese education recently. Criticism of the commercialised Chinese education indicates that he activated the discourse scenario of *jiao shu yu ren* 'teaching books and cultivating people'. That is, governed by his discourse scenario of *jiao shu yu ren* 'teaching books and cultivating people', IC5 did not regard the current practice of emphasising teachers' [lecturers'] high qualification, which is the symbol of the high level of knowledge, as fulfilling the mission of teaching. In IC5's conceptualisation, teaching should be about "how to nurture students' souls, encourage their students to think, ignite their potential imagination, and plough the seeds for the future dreams" as well as "to impart knowledge" through the process of transmitting knowledge.

Thus far, several identified salient and recurrent linguistic features in the discourse of mainland Chinese teachers (Excerpt 7.8, 7.9 and 7.13), Chinese parents (Excerpts 7.1, 7.4, 7.6) and Chinese students (Excerpts 7.11, 7.12) have been shown that these Chinese participants activated the discourse scenarios of *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* 'Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers', *jiao shi quan wei* 'Teachers [are] authoritative' and *jiao shu yu ren* 'teaching books and cultivating people'. In other words, these activated discourse scenarios structure the discourse of mainland Chinese students, teachers and parents alike in the data.

7.5 Summary and discussion

Thirteen intercultural data and interview data excerpts were analysed in this chapter. The 13 excerpts have instantiated six activated discourse scenarios of the Chinese *Education* schema. The six activated discourse scenarios are:

1. The discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it’. This activated discourse scenario leads C19 (Excerpt 7.1) not only to push her own son for his education, but also to express her concern with A19’s son, who left school at Year 11 to become an apprentice plumber. The same discourse scenario causes the mainland Chinese mother in IC4’s account (Excerpt 7.2) to successfully exhort her daughter to continue with her tertiary education without deferring. The mother’s successful involvement in her adult daughter’s education, which was perceived by IA4 as emotional blackmail, was accepted by her daughter. Mainland Chinese parents’ involvement in their adult children’s education was observed by some Anglo-Australians such as A38 (Excerpt 7.3), who, without the knowledge of the legitimacy of Chinese parents’ involvement in their children’s education, worried for his mainland Chinese students. His worries were fundamentally related to the pressure that some of his mainland Chinese students had experienced due to their parents’ expectations of them. However, mainland Chinese parents’ involvement in their children’s education took the form of support as well as expectations and pressure. The support-involvement underpins C4’s discourse (Excerpt 7.4) that he decided to buy a house next to a competitive, but well-reputed, senior high school so that his daughter could study there for the tertiary entrance examination;
2. The discourse scenario of *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’. This activated discourse scenario was instantiated by C19’s discourse (Excerpt 7.1) and C4’s discourse (Excerpt 7.4). This discourse scenario is related to the social significance of Chinese examinations. Success in education or examinations paves the way to higher social status not only for an individual Chinese student, but also for his or her family. Thus C19 stated clearly that Chinese parents, whether they were educated or not, all wished that their children could go to university. C4 then chose to limit his discourse to minimal utterances when he learned that A4’s son did not take TEE subjects and did not intend to study for the examination;

3. The discourse scenario of *yi xue wei zhu* ‘explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge’. This activated discourse scenario is associated with the discourse scenario of *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’. That is, since examinations are conceptualised as important by some mainland Chinese parents, these parents would be likely to support their children to focus on learning the subject knowledge that was testable in examinations. This discourse scenario causes C4 (Excerpt 7.4), C25 (Excerpt 7.6) and C10 (Excerpt 7.7) not to share their Anglo-Australian interactants’ conceptualisation which focused on creating environments for children either to learn from life experiences to become wiser or to live a pleasant life which involved more than learning subject knowledge;
4. The discourse scenario of *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’. This activated discourse scenario was instantiated by C34 (Excerpt 7.8) and C5 (Excerpt 7.9). The discourse scenario is related to the discourse scenario of *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’ and the discourse scenario *yi xue wei zhu* ‘explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge’. That is, due to the cultural conceptualisation of the importance of examinations and subject knowledge, teachers would attune their teaching to imparting knowledge to attend to the cultural knowledge. The discourse scenario of *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’ was revealed by C34 in his account of how he taught history in China;
5. The discourse scenario of *jiao shi quan wei* ‘Teachers [are] authoritative’. This activated discourse scenario was instantiated in C5’s (Excerpt 7.9) dilemma that she should not only impart knowledge, but also impart knowledge as an authority, given the dynamic of the world and the diversity of views and perspectives. This discourse scenario was also instantiated by the new immigrant mainland Chinese mother (Excerpt 7.10) who expected her son’s Anglo-Australian teacher to change her son’s learning behaviour through the teacher’s authoritative expectations of her son. The same discourse scenario provides a foundation for C39 (Excerpt

7.11) to explain why most mainland Chinese students would keep their different views or opinions from their lecturers to themselves or to discuss their different views with their lecturers after class; and

6. The discourse scenario of *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’. This activated discourse scenario was instantiated in the last two interview data of IC6 (Excerpt 7.12) and IC5 (Excerpt 7.13). Due to the persistent influence of traditional Chinese education, some mainland Chinese teachers such as IC5 and some mainland Chinese students such as IC6 consider that teachers should not only impart knowledge to students, but also cultivate the ‘soul’ of their students, so as to teach students how to be a confident person (IC6), how to think (IC5) and how to be an accepted member of society.

In discussion, it may seem that the discourse scenario of *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’ is in conflict with the discourse scenarios of *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’, *yi xue wei zhu* ‘explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge’ and *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’. The relatedness of these discourse scenarios lies in the fact that mainland Chinese teachers and lecturers frequently “nurture students’ souls” (IC5) implicitly through their role of being paragons. Qualified teachers in mainland China influence students through their responsibility for their teaching and their care for their students.

Despite the fact that morals and virtues in mainland China are not the obvious focus of Chinese education, moral education is a major concern in contemporary Chinese curriculums (Leng, 2005). Most mainland Chinese teachers and lecturers use textbooks which are written according to Chinese national curriculums. The development of students’ morals and virtues is emphasized in all the Chinese curriculums. Therefore, the teaching of morals and virtues is achieved in an implicit manner in mainland China.

To sum up, the six activated Chinese discourse scenarios contribute to the identification of the Chinese cultural schema of *Education*. That is, these six discourse scenarios are all underpinned by the *Education* schema and substantiate the schema. As

far as the data are concerned, the substance of the *Education* schema is identified to include such culturally constructed and culturally accepted knowledge as:

- Education matters to mainland Chinese parents as much as, if not more, to their children;
- Parents, teachers and students focus on the learning of subject knowledge to strive for success in examinations;
- Mainland Chinese teachers are respected highly and regarded as authoritative by both parents and students. Chinese teachers' explicit focus in teaching is to prepare their students for examinations. The goal of cultivating values and morals is mainly achieved implicitly through teachers setting examples as moral models for their students.

In the context of intercultural communication, the data have shown that the Chinese *Education* schema caused subtle communication gaps between Chinese participants and their Anglo-Australian interactants. For instance, C19 (Excerpt 7.1) and C4 (Excerpt 7.4) might find it difficult to understand why A19 and A4 had not pushed their children to study for university. A19, on the other hand, might not know why C19 and her husband had to impose their wishes on their son against his interest and potential. Both A19 and A4 might not understand why C19 and C4 stressed the significance of their children obtaining a university degree.

Motivated by the Chinese *Education* schema, C4 (Excerpt 7.4) did not appreciate A4's liberal thinking in terms of exposing A4's daughter to refugee people in an ESL school. Similarly, A4, A25 (Excerpt 7.6) and A10 (Excerpt 7.7) might not know why their Chinese interactants limited the focus of school learning to subject knowledge.

Moreover, A34 (Excerpt 7.8) and A5 (Excerpt 7.9) did not know that in mainland China, teachers and lecturers are prescribed with the main task of transmitting knowledge to their students. A5 (Excerpt 7.9) might not know that C5 regarded herself as a classroom authority. The Anglo-Australian teacher (Excerpt 7.10) did not get the message from the new immigrant mother that he was expected to use his authoritative status to motivate her boy to study harder.

Communication discomfort occurred to Anglo-Australian participants and informants due to the Chinese *Education* schema. IA4 (Excerpt 7.2), after hearing the story which he identified as emotional blackmail, expressed that he was uncomfortable with the Chinese mother's involvement in her daughter's decision to take a one-year break before going to university. A38 (Excerpt 7.3) was so uncomfortable with mainland Chinese parents' involvement in some of his students' learning experience that he worried for his Chinese students.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Concluding discussion, limitations and implications

8.1 Introduction to the chapter

This chapter draws a conclusion on the basis of the findings in the previous three chapters. It first summarises a fundamental feature of all the activated Chinese discourse scenarios and then explores the relationship between the three identified Chinese cultural schemas. It also presents limitations of the study. Implications for intercultural communication and for English language teaching as a foreign language in China, and as a second language in Australia, are provided. Finally, suggestions for further research are also made.

8.2 A fundamental feature of Chinese discourse scenarios

The analysis of the 55 excerpts from the collected data provides evidence for the 20 activated Chinese discourse scenarios. These 20 discourse scenarios are the abstraction of some schematic knowledge that has been accepted by mainland Chinese speakers of English in the study.

The fundamental feature of all these activated Chinese discourse scenarios is that they are structured by culturally-constructed images which are “both specific and schematic” (Palmer, 1996: 46). An image of ‘insider’ structures 1) the Chinese greeting scenario, 2) the discourse scenarios of *bu jian wai* ‘not regarding someone as outsider’, and 3) *lao xiang qing* ‘hometown fellow feeling’. The image of ‘insider’ is compatible with the Chinese conceptualisation of self-other relatedness.

An image of ‘outsider’ structures the discourse scenarios of 1) *nei wai you bie* ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’, 2) *sui he* ‘following [for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ and 3) *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’. That is, mainland Chinese speakers will speak and behave according to the schematic knowledge which is generated by the image of ‘outsider’.

An image of ‘flexible interpersonal boundary’ structures the discourse scenarios of 1) *ti ta ren zhao xiang* ‘thinking for other people’, 2) *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* ‘interlocking-entwining family bond’, 3) *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future

benefit]', 4) *jīn qīn shì yì jiā rén* 'Close relatives are in one's family' and 5) *qīn rú yì jiā rén* '[People are] close to each other as if they were family members'. To a large extent, this image of a flexible boundary is related to the images of an 'insider' and an 'outsider'. Transforming 'outsiders' into 'insiders' is based on the image of 'flexible interpersonal boundary'.

An image of 'yin-yang balance' structures the discourse scenario of *bù hào yì sī* '[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling'. However, this image of a 'balance' does not necessarily place same weight on both parties. The image of 'yin-yang balance' in the discourse scenario of *bù hào yì sī* '[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling' is the 'balance' that is grounded in the Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony*. The image of 'yin-yang balance' firstly involves "the Principle of balance" as categorised by Gu (1990: 255). Gu maintains that there are two notions underlying this principle of balance. The first notion is *huán lǐ* (还礼 'return politeness') and the second notion is *qiān rén qíng* (欠人情 'to be indebted). Thus Gu holds that it often involves more than one transaction for mainland Chinese speakers to maintain interpersonal balance.

Given the credit that Gu (1990) has, it is maintained in this study that the image of 'yin-yang balance' also involves an image of a hierarchy. That is, the image of 'yin-yang balance' which is embedded in the Chinese *Harmony* schema is often tilted. The correction of the image of a tilted 'balance' is frequently achieved by taking into consideration culturally-constructed hierarchical systems. Factors such as age and social status often change the image of 'a balance'.

An image of a 'hierarchy' thus structures many of the discourse scenarios which were activated by Chinese participants. It is useful to make a distinction between the image of 'family hierarchy' and the image of 'social hierarchy' for the purpose of discussion. The image of 'family hierarchy' structures the discourse scenarios of 1) *lǎo jiǔ shì lǎo* 'The old is old', 2) *guān xīn zhào gù lǎo rén* 'being concerned about and looking after the old' and 3) *hái zǐ de jiāo yù shì zhōng shēn dà shì, fù mǔ bù néng bù guān* 'Children's schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it'. It also structures the discourse scenario of *fù mǔ zōng shì wèi hái zǐ zhuó xiāng* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future

benefit]’ which is also structured by the image of ‘flexible interpersonal boundary’. That is, the culturally accepted image of a ‘family hierarchy’ provides senior mainland Chinese people with respect from their juniors in the family. This image of ‘family hierarchy’ also grants most mainland Chinese parents authorisation to make decisions for their children who are in a lower position according to the family hierarchy system.

The image of ‘social hierarchy’ mainly structures the discourse scenarios which are underpinned by the identified *Education* schema. The discourse scenarios are 1) *jiao shi quan wei* ‘Teachers [are] authoritative’, 2) *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’ and 3) *jiao shu yu ren* ‘teaching books and cultivating people’. The image of ‘social hierarchy’ provides most Chinese teachers and lecturers alike with respect from their students, parents and society, because they occupy a high position according to the social hierarchy system.

Finally, an image of ‘mobility up the social ladder’, which is related to the image of ‘social hierarchy’, structures the discourse scenarios 1) *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’ and 2) *yi xue wei zhu* ‘explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge’. This image also structures the discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it’. That is, the image of the social ladder motivates most mainland Chinese students and their parents to work for a higher position in the ‘social hierarchy’.

To sum up, the 20 activated Chinese discourse scenarios are structured by seven Chinese culturally constructed images. These seven images are:

1. The image of ‘insider’;
2. The image of ‘outsider’;
3. The image of ‘flexible interpersonal boundary’;
4. The image of ‘yin-yang balance’;
5. The image of ‘family hierarchy’;
6. The image of ‘social hierarchy’; and
7. The image of ‘mobility up the social ladder’.

Notably, the image of ‘insider’ and the image of ‘outsider’ are not images of a specific person. As mentioned earlier in Section 5.4 (P 158, the submitted version), the images are conceptualised images. These two images could be understood with reference to the image-schema of – CONTAINER–. The ‘insider’ is inside the ‘container’, whereas the ‘outsider’ is outside the ‘container’.

In general, the images that structure Chinese discourse scenarios are consistent with Palmer’s assertion that “[c]ultural linguistics and cognitive linguistics are fundamentally theories of mental imagery” (Palmer, 1996: 46). “[I]magery in language provides a basis for examining a surprisingly wide range of linguistic topics” (Palmer, 1996: 4).

8.3 Relationships between the three identified Chinese cultural schemas

Relationships between the three identified Chinese cultural schemas are analysed on the basis of the relationship of the activated discourse scenarios and the images that structure the discourse scenarios. Firstly, the image of ‘flexible interpersonal boundary’ structures a set of discourse scenarios that are underpinned by two different schemas. That is, both the discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* ‘thinking for other people’, which is underpinned by the Chinese *Harmony* schema, and the discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’, which is underpinned by the Chinese *Family* schema, are structured by the image of ‘flexible interpersonal boundary’. In other words, there is an overlap between the Chinese *Harmony* schema and the Chinese *Family* schema.

Secondly, the image of ‘family hierarchy’ structures another set of discourse scenarios that are underpinned by two different schemas. That is, both the discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang* ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’, which is underpinned by the Chinese *Family* schema, and the discourse scenario of *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it’, which is underpinned by the Chinese *Education* schema, are structured by the image of ‘family hierarchy’. That is, there is an overlap between the Chinese *Family* schema and the Chinese *Education* schema.

Thus it becomes apparent from the images that structure the activated discourse scenarios that it is the Chinese *Family* schema that joins the Chinese *Harmony* schema and the Chinese *Education* schema. That is, the Chinese *Family* schema is the core conceptualisation that is distributed among mainland Chinese participants. In other words, it is the Chinese *Family* schema that largely underpins the entire conceptual system that is accessed by mainland Chinese participants.

8.4 Limitations

It is recognised here that, as with any study, the present study relies on a certain degree of idealisation. This limitation is caused by the limited number of interactants who participated in the research. Mainland China has the largest population in the world and Anglo-Australians are not necessarily a homogeneous speech community. The study of intercultural communication becomes more complicated when taking into consideration such variables as age, personality, gender and social class. Therefore, it is understood that those mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians who volunteered to participate in the research in Western Australia do not necessarily represent all mainland Chinese speakers or all Anglo-Australians. The activated discourse scenarios and the identified Chinese cultural schemas are relative to the collected data.

Secondly, due to the limited time that the mainland Chinese speakers of English and their Anglo-Australian interactants had, seldom could they engage in conversations as thoroughly as two acquaintances or two familiar colleagues normally do when they are not constrained by time. Meeting for social purposes was designed according to the ethnographic research tradition so as to reduce the degree of unnaturalness of having people interacting for the purposes of research. However, the side effect inherent in social talk of this kind was that the two interacting parties rarely had opportunities to explore topics or to exchange ideas and views that might have been misunderstood by each other.

Thirdly, the present study has a limitation of potential subjectivity in interpreting the data. This limitation was caused by the researcher being a cultural insider. However, subjectivity was minimised through the researcher keeping an emotional distance from the data (Section 4.3) and by frequent consultations with both Anglo-Australian and mainland Chinese informants. These informants contributed to the present study with their intuitive knowledge.

8.5 Implications for intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians

Given the limitations that the present study has, its findings have implications for intercultural communication between mainland Chinese speakers of English and Anglo-Australians in other contexts. Based on the research findings, the present study holds that some Chinese cultural schemas and activated discourse scenarios are more likely than others to cause intercultural miscommunication.

The Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* which drives most mainland Chinese speakers to greet each other and their Anglo-Australian interactants with the purpose of establishing, maintaining or enhancing interpersonal harmony may cause miscommunication. When some mainland Chinese speakers of English draw on their Chinese greeting scenario to greet Anglo-Australians with open inquiries or with offers of assistance, those Anglo-Australians who are not familiar with the Chinese greeting scenario may either misunderstand or misinterpret the discourse. Most Anglo-Australians may regard open inquiries or unexpected offers of assistance as invading their personal space and feel uncomfortable.

The Chinese cultural schema of *Harmony* reinforces the cultural conceptualisation of self-other relatedness. The constant awareness of self-other relatedness results in most mainland Chinese speakers keeping a conceptual balance between their interactants and themselves. When they realise that the balance has been tipped in their favour due to compliments from their interactants, mainland Chinese speakers often activate their discourse scenario of *bu hao yi si* '[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not show his or her] good feeling' and reject compliments flatly. The flat rejection, which is regarded by other mainland Chinese speakers as appropriate, might be interpreted as doubting the judgement of their Anglo-Australian interactants. It is also likely to create an impression that mainland Chinese speakers of English often appear unnecessarily polite, which may make Anglo-Australians feel comfortable. It may also create the impression that mainland Chinese speakers do not have the self-confidence to accept the compliment.

The discourse scenario of *bu jian wai* 'not regarding someone as outsider' is also likely to lead to miscommunication between mainland Chinese speakers and Anglo-

Australians. The culturally accepted five commons (Wen and Clement, 2003: 21) which give rise to the Chinese insider groupship may not be noticed by the Anglo-Australians. In many cases, Anglo-Australians may be unaware that they have been accepted by Chinese speakers as conceptual insiders.

The discourse scenarios of *sui he* ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’ and *ren yi shi* ‘being tolerant for the time being’ can also cause miscommunication in the context of disagreement or conflicts. These two scenarios often lead Chinese speakers of English to either suppress their disagreement or only reveal subtle clues to their view to their Anglo-Australian interactants. When the subtle clues are neglected, most mainland Chinese speakers of English may feel that they are unattended to by their Anglo-Australian interactants. Unintended but accumulated neglect on the part of Anglo-Australians may be misinterpreted by mainland Chinese speakers of English and thus miscommunication occurs. Moreover, when mainland Chinese speakers of English manage to express their disagreement or complaints in subtle ways for the sake of maintaining harmony, their discourse might be regarded as “inscrutable” (Young 1994:1) or incomprehensible by some Anglo-Australians who do not have time to ask for clarification.

The discourse scenario of *ti ta ren zhao xiang* ‘thinking for other people’ is also likely to cause intercultural miscommunication. This discourse scenario often leads Chinese speakers of English to speak as if they could read the mind of their interactants. Miscommunication may occur due to the fact that most Anglo-Australians might interpret the idea of reading their mind and thinking for them as imposing and patronising, because they often prefer being an independent individual with privacy. On the other hand, most mainland Chinese speakers of English are often led by the discourse scenario to give their primary concern to their interactants at the cost of their own interests, particularly, when they conceptualise their interactants as insiders. When their repeated self-sacrifice is not appreciated by their Anglo-Australian interactants, they may regard their Anglo-Australian interactants as *bu ling qing* (不领情 ‘not taking the good feeling: not appreciative’).

Like the Chinese *Harmony* schema, the Chinese *Family* schema is also likely to be a source of intercultural miscommunication. The life-long attachment that most

mainland Chinese parents have developed with their adult children and vice versa might not be appreciated or may even be misinterpreted as losing self-identity. On the other hand, mainland Chinese speakers of English might regard old Anglo-Australians who prefer living on their own or who value their independence as lonely and unattended to by their children. The Chinese culturally constructed value of filial piety in relation to the Chinese *Family* schema might not be fully appreciated by most Anglo-Australians.

Moreover, the Chinese speakers' frequent verbal behaviour of paying respect to old Anglo-Australians by referring to them in various ways as old is also likely to cause miscommunication. In addition, the high respect paid to most old mainland Chinese might not be understood by Anglo-Australians. Special concerns and cares reserved for old mainland Chinese people by their family members and society at large might not be regarded as necessary nor be accepted by most old Anglo-Australians.

The Chinese *Education* schema also exerts its influences on intercultural communication. Most Anglo-Australian parents may not be involved in their children's education to the degree that they will push their children to academic success against their potential and interests, although they may provide emotional and financial support to their children and assist their children's academic success. Thus most Anglo-Australian parents might not understand why their mainland Chinese interactants would often impose their wishes on their children and expect their children to increase the family status in the social hierarchy. Nor may they understand why most adult Chinese students are willing to compromise their own agenda to accommodate their parents' wishes.

Most mainland Chinese parents, on the other hand, might regard it a great pity if their Anglo-Australian interactants tell them that they are happy for their children to quit university to pursue their other interests. Successful university education in mainland China is associated with family success, high standard of morals and virtues, in addition to better job prospects. Therefore, most mainland Chinese parents might not appreciate those activities that divert their children's attention to knowledge that is not directly related to tertiary entrance examinations. In particular, mainland Chinese students studying in Australia may feel that they "are not always capable of integrating themselves with the local academic ... communities in Australia" (Wang & Webster, 2004, p.2).

These students might see some gaps between the roles of teachers and students, learning strategies, attitudes towards examinations and conceptualisations of open student-lecturer communication in the two education systems that they have experienced.

Briefly, all the three identified Chinese cultural schemas influence intercultural communication. Depending on the context of interaction, one Chinese cultural schema or two or three cultural schemas simultaneously will be activated by mainland Chinese speakers of English. Since the activation often takes place unconsciously, miscommunication, communication gaps or communication discomfort also take place subconsciously. Therefore, it is maintained here that successful intercultural communication requires a constant awareness of intercultural differences at the level of cultural schemas. This awareness of differences in cultural schemas prevents miscommunication being interpreted as a personal intention. Secondly, successful intercultural communication also needs active self-reflection on the cultural differences between the two interacting parties. A sense of commitment to successful intercultural communication can lead the interacting parties to renegotiations. Negotiations achieved on the basis of their self-reflections by the two interacting parties will be effective in clearing intercultural miscommunication.

8.6 Implications for English language teaching as a foreign language (EFL) in mainland China and English language teaching as a second language (ESL) in Australia

Two implications for teaching EFL in mainland China and ESL in Australia are drawn from the present study. The first one is a counter-argument against the concept of English linguistic imperialism (e.g. Phillipson, 1992). English linguistic imperialism is defined by Phillipson as “the dominance asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (Phillipson, 1992: 47). The research finding shows that, as far as mainland Chinese EFL students are concerned, English linguistic imperialism is not likely to take place at the level of cultural schemas, because Chinese cultural schemas permeate the Chinese EFL speakers’ discourse.

As far as teaching ESL in Australia is concerned, English linguistic imperialism would rarely happen to adult mainland Chinese ESL students learning in Australia.

Although mainland Chinese ESL students may live and receive education in Australia over a number of years, they are still under the influence of Chinese cultural schemas. This is because most of their parents, whether they are with their children physically in Australia or not, are involved in their children's life. The discourse scenario of *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* '[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children's present and future benefit]' is often activated by their parents whose conceptualisation is rooted in mainland Chinese culture. One of the effects of mainland Chinese parents being involved in their children's life is the transmission of Chinese values to their children. This transmission is done either explicitly or implicitly. Therefore, adult mainland Chinese ESL students learning in Australia will often rely on their Chinese cultural schemas to interpret the Anglo-Australian English. The degree of the reliance may vary among these ESL students learning in Australia.

The second implication for teaching EFL in mainland China and ESL in Australia is the acceptance of the EFL or ESL students' 'mother culture'. It has been widely recognised in the field of EFL or ESL that immersion in English culture facilitates EFL or ESL learning. Based on the research findings, it is implied that the effect of the immersion learning may not necessarily take place unless the EFL or ESL student becomes bi-cultural competent.

Bi-cultural competence can only take place on the condition that the EFL or ESL student's mother culture, in this case, the Chinese culture, is equally appreciated by their teachers and by themselves. Since Chinese cultural schemas penetrate the Chinese EFL or ESL speakers' discourse, rather than inhibiting persistent Chinese culture in EFL or ESL teaching, EFL and ESL teachers and textbook writers can bring them into full play. EFL and ESL teachers may take a liberal approach which will appreciate, accommodate and encourage the EFL or ESL performance variety. The EFL or ESL students' linguistic performance is often saturated with Chinese culture. This can be analysed appropriately for cultural schema comparisons, and can be used to raise EFL and ESL students' bi-cultural awareness. The ESL or EFL students' linguistic performance can also be used as a reference for EFL and ESL textbook writers. Exercises designed accordingly will enhance students' learning interest.

As far as adult mainland Chinese EFL and ESL students are concerned, exploring and accepting their familiar, but deeply-seated, cultural schemas in their conceptualisation could sharpen their insights into their mother culture. Insights into the Chinese culture can facilitate mainland Chinese EFL and ESL students developing cultural identity and a sense of cultural belonging. Moreover, this insight will facilitate their mature thinking and discussion in intercultural communication with those Anglo-Australians who are interested in discussing Chinese culture.

It is thus implied from the present study that *overt culture learning* at the level of cultural schemas is likely to facilitate the development of EFL and ESL students' intercultural competence and intercultural confidence. EFL teaching materials explicitly incorporating culture learning on the basis of both the English-speaking culture and the EFL students' mother culture are likely to achieve cultural authenticity. This view is consistent with Cook (1997) who maintains that schema is one of the "key concepts in ELT" (1997: 86).

8.7 Suggestions for further research

This study can be replicated with other types of data. As it was explained in Section 4.8, the present study limited itself to the data that were collected from mainland Chinese speakers of English who live, work or study in Western Australia. That is, the data were collected from participants who were not born in Australia and have acquired the schematic cultural knowledge through their childhood and education of different levels in mainland China. It might be useful to collect data from second generation mainland Chinese speakers of English who were born and have received education in Australia. Such research can aim at exploring whether, and to what extent, Chinese culture still influences the intercultural communication at the level of cultural conceptualisations between second generation mainland Chinese speakers in Australia and their Anglo-Australian interactants.

A second type of data could include those mainland Chinese who have married Anglo-Australians. It might be significant to conduct longitudinal research about these mainland Chinese due to their close and frequent interaction with Anglo-Australians. Such research can aim at exploring whether, and to what extent, Chinese culture still influences the intercultural communication at the level of cultural conceptualisation

between mainland Chinese speakers of English and their Anglo-Australian family members and their other Anglo-Australian interactants.

With regard to the second type of data, distinctions can be made between those mainland Chinese who have married the Anglo-Australian who learns to speak fluent Chinese language and is familiar with Chinese culture and those Anglo-Australians who do not speak fluent Chinese and are not familiar with Chinese culture. In this case, gender may be a useful variable for consideration.

Similar replication studies can also be done in the context involving cultures and language speakers other than Mandarin Chinese.

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Appendix I: Glossary of Chinese discourse scenarios

1. *bu hao yi si* (不好意思 ‘[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling’)
2. *bu jian wai* (不见外 ‘not regarding someone as outsider’)
3. *lao xiang qing* (老乡情 ‘hometown fellow feeling’)
4. *nei wai you bie* (内外有别 ‘keeping a distinction between inside and outside’)
5. *sui he* (随和 ‘following [others for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’)
6. *ren yi shi* (忍一时 ‘being tolerant for the time being’)
7. *ti ta ren zhuo xiang* (替他人着想 ‘thinking for other people’).
8. *fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhuo xiang* (父母总是为孩子着想 ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’)
9. *guan xin zhao gu lao ren* (关心照顾老人 ‘being concerned about and looking after the old’)
10. *lao jiu shi lao* (老就是老 ‘The old is old’)
11. *jin mi de jia ting guan xi* (紧密的家庭关系 ‘interlocking - entwining family bond’)
12. *jin qin shi yi jia ren* (近亲是一家人 ‘Close relatives are in one’s family’)
13. *qin ru yi jia ren* (亲如一家人 ‘[People are] close to each other as if they were family members’)
14. *hai zi de jiao yu shi zhong shen da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan* (孩子的教育是终身大事, 父母不能不管 ‘Children’s schooling matters his/her whole life. Parents must get involved in it’)
15. *kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi* (考大学是学生的正经事 ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’)
16. *yi xue wei zhu* (以学为主 ‘explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge’)
17. *chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu* (传授知识是教师的主要任务 ‘Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers’)
18. *jiao shi quan wei* (教师权威 ‘Teachers [are] authoritative’)
19. *jiao shu yu ren* (教书育人 ‘teaching books and cultivating people’)
20. *jiao shu yu ren* (教书育人 ‘teaching books and cultivating people’)

Appendix II: A list of excerpts and discourse scenarios

	Chapter Five
PC3, PC4 & PA1	Excerpt 5.1 greeting scenario
PC5 & PC5	Excerpt 5.2 greeting scenario
C10, A10 & a Chinese visitor	Excerpt 5.3 greeting scenario
IA1	Excerpt 5.4 greeting scenario
C8 & A8	Excerpt 5.5 <i>bu hao yi si</i> '[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling'
C13 & A13	Excerpt 5.6 <i>bu hao yi si</i> '[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling'
C5 & A5	Excerpt 5.7 <i>bu hao yi si</i> '[After hearing the compliment, one feels happy, but does] not [show his or her] good feeling'
C22 & A22	Excerpt 5.8 <i>bu jian wai</i> 'not regarding someone as outsider'
C23 & A23	Excerpt 5.9 <i>bu jian wai</i> 'not regarding someone as outsider'
C34 & A34	Excerpt 5.10 <i>bu jian wai</i> 'not regarding someone as outsider'
C14 & A14	Excerpt 5.11 <i>bu jian wai</i> 'not regarding someone as outsider'
C10 & A10	Excerpt 5.12 <i>lao xiang qing</i> 'hometown fellow feeling'
C30 & A30	Excerpt 5.13 <i>lao xiang qing</i> 'hometown fellow feeling'
IC8	Excerpt 5.14 <i>lao xiang qing</i> 'hometown fellow feeling'
C12 & A12	Excerpt 5.15 <i>nei wai you bie</i> 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside'
IC3	Excerpt 5.16 <i>nei wai you bie</i> 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside'
C2 & A2	Excerpt 5.17 <i>nei wai you bie</i> 'keeping a distinction between inside and outside' + <i>sui he</i> 'following [for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]'
C24 & A24	Excerpt 5.18 <i>sui he</i> 'following [for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]'
C36 & A36	Excerpt 5.19 <i>sui he</i> 'following [for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]'

C30 & A30	Excerpt 5.20 <i>sui he</i> ‘following [for] harmony [when one disagrees with outsiders]’
C1 & A1	Excerpt 5.21 <i>ren yi shi</i> ‘being tolerant for the time being’
C34 & A34	Excerpt 5.22 <i>ren yi shi</i> ‘being tolerant for the time being’
C19 & A19	Excerpt 5.23 <i>ren yi shi</i> ‘being tolerant for the time being’
C13 & A13	Excerpt 5.24 <i>ti ta ren zhao xiang</i> ‘thinking for other people’
Chapter Six	
C19 & A19	Excerpt 6.1 <i>fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang</i> ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’
C10 & A10	Excerpt 6.2 <i>fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang</i> ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’
C22 & A22	Excerpt 6.3 <i>fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang</i> ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’
C36 & A36	Excerpt 6.4 <i>fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang</i> ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’
C15 & A15	¹⁸ Excerpt 6.5 <i>fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang</i> ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’
IC7	Excerpt 6.6 <i>fu mu zong shi wei hai zi zhao xiang</i> ‘[Chinese] parents throughout life think and work for their children [or children’s present and future benefit]’ + <i>guan xin zhao gu lao ren</i> ‘being concerned about and looking after the old’
C37 & A37	Excerpt 6.7 <i>guan xin zhao gu lao ren</i> ‘being concerned about and looking after the old’
C32 & A32	Excerpt 6.8 <i>guan xin zhao gu lao ren</i> ‘being concerned about and looking after the old’
C11 & A11	Excerpt 6.9 <i>lao jiu shi lao</i> ‘The old is old’

¹⁸ Excerpt 6.5 was used as a comparison data.

C9 & A9	Excerpt 6.10 <i>lao jiu shi lao</i> ‘The old is old’
IC2	Excerpt 6.11 <i>jin mi de jia ting guan xi</i> ‘interlocking-entwining family bond’
C7 & A7	Excerpt 6.12 <i>jin mi de jia ting guan xi</i> ‘interlocking-entwining family bond’
C16 & A16	Excerpt 6.13 <i>jin mi de jia ting guan xi</i> ‘interlocking-entwining family bond’
C35 & A35	Excerpt 6.14 <i>jin mi de jia ting guan xi</i> ‘interlocking-entwining family bond’
C25 & A25	Excerpt 6.15 <i>jin qin shi yi jia ren</i> ‘Close relatives are in one’s family’
C35 & A35	Excerpt 6.16 <i>jin qin shi yi jia ren</i> ‘Close relatives are in one’s family’
IC1	Excerpt 6.17 <i>jin qin shi yi jia ren</i> ‘Close relatives are in one’s family’
C35 & A35	Excerpt 6.18 <i>qin ru yi jia ren</i> ‘[People are] close to each other as if were family members’
	Chapter Seven
C19 & A19	Excerpt 7.1 <i>hai zi de jiao yu shi ren sheng da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan</i> ‘Children’s schooling is a vital life affair. Parents must get involved in it’
IC4	Excerpt 7.2 <i>hai zi de jiao yu shi ren sheng da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan</i> ‘Children’s schooling is a vital life affair. Parents must get involved in it’
C38 & A38	Excerpt 7.3 <i>hai zi de jiao yu shi ren sheng da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan</i> ‘Children’s schooling is a vital life affair. Parents must get involved in it’
C4 & A4	Excerpt 7.4 <i>hai zi de jiao yu shi ren sheng da shi, fu mu bu neng bu guan</i> ‘Children’s schooling is a vital life affair. Parents must get involved in it’
C19 & A19	Excerpt 7.1 <i>kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi</i> ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’.
C4 & A4	Excerpt 7.4 <i>kao da xue shi xue sheng de zheng jing shi</i> ‘Taking the tertiary entrance examination is canonical to students’.
C4 & A4	Excerpt 7.4 <i>yi xue wei zhu</i> ‘explicitly focusing on learning

	subject knowledge'
C5 & A5	¹⁹ Excerpt 7.5 <i>yi xue wei zhu</i> 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge'
C25 & A25	Excerpt 7.6 <i>yi xue wei zhu</i> 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge'
C10 & A10	Excerpt 7.7 <i>yi xue wei zhu</i> 'explicitly focusing on learning subject knowledge'
C34 & A34	Excerpt 7.8 <i>chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu</i> 'Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers'
C5 & A5	Excerpt 7.9 <i>chuan shou zhi shi shi jiao shi de zhu yao ren wu</i> 'Transmitting knowledge is the key role of teachers'
C5 & A5	Excerpt 7.9 <i>jiao shi quan wei</i> 'Teachers are authoritative'
Chinese mother & Anglo-Australian teacher	Excerpt 7.10 <i>jiao shi quan wei</i> 'Teachers are authoritative'
C39 & A39	Excerpt 7.11 <i>jiao shi quan wei</i> 'Teachers are authoritative'
IC6	Excerpt 7.12 <i>jiao shu yu ren</i> 'teaching books and cultivating people'
IC5	Excerpt 7.13 <i>jiao shu yu ren</i> 'teaching books and cultivating people'

¹⁹ Excerpt 7.5 was used as a comparison data.