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Understanding and Attitudes towards Moral and Civic Education among Primary School Teachers in Hong Kong

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Abstract

Moral and Civic Education (MCE) was highlighted in the 2000 curricular reform proposals in Hong Kong. This paper attempts to investigate primary school teachers' understanding and attitudes towards MCE in Hong Kong. It aims to understand whether and how the proposed curriculum of MCE is practiced in the school. Six teachers from a primary school were interviewed and the curriculum documents of the school were analyzed. The findings indicated that all of the interviewees lacked comprehensive understanding of MCE but they generally had high degree of concern towards the implementation of moral and civic development in the school. They were also receptive towards new ideas and teaching approaches in MCE. Further analysis showed that school-based curriculum and teachers' perceptions were the contradictory factors affecting teachers' implementation of MCE.

Keywords: Civics education, Citizenship education, Moral education, Primary curriculum, Teacher understanding, Teacher attitude

1. Introduction

Hong Kong had become a British colony since 1842 by the Treaty of Nanking. It was returned to Chinese sovereignty on the 1st of July in 1997. The issue of civics education especially national identity was almost unmentioned during the period of its colonial history. When this study was conducted, Hong Kong has been returned to the sovereignty of People's Republic of China for almost ten years. In this ten-year period after the 1997 handover, there has been growing awareness of the need for the Hong Kong educational system about the strengthening of civics and citizenship education. The role of the Hong Kong government in promoting civics and citizenship education shifted from a passive role to a supporting role in post-1997 educational changes.

In 2000, the Education Commission of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region first proposed civics and citizenship education, namely Moral and Civic Education (MCE), as one of four key learning and teaching tasks of curricular reform in a consultation document (Education Commission, 2000). In the two following curriculum documents published afterwards, the Curriculum Development Council (2001, 2002a) put it at the top of five essential learning experiences for whole-person development in the curriculum guides. MCE was also highlighted with details in the subsequent curriculum guide entitled *Basic Education Curriculum Guide – Building on Strengths (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* in 2002. The components of civics and morality, the recommendations of teaching strategies and the assessment principles were clearly stated in the curriculum guide. During the period of curricular reform from 2001 to 2006, schools were encouraged to integrate the five priority values including perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity and commitment (Curriculum Development Council, 2002a, Booklet 3A, pp. 2-4) into the school mission.

In order to strengthen the promotion of MCE, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) put a great deal of effort into the provision of resource support and professional training. With a huge amount of fund that was spent on resource support and professional training, the effectiveness of MCE has always been subject to skepticism. There are abundant

teaching materials for facilitating civics placed in primary schools; however, teachers do not use them conventionally. More specifically, in most primary schools, the citizenship education teaching kits are merely placed in the staff rooms but not for use by teachers. This phenomenon is considered as very inappropriate. Obviously, the teacher who is a frontline practitioner in the curriculum plays an influential role at implementation level. Therefore, the studies on teachers should receive serious attention. These are the issues that set the context for this study.

There is a distinct lack of studies on primary school teachers in MCE after the 2000 curricular reform. This research study aims to fill this gap. The first purpose of this research project is to explore primary school teachers' understanding of the current knowledge in MCE. Secondly, it attempts to find out the factors associated with teachers' attitudes towards MCE in their daily teaching. For investigating teachers' understanding of MCE, the study includes their perceptions regarding the component of MCE, the importance of five priority values and attitudes – perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity and commitment as well as the needs of promoting these five priority values and attitudes in primary education. For investigating teachers' attitudes towards MCE, the study includes their degrees of concern, their receptivity towards implementing MCE and factors affecting their attitudes towards MCE in the school.

This qualitative research has enhanced further understanding of the real situation emerging across the intended curriculum and the actual practice in MCE in schools. The personal and environmental factors in affecting primary school teachers' perceptions and attitudes of MCE are revealed. The findings of the present study have significant theoretical and practical implications for professional development, teacher induction as well as curriculum development regarding MCE.

2. Theoretical Orientation

For decades a number of philosophers, psychologists and educators have provided considerable insight into the theoretical issues about the role of the teacher in education (Bruner, 1966; Dewey, 1902; Gagné, 1974; Grundy, 1998; Jackson, 1968; Kohlberg, 1976; Lee and Fouts, 2005; Lindsey, 1962; Piaget, 1932; Rogers, 1969; Skinner, 1974; Wayland, 1962). This section of the paper draws together the main issues surrounding the role of the teacher related to the curriculum, the students, the moral values and the citizenship education as interpreted by these scholars.

2.1 The teacher and the curriculum

There are various dimensions of curriculum. They can be categorised into eight groups: curriculum as content or subject matter, curriculum as discrete tasks and concepts, curriculum as a program of planned activities, curriculum as intended learning outcomes, curriculum as cultural reproduction, curriculum as an agenda for social reconstruction, curriculum as experience and curriculum as "currere" (Schubert, 1986, pp. 26-33). Whatever the characterizations of curriculum are, all of the conceptualizations of curriculum involve a certain degree of interaction between teachers and learners. Dewey (1902) emphasized the present experience of the child in education and advocated a child-centered curriculum. For the role of the teacher in implementing the curriculum, Dewey alluded that the teacher should be a facilitator of individual growth, development and self-realization:

The case is of Child. It is his present powers which are to assert themselves; his present capacities which are to be exercised; his present attitudes which are to be realized. But save as the teacher knows, knows wisely and thoroughly, the race-experience which is embodied in that thing we call the Curriculum, the teacher knows neither what the present power, capacity or attitude is, nor yet how it is to be asserted, exercised, and realized (Dewey, 1902, p. 31).

What Dewey implied was that the job of the teacher in the curriculum is to incorporate the child's past experience into teaching (Dewey, 1938). The pedagogical curriculum is merely a framework for education. The role of the teacher is not only a implementer of the curriculum but also a decision-maker (Lindsey, 1962; Wayland, 1962). Lindsey (1962) defined the role of teacher as a professional with decision-making skill. Wayland (1962) described it as a functionary in a bureaucratic to make judgments. This idea is explored further by Grundy (1998). She claimed that both teachers and students are co-developers of the curriculum. It is an unavoidable responsibility of the teacher for participating in curriculum decision-making because "the curriculum is constructed through every act of teaching" (Grundy, 1998, p. 33).

While the views of Dewey, Lindsey and Wayland underline the role of the teacher in formal curriculum, Jackson (1968) introduced an idea of the hidden curriculum that was generated from the hidden effects of the formal curriculum. This idea was used by Snyder (1970) to explain the mismatch between intended curriculum and received curriculum. He indicated that the disparate signals given to students from both the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum would lead to confusion. It is important to exposure the hidden curriculum due to its own value (Seddon, 1983). Students are "constantly receiving information about which they are largely unaware from people who are often unaware of this transmission" (Print, 1987, p. 7). Explicitly, the teacher is a mediator to transmit the signal from the intended curriculum to students. Therefore, the teacher plays an influential role to convert messages of the hidden curriculum through the formal curriculum. It seems reasonable to conclude that the role of the teacher is more than a decision-maker in the

hidden curriculum.

2.2 The teacher and the student

A review of the literature regarding the role of the teacher in pedagogy reveals that much has been written on the human behaviour and the importance satisfying psychological needs of students in the learning process. Skinner (1974) studied the relationship between stimuli and the responses of human behaviour. He proved that the existence of a reinforcing stimulus increased the probability of the operant behaviour occurring in the future, and vice versa. He also verified that an aversive stimulus resulted in a decreased probability of the operant behaviour happening in the future. In other words, a reinforcing stimulus such as encouragement could maintain the operant behaviour of the student while an aversive stimulus such as punishment could cause the extinction of the operant behaviour. This idea of reinforcement on learning contributes to effective schooling. Bruner's (1966) notion of reinforcement was based on his theory of instruction. He proposed to use more intrinsic rewards than extrinsic incentives in order to enhance students' learning motivation. The scope of Gagné's (1974) theory of instruction focused on the process of learning rather than the learning outcome. He was concerned about critical learning conditions and suggested specific teaching strategies for teacher intervention in the learning process. His theory of instruction demonstrated the ways of teaching in the classroom. For the learning process, Rogers (1969) defined significant learning in terms of facilitation. He pointed out that the qualities in the facilitator would foster significant learning. A good teacher who was the main facilitator should be real and genuine because real learning was not merely verbal learning.

These learning theories drawn out by the psychologists have two implications for the role of the teacher in regard to schooling. The first implication is that the teacher plays a key role in behaviour modification of the student. In the school, teachers can reinforce students' desirable behaviour by encouragement and extinguish their undesirable behavior by punishment or removing the reinforcing stimulus. The judgment of the teacher has a powerful impact on the student's behaviour as well as his or her learning motivation. The second implication is related to teacher quality. The quality of teaching is not merely governed by academic knowledge, the teaching skills and the empathic understanding are both the essential components of teacher's competence. Instruction technique is a sort of teaching skills. The usefulness of the theories of instruction depends on the selection of the teacher. Besides, empathic understanding is another teacher quality affecting students. Teachers should be aware of the individual difference among students. "Together, teachers and students who know each other well can develop a course of experience (curriculum) that helps to meet their needs and enrich their growth." (Schubert, 1986, p. 421) Thus, it is important for the teacher to engage in dialogue with the students during the learning process. Teachers influence students how to learn while students influence teachers how to teach. The relationship of teachers and students is interdependent.

2.3 The teacher and the civics education

There are various aspects to comprehend the nature of civics education. The concept and the component of civics education varies according to the source. It is problematic to define a general definition of civics education among different countries or societies. Kerr (2000) studied the nature of civics education in 16 societies and pointed out that the key elements of the context of civics education were formal curriculum, hidden curriculum, school ethos and culture. He also alleged that the topical nature of citizenship education should be determined according to its breadth, depth and complexity (Kerr 2002, p. 232). In Western countries, civics is closely associated with political and national education (Heater, 1992); in East Asian countries, civics is emphasized in terms of moral education (Cogan & Morris, 2001). While humanistic education is promoted in Western countries, Confucian values are fundamental to civics education in East Asian countries (Tung, 2001). In the case of Hong Kong, moral and civic education is chiefly composed of moral education and citizenship education. The role of the teacher regarding these two components of the moral and civic education is discussed below.

According to Hansen (2001), education is a moral endeavour and the nature of teaching is a moral activity. In accordance with the cognitive theory of child development by Piaget (1932), at the transcendental stage in which children are above seven years of age, adult constraints impel children' moral realism. Children who are at this stage possess the concept that obedience to rules set by adults is a good behaviour. In order to develop the conscious realization of children's moral thought, theoretical or verbal moral reflection is an effective means of moral development (Piaget, 1932). It implies that the teacher has a role in the classroom to help the child to act and think in moral ways. Moreover, Kohlberg (1976) found out that there could be some individual differences of moral development between children even though they were at the same age. His six stages of moral judgment model explained three distinct levels of moral thought including preconventional, conventional and postconventional levels. This demands teachers to expedite the transition of children's moral thinking level from a stage to a higher stage. From Kohlberg's point of view, teachers should thoroughly comprehend the meaning of virtue since "teachers are moral educators (or miseducators) as creators of the 'hidden curriculum' of the moral climate of the classroom" (1981, Kohlberg, p. 1).

Virtue is a significant part of Confucian ethic. It has a considerable influence on the normative patterns of society and

morality in Chinese culture (Hall & Ames, 1987). In Confucius's *Analects* (1979), a large proportion of the content was written in the format of conversations between Confucius and his students. Confucius as a teacher was a domain of the conversations. The implication in this phenomenon is that the status of the teacher is relatively high in the Confucian tradition. Traditionally, it is regarded that it will be the shame of teachers if they do not instruct students severely. Under the influence of Confucianism and Chinese traditional culture, the role of the teacher is a mighty instructor who is respected widely in the society. The teacher who seems to exercise a strange power over the student plays a key role in affective education. In addition to the instinct imitation capacity of human being (Skinner, 1974), undoubtedly, the teacher is a role model of the student.

On the other hand, teachers are considered to have a double role in citizenship education. Lee and Fouts (2005) stated that teachers did not only play a passive role but also an active role in citizenship education:

They are both the recipients and the providers of citizenship education – recipients in the sense of doing what is expected of them by the society, the education body, the official curriculum and the school; providers in the sense that in actual practice they are the ones making all the decisions on what to teach and how to teach, and in determining what is important for what groups of students. Teachers thus play a key role in citizenship education (Lee & Fouts, 2005, pp. 9-10).

Based on this view, teachers who act as the recipients of citizenship education are expected to understand the intended curriculum and grasp the contemporary knowledge of civics. As mentioned above, teachers are also the providers of citizenship education due to their frontline role in the curriculum. Therefore, the implemented curriculum of citizenship education is decided by teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards civics and morality. It seems that a study on teachers' understanding and attitudes towards moral and civic educaiton might reveal the implemented curriuclum of the moral educaiton as well as the citizenship education. This is the philosophy that underpins this study.

3. Overview of Moral and Civic Education in Hong Kong Primary Education

3.1 Content of Moral and Civic Education

According to the offical curriculum guide (Curriculum Development Council, 2002a, Booklet 3A, p. 7), Moral and Civic Education (MCE) involves eleven different themes. They are moral and ethical educaiton, civic education, life education, health education, sex education, legal education, drug education, media education, AIDS education, consumer education and environmental education. In the short-term phase of the curricular reform, five positive values and attitudes including (i) perseverance, (ii) respect for others, (iii) responsibility, (iv) national identity and (v) commitment are suggested to be focused. Schools should adopt a specific theme for MCE to develop these five priority values and attitudes. The life event approach is a teaching strategy to enhance MCE for whole-person development in the curriculum framework. For this practical approach, some recommendations of core events and extension or special events were provided as examples in the curriculum guide. The main function of its curriculum framework is to re-organize the themes of civics to avoid gaps between cross-curricular areas and values development (Curriculum Development Council, 2002a, Booklet 3A, p. 6).

In the curriculum framework, there is no concrete assessment of student learning in MCE but some principles of assessment are given. The purpose of assessment in this field is to provide useful feedback and opportunities for reflection which aims to develop students' positive values and attitudes and also their self-reflection abilities (Curriculum Development Council, 2002a, Booklet 3A, p. 21). The assessment is an interactive process involves teacher, students and their peers and parents. Thus, school heads and teachers are the key players in MCE. The curriculum guide states that the school head should establish better connections among the coordinators of civic education, sex education and environmental education as well as school discipline team and guidance team (Curriculum Development Council, 2002a, Booklet 3A, p. 18). Subject teachers also play a key role in MCE. There are seven duties or requirements. The duties or requirements of subject teachers which are mentioned in the curriculum guide are all related to their professional development regarding knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes towards MCE. In order to give a clear conceptual framework of curricular reform for subject teachers in their professional areas, eight key learning area curriculum guides and the General Studies for primary schools curriculum guide were generated from the curriculum guide and delivered to all primary and secondary schools in 2002.

3.2 Implementation of Moral and Civic Education

Basically, MCE is conveyed through both formal curriulum and informal curriculum in Hong Kong primary schools. In the formal curriculum, it incorporates in General Studies (GS) in the Primary 1 to 6 school curricula. General Studies is a core subject in primary education. The content of this subject consists of three key learning areas including Technology Education, Science Education as well as Personal, Social and Humanities Education. There are six strands in the curriculum of General Studies where National Identity and Chinese Culture is one of them. "One of the major aims of GS is to help students maintain a healthy personal development and become confident, rational and responsible citizens." (Curriculum Development Council, 2002b, p. 90) The *General Studies for Primary Schools Curriculum*

Guide (Primary 1 – Primary 6) (Curriculum Development Council, 2002b) is a subject curriculum guide of General Studies in primary education. It provides some teaching strategies and examples for promoting MCE through learning and teaching of General Studies. In a general way, the subject teachers implement moral and civic values usually through the medium of civic-related syllabus. For example, a sense of national identity can be nurtured to students by teaching Chinese culture or Chinese history. On the other hand, Personal Growth Education (PGE) is another formal curriculum for developing students' competencies, generic skills, positive values and attitudes in the aspect of personal, social, academic and career development. It is a part of the Comprehensive Student Guidance Service that was introduced to primary schools in 2002. Each of the learning areas is classified into three levels: junior level (Primary 1 and 2), middle level (Primary 3 and 4) and senior level (Primary 5 and 6). Personal Growth Education was a new subject to be evoked in the academic year 2002/2003. In the *Personal Growth Education Revised 2004* (School Development Division of EMB, 2004), school-based Personal Growth Education is proposed to be a compulsory program from the academic year 2002/2003 in primary education with a minimum of twelve periods per school year for Primary 1 to 6 students. It indicates that "[s]chools should make flexible use of the teaching time to conduct PGE in single lessons or double lessons. Also, schools can arrange additional lessons as required to cater for students' developmental needs" (School Development Division of EMB, 2004, p. 8). Personal Growth Education is run as a school-based program. Its design varies across the culture and the actaul needs of schools but a life event approach is applied to the mode of design.

In the informal curriculum, MCE is always implemented through extra-curricular activities and pilot research schemes. In the *General Studies for Primary Schools Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Primary 6)* (Curriculum Development Council, 2002b), life-wide learning and service learning are introduced for developing the five priority values and attitudes of primary school students. Such as a visit to an eldercare center and participation in an outdoor excursion project or a voluntary organization are the typical extra-curricular activities with regard to MCE. In fact, a lot of primary schools apply for government funding to employ academic partners to assist teachers in implementing moral and civic values. The academic partners from universities or research associates take on a range of roles within the schools. They are experts in this field, and also are the facilitator in the learning and teaching process. They are also the resource providers for the schools. It is not surprising that this informal curriculum becomes a regular curriculum in most primary schools in Hong Kong. Some schools even schedule a period of weeks for the outdoor learning project to take place. Besides, interaction between teachers and students inside or outside the classrooms is also a common way to promote MCE (Curriculum Development Council, 2002b, p. 92). The school-based Personal Growth Education provides this opportunity. Class master or mistress is the teacher usually assigned in charge of the Personal Growth lessons in the class.

This short overview analyzes the contemporary situation of MCE in Hong Kong primary education. In accordance with the features of formal and informal curriculum in MCE, it seems reasonable to infer that General Studies teachers and class teachers both play their significance in primary civics education. It also identifies issues that need to be addressed as the teacher factor is an influential element in successful practice of MCE.

4. Previous Research

Numerous research studies focused on the performance of students in civics education. One of the significant studies in this field is an international assessment. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) carried out a two-phase civics education study in 1995 and 1999 respectively. In Phase one of the project, national qualitative case studies were conducted in 24 countries to examine their context and meaning of civics education. In the second phase of the project, a survey instrument was developed based upon the qualitative observations from the previous case studies to investigate civic knowledge and engagement of around 90,000 students in the usual grade for 14-year-old students from 28 countries (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald & Schulz, 2001). Hong Kong was one of the participating countries in the entire study. Secondary 3 students were the research targets in Phase two of the study. According to the research report of the second phase of the study (Torney-Purta et al., 2001), the means of Hong Kong students' civic knowledge and attitudes towards immigrants were almost above the international means while the mean of their attitudes towards nation and their perceptions of opportunities for civic engagement in classrooms and schools was considerably below the international mean. It indicates that Hong Kong students have good citizenship knowledge and they are concerned about social-related citizenship issues but they do not favour confrontational and violent political actions (Lee, 2004). A question for future analysis is how an open classroom climate can be generated to provide students opportunities to participate in discussions of issues as well as enhance their national identity? However, the amount of research concerning the implementation of curricula in MCE and the teachers' knowledge of civics is quite small by comparison.

4.1 Research on implementing civics education

Hong Kong was the only Asian region to participate in the entire IEA Civic Education Study. Due to the impact of Confucianism and the traditional culture, it is supposed that "[e]ducational programs in Asian countries manifest a

strong commitment to moral aspects of citizenship education" (Steiner-Khamsi, 2002, p. 188). This hypothesis, however, contrasts strikingly with Steiner-Khamsi's research findings. Steiner-Khamsi (2002) studied the spheres of citizenship among Hong Kong, Germany, Romania and the United States by analyzing the results of the second phase of the IEA Civic Education Study. She criticized that there was no significant commitment to the moral sphere in Hong Kong and it lacked a supportive environment for enhancing moral education in schools. She also claimed that a moral dimension of citizenship in Hong Kong schools was reflected by practices but not at the policy level. It was because the number of classes related to moral education such as religious studies or ethics in the curriculum were insufficient and they were mainly integrated within the constitutional sphere. On the other hand, in many Western countries such as Canada, England and Australia, an integrated approach is a domain of the pattern organizing citizenship education in the primary school (Kerr, 2002). Based on the findings of the IEA national case studies and the policy statements from the Institute for Numerical Computation and Analysis (INCA) Archive, Kerr (2002) used triangulation as a qualitative method to combine national policy initiative and professional circumstances on researching citizenship education in nine Western countries. He pointed out that "[t]his pattern suggest[ed] a deliberate emphasis in the intended curriculum, particularly in the early years of this phase, on children's understanding of their interaction with the world around them with respect to topics and aspects" (Kerr, 2002, p. 223).

In the mainland China, schools are encouraged to build up connections with community for promoting school-based moral education. Cheung and Pan (2006) identified that the diversified methods were applied in the state to increase institutional autonomy for improving the quality of moral education. They explained that not only the on-campus channels including curriculum and extra-curricular activities were involved in moral education but also the off-campus bodies such as museums and mass media. In fact, some pilot research projects regarding the implementation of civics education were conducted in primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. An official research entitled *Whole School Moral and Civic Education Programme for Promoting Five Priority Values* investigated the effectiveness of the whole-school approach in changing school culture for promoting civics education (Moral and Civic Education Section, 2004) and a positive result was reported. Another official action research project was conducted on the basis of grounded theory by participant observations and key-informant interviews. A causal relationship between cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions of national identity was demonstrated in the pilot study. The report indicated that co-curricular activities were effective channels for students to develop their cognitive and affective competencies in citizenship education (Moral and Civic Education Section, 2003).

Moreover, national education has particularly been concerned in Hong Kong after 1997. Cheung (2005), a Chief Curriculum Development Officer (Moral and Civic Education) of EMB, emphasized the essence of national education in the development of a sense of national identity in 2005 International Symposium on National Education. A comparative study on national identity conflicts and civic education conducted by Mátrai (2002) showed that the civics-related subjects in Hong Kong addressed a vague conception of national identity. The identity matters of the subjects in schools are mostly historical descriptions. "Historical topics also provide opportunity to strengthen cultural nation identity, but Hong Kong's typically descriptive teaching methods allow avoidance in these topics of the actual political aspects and conflicts originating from the move to one political nation."(Mátrai, 2002, p. 98) Actually, a study on enhancing the national identity of Hong Kong students has been directed recently. One of the research projects (Centre for Citizenship Education of HKIEd, 2005) as mentioned at the beginning of the paper entitled *National Identity and Global Citizenship Educaiton Project* was launched in three primary schools and four secondary schools from 2003 to 2005. It was an action research project for promoting national identity and global citizenship education at the schools. Apart from developing subject-based curriculum and project learning strategy, the research report also claimed that effective partnerships of moral and civic edcuation between Hong Kong schools and the schools in the mainland China has been established for those years (Centre for Citizenship Education of HKIEd, 2005). These official action research projects seem to develop productive approaches for facilitating citizenship and national education.

One remarkable aspect of the research projects on civics education reviewed above is that seldom was the study principally conducted in primary schools. Most cases of the study merely focused on secondary schools or the secondary civic curricula. However, as primary education provides a foundation education for the student, it is important to explore the implementation of civics education as well as the effectiveness of civics programs at primary level.

4.2 Research on Hong Kong teachers in civics education

On the basis of the findings from Phase one of the IEA Civic Education Study, Mintrop (2002) studied teachers and civics education instructions in seven societies or countries: Chinese Taipei, the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Hong Kong, Hungary and the United States. He ascertained that most teachers in these countries, with an exception of Finland, were not subject-matter specialists in civics education. "Knowledge in this field is constituted not by formalized or codified body of knowledge, but by the informal, personal knowledge, on-the-job craft knowledge and life experience of the instructor." (Mintrop, 2002, p. 67) Indeed, there is no special requirement for teachers to teach moral- or

civics-related subjects in Hong Kong. MCE is not a compulsory subject in most of teacher-training programs. Thus, research on teachers' knowledge of civics is crucial in this field.

A research report pointed out that Hong Kong teachers were relatively concerned about current events of local affairs. Lee and Leung (2006) conducted a study on global citizenship education in secondary schools from December 2002 to June 2003. The research targets were the secondary school teachers in Hong Kong and Shanghai. One of the purposes of the study was to understand teachers' knowledge, skills and values towards global citizenship education. The most interesting finding of the comparative study was that teachers in Hong Kong tended to focus on local affairs and values in global citizenship education. Besides, depoliticisation was a notable feature of teachers' perceptions of citizenship which was implicated in the other comparative research. The most recent research study regarding Chinese primary and secondary school teachers' perceptions of citizenship was conducted in Hangzhou, Guangzhou and Hong Kong by Lee (2005). The research result showed that teachers in Hong Kong ranked the fulfillment of family responsibilities, the knowledge of government and current events, and the moral and ethical behaviour to be the highest priority of good citizenship characteristics (Lee, 2005, p. 227). Lee (2005) explained that it was because they perceived the term 'citizenship' as a relationship between the government and citizens but not nationality. The second reason caused the result was an affection of the political transition on teachers in Hong Kong. In comparison with teachers in Guangzhou, he classified Hong Kong teachers' perceptions of good citizenship as social citizenship with focusing on the importance of social involvement and awareness:

As indicated in the interview, teachers in Hong Kong seem to view citizenship from the social rather than the political perspective. Even political involvement such as voting is rather passively expressed. Also, there is a focus in teachers' responses on duties and civic virtues such as obeying laws; individual rights in both cities tend to receive less attention. This implies an inclination towards classical citizenship. (Lee, 2005, p. 234)

According to Lee's (2005) research findings, teachers in Hong Kong generally deemed that they had greater influence on students than the parents had. It might be one of the reasons for the teachers to treat themselves as a role model of students and take the responsibility in MCE. One of the findings related to the most helpful types of classroom activities for the students' citizenship development considered by Hong Kong teachers was activity dealing with current events (Lee, 2005, p. 239). However, Lee's (2005) report did not distinguish findings between primary and secondary school teachers. Grossman (2004) conducted a survey of teachers' perceptions of future citizens in Hong Kong and Guangzhou. He took Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) students who were in-service primary school teachers as the sample of Hong Kong. The survey showed that ability to work with others in a cooperative way and to take responsibility for one's role and duties within society was ranked to be the highest frequency citizen characteristics of teachers' perceptions of future citizens in Hong Kong; however, the item of willingness and ability to participate in politics at local, national and international levels was ranked to be the lowest priority. Observably, a reflection of teachers' perceptions of citizenship could be seen in the pedagogical approaches chosen for implementing civics education in the classroom.

In reviewing the previous research, it is obviously to note that there is a marked lack of research study concerning the importance of primary school teachers in civics and citizenship education. Most of the study targets of the former research such as that summarised above were the teachers teaching only in secondary schools or both in primary and secondary schools. Only a few research brought the primary school teachers particularly into focus. Although Grossman (2004) took in-service primary school teachers who were taking the subject of civics education as the sample for his comparative study, the purposeful sampling was merely drawn form the teacher training institution and his study only focused on teachers' perceptions of future citizens. To fill the gap in research on primary schools, this study chooses to focus on analyzing teachers' understanding and attitudes towards the official framework of primary civics education deserve researching.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design

In this study, a qualitative research approach was adopted. To investigate primary school teachers' understanding and attitudes towards Moral and Civic Education (MCE) in Hong Kong, interviews and document analysis were the primary methods of this study. In-depth interviews were conducted to elicit the cognitive structures leading teachers' perceptions of MCE (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). The interview schedule comprised three parts. The first part was a set of background questions to collect some information about the length of teaching experience and the teacher training of the interviewees. The second part and the third part of the interviews were to explore teachers' understanding as well as their attitudes towards MCE respectively.

5.2 Sampling

A government-aided whole-day primary school was chosen for this study. It is a typical mixed gender school with Christian background. It was established in 1961 and located in a lower socioeconomic region in Hong Kong. In the

academic year 2006/2007, there were 49 certificated teachers and 30 classes from Primary 1 to Primary 6 in the school. In order to collect data from the teachers at their different career stages in the school, the sampling was purposeful. The teachers were divided into three groups according to their length of teaching experience: teachers at the early career stage (less than 10 years teaching experience), teachers at the middle career stage (11 to 20 years teaching experience) and teachers at the late career stage (over 20 years teaching experience). A total of six teachers were invited to participate in this study. Two teachers were selected from each group for semi-structured in-depth interviews. The background information of the interviewees was summarized in Table 1. The responses obtained from the interviewees were tape-recorded and coded with categories. Concept mapping was applied for emerging themes or patterns. The findings from the study were compared to the official content of MCE and then used for analyzing.

6. Description of Findings

6.1 Teachers' knowledge about moral and civic education

Almost all interviewees viewed the term 'moral and civic education' from a moral aspect. Expect for one interviewee, Teacher C, who considered citizenship as the key message of Moral and Civic Education (MCE). The other major point of view among interviewees was that moral development of children should be the focus of MCE. Values and attitudes were also regarded as the domain in this area. Some interviewees mentioned about the importance of values and attitudes not only from a personal aspect but also from a social aspect. Teacher B and Teacher D considered social matters such as social rules and social stability to be the key messages of MCE. It indicated that teachers' general conception of MCE was a pedagogical issue regarding individual moral development for the social purpose. Although all interviewees agreed to the importance of promoting values and attitudes in MCE, none of the interviewees knew what the five priority values and attitudes were. No interviewee had any idea about the five priority values and attitudes proposed by the Curriculum Development Council. Four interviewees even did not know the shot-term phase of the 2001 curriculum reform when was from academic year 2001/2002 to academic year 2005/2006.

Teachers' understanding of MCE was insufficient. They got the notion of moral and civic values but they did not know the components of MCE. In the interviews, the teachers were requested to list some relevant issues or topics of MCE. Their responses were hence classified into eleven themes under the curriculum framework. By comparing the conceptual diagram of the curriculum framework and the answers provided by the teachers, it indicated that the teachers merely knew a small number of the themes in MCE. The result which is about interviewees' cognition in this area is shown in Table 2. Four out of six interviewees recognized that Moral and Ethical Education was a theme of MCE. Only two interviewees knew that Civic Education was one of the themes regarding MCE. Health Education and Legal Education were mentioned by two interviewees respectively. However, seven out of eleven themes which included Life Education, Sex Education, Media Education, Drug Education, AIDS Education and Consumer Education were not mentioned in the interviews. As indicated in Table 2, the teachers at the late career stage seriously lacked knowledge in MCE. One of the interviewees at this stage, Teacher E, who was a General Studies teacher and also taught Personal Growth Education, could not even recognize any issues or topics from this field. Either the teachers at the early career stage or the teachers at the middle career stage also had limited knowledge about MCE. They used to regard Moral and Ethical Education as the overall theme of MCE in Hong Kong primary education. Thus, the primary school teachers paid scanty attention to the civic component of MCE.

6.2 Teachers' comprehension of the five priority values and attitudes

There had some coherence of the interpretations of the terms 'perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity and commitment' by all interviewees and the Curriculum Development Council. Interviewees' comprehension of the five priority values and attitudes were closest to the statements of that in the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide – Building on Strengths (Primary 1 - Secondary 3)* (Curriculum Development Council, 2002a). Table 3 shows a comparison of interviewees' responses with the official interpretations of the five priority values and attitudes. Teachers' interpretations of these values and attitudes in the interviews mostly matched to the statements regarding the five priority values and attitudes by the Council. Four out of six interviewees considered perseverance to be a strength of the Chinese people such as patience and persistence. Four of the interviewees pointed out that appreciations and acceptance of different beliefs were the main idea of respect for others. And also four interviewees deemed commitment as a social value with contribution. Their points of view about perseverance, respect for others and commitment were the main idea of the official interpretations in regard with these three values and attitudes.

Nevertheless, there were some differences between interviewees' comprehension and the official interpretations of responsibility and national identity. While the interpretation of responsibility by the Council is related to both individual and community, two interviewees viewed this value only from an individual aspect. They were concerned about personal responsibility such as finished the job on students' own initiative or finished the job with certain quality rather than social responsibility. One interviewee, Teacher E, could not elaborate on her understanding of the term 'responsibility'. The other interviewees connected responsibility to the different roles in school, family and society. Besides, interviewees' comprehension of national identity was various from the official statement. The Council does not

advocate imposing national sentiments on students, however, some of the interviewees interpreted national identity in terms of emotion. Teacher C tied patriotism to this value. Teacher E connected an expression - 'proud', which was mixed of satisfaction and pleasure, with her perception of national identity. Only one interviewee, Teacher F, referred to some activities such as flag-raising ceremonies and singing the national anthem in special events to develop students' sense of belonging to China. It is clear that some teachers did not understand these two values completely. In general, the teachers interpreted these values and attitudes according to their teaching experience as well as their own notion of the values.

6.3 Teachers' perceptions regarding the needs of promoting the five priority values and attitudes in primary education

All of the interviewees agreed the importance of the five values and attitudes proposed in primary education even though they had different opinions in the importance priority of these values and attitudes. Teacher D was an exception in this issue. She emphasized the same degree of importance among perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity and commitment in schooling. From her point of view, there was no preferred priority for these five values and attitudes. Teacher A and Teacher B both were at their early career stage but they had opposite opinions about the general importance priority of the five values and attitudes. Teacher A regarded that national identity was a less important value to implement in primary education but Teacher B thought that national identity was the most important value for primary school students. Teacher A stated that:

Generally speaking, I think that national identity is not very important among these five priority values and attitudes. Firstly, it is difficult to nurture at primary school level. Secondly, I personally do not have a sense of national identity so that it is very hard for me to teach the related topics.

Teacher B had another view:

National education is a focus in primary education. As Hong Kong had been return to Chinese sovereignty, it is essential to develop a sense of national identity of primary school students. They should have a sense of belonging to China. It is also a purpose of promoting moral and civic education. This value is very important for our society to have a good development in the future.

It is clear that the arrangement of priority mainly depends on teachers' perceptions of the five values and attitudes. The other interviewees generally agreed the importance of the five values and attitudes proposed in primary education but did not show their preferences.

6.4 Teachers' degree of concern and receptivity regarding moral and civic education

All interviewees reported a certain degree of concern about MCE in terms of its importance in their daily teaching. Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D and Teacher F had high degree of concern about this issue due to its importance for the society. They believed that MCE in schools could generate good citizens in the future. Relatively Teacher A and Teacher E had lower degree of concern about MCE. Teacher A explained that it was because General Studies was not her major subject. The reason given by Teacher E of paying relatively less attention to this area was lack of time in her teaching schedule. Even though two interviewees had some difficulties on promoting MCE because of the personal and practical problems, all of them agreed that it was the duty of primary school teachers to nurture moral and civic values to students. As noted by Teacher A:

Teachers should be the role model of students because of an imitation effect. … It is necessary to promote moral and civic education in primary schools as schooling is not only for knowledge delivery but also for the moral development of children. A student has to learn how to act as a human being.

Apart from this view, the interviewees also deemed the primary school teacher as a guide in MCE. Teacher E pointed out that students in the primary school were too young to clearly distinguish right and wrong so they needed guidance offered by teachers. Teacher D thought that MCE should be implemented to students since their childhood. The significance of the implementation of MCE at the primary school was mentioned by Teacher C as well:

Actually, primary school students spend a lot of time in the school. In this busy city, I personally believe that parents do not have time to nurture moral and civic values to them at home. Students generally obey their teachers at the primary school. By my experience, as I teach lower form students in this school, I find out that lower form students can assimilate these values very well when I convey moral and civic education in the class.

It seems that the interviewees had similar understanding of their roles in MCE. The interviewees understood their profound influence on students especially in primary education. They all agreed that the teacher was a key factor to facilitate MCE at the primary school level. As a consequence, it could be explained why all of the interviewees are receptive to promote MCE in their daily teaching. Teacher C stated that civics and morality were more important than academic knowledge in schooling. Teacher F also regarded MCE as the most important part in pedagogy. These are the factors associated with teachers' receptivity with regard to MCE. Obviously, the teachers have high receptivity regarding this issue. Nevertheless, not all of the interviewees could accept to develop an open learning and teaching

culture to promote MCE. Teacher C was the one who could not accept to provide an open climate in the classroom to nurture moral and civic values to students because she was worried about misleading ideas raised by students:

If the student raises a wrong idea, I must correct it. I cannot stand any wrong concept expressed in the class. So, I can not really accept to develop a very open learning and teaching culture to teach moral-related topics. I think I would prefer giving my own opinions to students regarding these issues.

Although one interviewee gave a negative response, the others had positive views on developing an open learning and teaching culture to implement civic and moral education. Five of the six interviewees deemed the interaction between teachers and students as the essential medium facilitating critical thinking. Teacher A said that peer sharing was useful in value education because students could learn from others. Teacher D also agreed the importance of interaction and sharing in MCE:

The student cannot be a passive learner in this subject area. Moral and civic development is directly related to students' background. It is not related to their ages. A ten-year old student might be more mature than a fifteen-year old student due to his personal experience. Great individual differences among students exist in moral and civic education. … As a matter of fact that the background of teachers and students is different, teachers have to provide more opportunities for students to express in order to understand them more.

From teachers' responses above, it reveals that moral and civic development of children is stressed by primary school teachers. The teachers understood and agreed the needs of promoting MCE at primary school level. They also recognized their roles in this subject matter. Thus, the teachers have a high degree of concern and receptivity regarding MCE. It implies that the attitude of the primary school teachers in Hong Kong towards MCE is generally positive and open-minded.

6.5 Factors affecting teachers' implementation of moral and civic education

The teachers conveyed moral and civic values to primary school students in various ways. According to teachers' responses in the interviews, the approaches or teaching materials were selected from two main areas. The first area was the formal and informal curricula. The second area was the learning and teaching environment. General Studies and Personal Growth Education were the formal curricula of MCE. Apart from these two subjects, Chinese and Bible Studies were also the major subjects for the teachers to promote MCE in the school. Some interviewees reported that they could implement these values through other subjects such as English and Physical Education. Teacher F preferred promoting moral values to all students in the school through the period of assembly. Extra-curriculum activity was another way for Teacher A, who was a leader of Girl Scout, to implement MCE. On the other hand, the learning and teaching environment also affects teachers' implementation regarding this field. Half of the interviewees were class mistresses. They had the Class Master/Mistress Period every school day to deal with student affairs such as students' behaviour problems. These interviewees agreed that this period could provide the opportunities for them to nurture moral and civic values to students. It is interesting to note that among all the interviewees, even three of them were not assigned to be the class masters or mistresses, regarded students' disciplinary problem as the teaching material or resource for them to implement MCE. In teachers' opinions, the behaviour problem of students was the main factor to arouse their self-motivation in respect of promoting MCE. As Teacher A said:

I can see that, nowadays, children are very poor in moral and civic development. They do not know how to respect others and they lack politeness with comparing children in the past generation. That is the reason why I am eager to promote moral and civic education at the school.

Besides, the personal experience of teachers is also a factor affecting their implementation of MCE. Some interviewees replied that their own experience would be the issue sharing with students in order to convey moral and civic values. Teacher C mentioned that:

I would like to discuss the hot topics such as the content of current television programmes with my students. … I would also like to share my experience when I talk about civic-related topics. Once I saw a passenger who had inappropriate behaviour on the train, I took it as an issue to discuss with students in the class. I think it is a kind of life event approach.

It is critical to indicate that the interviewees used to apply school events or their life events for promoting MCE but none of them mentioned about discussing social events such as political issues with students to be the instrumentation. It is obvious that the teachers emphasized moral matters and guidance in their implementation of MCE. The interviewees did not discuss any political topics with upper form primary school students. It seems that teachers in Hong Kong are not concerned with social issues. In primary schools, citizenship and politics is not the focus in MCE.

The lack of assistance is also a negative factor to affect teachers' implementation of MCE in primary schools. Teacher A and Teacher D thought that colleagues and the informal curriculum could provide limited assistance for them in this area. Four out of six interviewees did not have any assistance for them to promote MCE; by contrast they faced some

resistances to promote MCE in the school. The greatest resistance came from the school-based curriculum. Almost all interviewees did not have enough time to implement moral and civic values to students due to their tight teaching schedules. School examination was the resistance for Teacher A. Incomplete civic curriculum was the resistance for the other interviewees. Teacher B complained that:

The curriculum does not show much concern about individual differences between students. I want to nurture some values to my students because of their special needs but unfortunately I cannot. It is because the issues are not included in the curriculum and time is not allowed. … Undoubtedly, the curriculum of Personal Growth Education is designed for the social needs. However, it can not serve the needs of every student. This is a contradiction. Its framework really controls my teaching. … The curriculum of General Studies does not focus too much on moral and civic education too.

Teacher C also had some comments on the implementation of MCE through General Studies:

In General Studies and Chinese, the content related to morality and civics is not deep enough. General Studies includes Technology Education and Science Education… I know there are some teaching kits of Life Education in the school. I guess it should be used in teaching General Studies. I also know that there are many in the Teacher Centre. However, there is no particular period for me to use these civic-related teaching materials in my teaching schedule. Besides, the schedule of General Studies is very tight. How can I use these teaching materials in the classrooms? I have got no time!

From the document analysis, the school-based curriculum of General Studies involves six main themes. These themes are Health and Life, People and Environment, Daily Science and Technology, Society and Citizenship, National Identity and Chinese Culture, and Understanding of the World. Except Daily Science and Technology is about Technology Education and Science Education, the other themes are all directly connected to MCE. In fact, there is a high proportion of civic-related topics in General Studies. According to the schedule of Personal Growth Education provided by the subject coordinator, there is nine periods in total with one period per month in the academic year 2006/2007. Obviously the amount of period is insufficient because the official recommendation of the number of Personal Growth Education period is a minimum of twelve periods per school year. Meanwhile, the teachers pay much attention to moral and value components in MCE. Under this circumstance, these are clearly controversies that have got the teachers stirred up indeed. Overall, the arrangement of school-based curriculum and teachers' perceptions of MCE are the factors affecting their implementation of this subject matter. As self-motivation is a characteristic of the teachers in implementation of morality and civics but not the force by the educational policy or the school head, the attitude of the teachers could be concluded to be enthusiastic and progressive.

7. Conclusion and Discussion

7.1 Weaknesses in understanding of moral and civic education

Focusing on the perceptions regarding the component of Moral and Civic Education (MCE), it is no doubt that teachers' knowledge of MCE was definitely insufficient. In their conception, MCE is identical to moral and ethical education. Indeed, morality and ethics involves civics component. However, the Education Commission (2000, p. 34) proposed a broad perception of MCE in the curricula reform. The content of MCE in Hong Kong is diversified. Such as Legal Education, Media Education, Drug Education, AIDS Education and Consumer Education are knowledgeable civic-related topics. They are not included in moral and ethical education. Some of the primary school teachers in Hong Kong regard Personal Growth Eduacation as entire MCE. As a matter of fact that Personal Growth Education is merely an attachment of MCE, it is principally composed of moral and ethical elements. This phenomenon can be explained by Confucian influence rather than religious orientation.

Some Confucian concepts such as virtue, self-cultivation and internal growth were mentioned frequently in the interviews; however, none of the interviews referred to Christianism although the school selected for this study had Christian background and two of them were Christians. Due to the impact of Confucianisum, the teachers in Hong Kong relatively pay more attention to morality and ethics rather than citizenship. From a multidimensional view (1998, Cogan & Derricott), primary school teachers in Hong Kong have put emphasis upon personal citizenship rather than other dimensions of civics education. It is not a new finding on teachers' perceptions of citizenship in Hong Kong since Grossman (2004) who studied teachers' perceptions of future citizens has also got the same result in this area. Nevertheless, the teachers have mostly coherent perceptions to the interpretations of the five priority values and attitudes evoked by the Curriculum Development Council (2002a, pp. 2-4). They strongly agreed to the needs of promoting the five priority values and attitudes for primary students and immersing them in schooling. It is a pedagogical purpose advocated in the concept of quality teaching as important for providing quality learning environment to students. Teachers' comprehension of these values and attitudes implicates their expectation of the students in moral and civic development. Teachers' expectation of the students is an influential factor to affect their attitudes towards MCE at the implementation stage in primary schools.

7.2 Strengths of attitudes towards moral and civic education

In spite of the fact that primary school teachers in Hong Kong are weak in the content of MCE, they have high degree

of concern and receptivity regarding the implementation of MCE. They recognize their roles and understand the needs of implementing MCE at primary school level. As discussed before, Hong Kong teachers consider the idea of moral and ethical education to be the most important part of MCE. They regard discipline training as a major component in this area. Therefore, teachers' attitudes towards MCE vary based upon their perceptions.

Looking at the factors affecting teachers' implementation of MCE, it is obviously to notice that the school-based curriculum and teachers' perceptions are the competitors of each other. It is because there is a contradiction between these two factors. While the teachers take the responsibilities to nurture moral and civic values to students, the fixed syllabi such as the curricula of General Studies and Personal Growth Education control their implementation of this aspect. Firstly, the teachers have to compete with time. They need to finish their teaching within the set schedule because General Studies is an examination-oriented subject. Secondly, the teachers have to compete with the curriculum framework. They understand the individual need of a student or a class of students but the syllabus is not flexible to allow them to take care of students' individual differences among them. It is a dilemma of the teachers about the balance of these two factors. Thus, their attitude towards MCE depends on their decision-making abilities. Even thought primary school teachers in Hong Kong face some resistances, they still have high self-motivation to implement MCE. The disciplinary problem of students always motivates the teachers to convey moral and civic values in the primary schools. Actually, the influence of teachers by students is not a new theory in pedagogy (Gordon, 1978). On the basis of these characteristics of primary school teachers in Hong Kong, it seems rational to describe their attitude towards MCE to be progressive and enthusiastic.

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Table 1. Summary of the interviewees' background information

| Career stage | Teacher | Years of teaching | | Subject teacher | | Teacher training related to MCE* |
		in total	at this school	GS*	PGE*	
Early career stage *(less than 10 years teaching experience)*	A	2.5	2.5	Yes	Yes	Nil
	B	9.5	3.5	Yes	Yes	Workshops by academic organizations
Middle career stage *(11 to 20 years teaching experience)*	C	11.5	4.5	Yes	Yes	Certificate of Education
	D	13.5	3.5	No	No	Certificate of Education
Late career stage *(over 20 years teaching experience)*	E	24.5	17.5	Yes	Yes	Seminars by EMB
	F	34.5	34.5	No	No	Nil

Note * GS: General Studies, PGE: Personal Growth Education, MCE: Moral and Civic Education

Table 2. Teachers' cognition of the themes in MCE

Themes in MCE (Curriculum Development Council, 2002a, Booklet 3A, p. 7)	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D	Teacher E	Teacher F
Moral and Ethical Education	✓		✓	✓		✓
Civic Education	✓		✓			
Life Education						
Health Education		✓				
Sex Education						
Legal Education			✓			
Media Education						
Drug Education						
AIDS Education						
Consumer Education						
Environmental Education						

Table 3. Comparison of the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) and the samples with the interpretations of the five priority values and attitudes

5 Priority Values & Attitudes	Perseverance	Respect for Others	Responsibility	National Identity	Commitment
Curriculum Development Council (2002a, Booklet 3A, p. 2-4)	◆ a strength of the Chinese people ◆ face life's challenges ◆ cope with adversities	◆ appreciate and tolerate views and beliefs different from their own	◆ well-being of an individual is inextricably bound up with the collective well-being of the community	◆ a deeper understanding of the history and culture of our motherland ◆ enhance their interests in and concern for the development of today's China	◆ a basic attitude for the realisation of core personal and social values
Teacher A	◆ *patience** ◆ *never give up**	◆ get along well with others	◆ to finish the job on students' own initiative	◆ recognition of China	◆ *to serve others in the society**
Teacher B	◆ *to cope with pressure**	◆ *to appreciate others**	◆ to finish the job with certain quality	◆ *a sense of belonging to China**	◆ *citizenship**
Teacher C	◆ *persistence** ◆ *cope with difficulties** ◆ to spare no efforts	◆ *to accept different opinions**	◆ *to finish the job in different roles**	◆ patriotism ◆ *a sense of belonging to China**	◆ *individual preparation for the future** ◆ *contribution to the society and the country**
Teacher D	◆ *'Never say die'**	◆ *to accept different religions, beliefs and races**	◆ *to commit in different roles**	◆ *understanding of our motherland** ◆ *recognition of Chinese as our nationality**	◆ *commitment in school, family and society**
Teacher E	◆ self-confidence	◆ self-cultivation	(Nil)	◆ respect to China ◆ to be proud of China ◆ *a sense of belonging to China**	◆ a promise
Teacher F	◆ *persistence** ◆ *not to concede defeat** ◆ *keep trying after failure** ◆ insistent on learning	◆ *to accept different opinions**	◆ *to play different roles**	◆ *flag-raising ceremony** ◆ *to sing the national anthem**	◆ to participate on students' own initiative

Note * Ideas that are coherent to the statements of CDC are printed in italics.

Metaphors in the First Stanza of Ode to the West Wind:

A Cognitive Linguistic Approach

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Abstract

Metaphor is ubiquitous and it is a way of conceptualizing human experiences. But the metaphors used in poetry are not the same as those employed in daily life although the metaphors maneuvered in poems are often based on those used in daily life. The metaphors employed in poems are always extended, elaborated and compressed into one poem by poets. And this is what makes poetic metaphors different from common metaphors. Ode to the West Wind is one of the best lyric and political poems of the English romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. And the metaphors maneuvered in this poem are a good evidence of this point.

Keywords: Metaphor, Image metaphor, Source domain, Target domain, Mapping

1. Introduction

What is metaphor? In order to answer this question we should first know that metaphor in different fields means different things. Metaphor in literature and rhetoric is not the same as metaphor in psychotherapy, or metaphor in computer science. Therefore the author would like to clarify at the beginning of this article that the metaphor that is going to be discussed is to be understood from a cognitive perspective. Metaphor in cognitive linguistics is 'the use of language that designates one thing to designate another in order to characterize the latter in terms of the former' (Wilson & Keil, 2000). According to this definition, language is just a tool to represent conception and the function of metaphor is to designate things. In line with this definition, conceptual metaphor refers to the understanding of one idea, or conceptual domain in terms of another (Wikipedia, 2008). The characteristics of metaphor in cognitive linguistics include: 1) Metaphor is ubiquitous; 2) Metaphor is conceptual in nature; 3) Metaphor is systematic; 4) Metaphor is composed of two domains, a source domain and a target domain; 5) Metaphorical mappings are grounded in bodily experience (Lan, 2003, 31). In accordance with these characteristics, we can conclude that metaphors are not limited to novel creations of talented writers and thus not patents for literary works, e.g. poems. They are 'part of the way members of a culture have of conceptualizing their experience' (Lakoff & Turner, 1989).

Metaphors and poems are inextricable, without metaphor, poems and all the other literary works will suffer an eclipse. In line with Lakoff & Turner (1989), all the metaphors used in poetry are basic ones; nevertheless poets extend, compose and compress the basic conventional metaphors in order to satisfy their needs. In order to get a clear view of this point, Lakoff & Turner analyzed the poem The Jasmine Lightness of the Moon: To a Solitary Disciple composed by William Carlos Williams in that book. Trying to verify the findings of Lakoff and Turner, the present article is going to examine Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*.

Ode to the West Wind can be comprehended as metaphorical on two levels. First, it is a lyric poem which speaks highly of one of the elements of nature — the wind. In the process of acclaiming west wind, Shelley employed a large number of metaphors. Second, the poem as a whole can be given a metaphorical interpretation and comprehended as a political poem. It can be understood as an ode to freedom and revolution through complimenting the west wind. The present study discusses the use of metaphors in the poet's compliment of the west wind first and such an analysis is treated as a first level analysis of the poem. On the basis of this analysis, the author will elaborate the metaphorical understanding of the poem.

There are many uses of metaphors in this poem. Due to the limitation of space, the author is going to discuss just the metaphors maneuvered in the first stanza of this poem. Nonetheless the author thinks that it is enough to show the subtle

and exquisite effects achieved by using metaphors in the whole poem by discussing one stanza of it. There are two reasons. When it comes to the quantity, one stanza stands for one fifth of the poem; when it comes to the style, the metaphorical style used in the first stanza is in consistency with the remaining four other stanzas so that the combination of all the five stanzas can make an excellent whole. The first stanza of *Ode to the West Wind* listed below is an excerpt from Reiman & Powers (1977).

1).   O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being

2).   Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead

3).   Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

4).   Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,

5).   Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O Thou,

6).   Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

7).   The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,

8).   Each like a corpse within its grave, until

9).   Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

10).   Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill

11).   (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)

12).   With living hues and odors plain and hill:

13).   Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;

14).   Destroyer and Preserver; hear, oh hear!

2. Analysis of the first stanza of *Ode to the West Wind*

Analysis on the first level

'O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being', in this line the poet first considers the west wind as a human being who can hear and comprehend so that he begins this line, actually this poem with a vocative 'O wild West Wind'. This is one case of personification. Nevertheless the readers seldom deem this as an example of personification as it is so conventional and automatic that it becomes unconscious and unmarked. This is also evidence that poetic metaphors are based on conventional metaphors. What's more, the personification of west wind is made more explicit by using the second person pronoun 'thou'. Then this personification is followed by another one: the autumn is regarded as a human being who can breathe, and the west wind is the breath of autumn. Therefore in the same line there are three metaphors compressed: THE WILD WEST WIND IS A HUMAN BEING, THE AUTUMN IS A HUMAN BEING and THE WILD WEST WIND IS THE BREATH OF A HUMAN BEING. The frequent manipulation of personification also proves the anthropocentric view when people perceive the world. Actually the employment of personification is carried on in the second line where the poet begins with a vocative 'Thou' which co-refers to the west wind. Following the vocative 'thou', 'from whose unseen presence the leaves dead/ Are driven,' the poet regards the west wind as a human being who can be present or absent and can drive away the autumnal leaves. In the second line, when the poet depicts the autumnal leaves with the adjective 'dead', the leaves are also understood as human beings who experience the process of birth, youth, maturity, decrepitude, illness and death. The metaphor used here is LEAVES ARE HUMAN BEINGS. This metaphor is the extension of PLANTS ARE ANIMATE BEINGS. Most of the leaves in late autumn are in the dead state. When the mighty west wind blows, the dead leaves fall off the trees and flutter in a confusion. In order to depict the scene clearly, the poet employs a simile: 'like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing'. Through this simile, the strength and formidableness of the west wind as a destroyer and the fear, weakness and helplessness of the leaves when they face the strong wind are vividly delineated. The metaphors used in the two lines 'Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead/ Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,' are THE WILD WEST WIND IS A DESTROYER and THE DEAD LEAVES ARE THE VICTIMS. The two metaphors are the extensions of WIND IS A HUMAN BEING and LEAVES ARE HUMAN BEINGS.

There are also three image metaphors triggered in the tercet discussed. First the image of two interlocutors communicating is mapped onto the poet's soliloquy. The second image metaphor that is created is that the image of a human being's act of breathing forcefully is mapped onto the autumnal wind's mighty blows. The image of an

enchanter's presence terrifying the ghosts is mapped onto the image of the powerful west wind blowing the dead leaves off the branches and flutter in confusion.

In the fourth line, the poet further depicts the colors of the dead leaves. They are 'Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red' which are colors arousing people's negative feelings. In specificity, when the adjective 'pale' is employed to describe a person's complexion, the person in consideration is often shocked, frightened or in ill health (Sinclair, 2000); when 'hectic' is used to depict a human being, the person depicted more often than not suffers from a regular recurrent fever typically accompanying tuberculosis, with flushed cheeks and hot, dry skin (Mckean, 2005). Hence the description of colors by employing 'pale' and 'hectic' can be regarded as both a metonymic and a metaphorical use. It is metonymic because 'pale' and 'hectic' are often used to describe a person's complexion. When the complexion or the face of a person stands for the person possessing the face or complexion, the usage becomes metonymic. It is metaphorical because the vocabularies used for depicting a human being are used for describing the leaves. The metaphor used here is LEAVES ARE HUMAN BEINGS. Like human beings, the leaves in the deep autumn are seriously ill — they are 'Pestilence-stricken'. According to Sinclair (2000), the noun 'pestilence' refers to 'a disease that spreads quickly and kills large numbers of people'. Hence only human beings can be pestilence-stricken; as a result, this is an employment of personification. The personification is made more straightforward by using the word 'multitude' which means 'a very large number of people' (Sinclair, 2000). Then the poet further delineates the situation of the fallen leaves. Shelley regards the west wind as a charioteer and it transports the leaves to their ultimate home — the grave, i.e. the earth. In line six, 'chariot' is used as a verb and it symbolizes the inexorable force — the death. In the same line the 'DEATH IS A JOURNEY' metaphor is employed. Here the grave of the leaves is referred to as 'dark wintry bed' as the grave is always dark and as cold as the temperature in winter. The metaphor GRAVE IS BED is employed by the poet and it is the extension of the DEATH IS SLEEP metaphor.

There are five image-metaphors triggered in this tercet. First, the complexion of serious patients is mapped onto the colors of withered, frost-stricken leaves. Second, the situation of the pestilence-stricken people is mapped onto that of the late-autumnal leaves. Third, the bed of a human being is mapped onto the grave of the leaves. Fourth, the state of sleep is mapped onto the state of death. Last, the temperature in winter is mapped onto the temperature in the leaves' grave — the earth.

The relentless west wind not only sheds the leaves from the trees and sends them to their wintry bed — the earth, but also takes the seeds off the plants and carries them to the earth too. 'The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low/Each like a corpse within its grave' delineates the situation of seeds in the earth after the west wind makes the sweep. Here the seeds are depicted as something animate with wings like angels or birds. This is another extension of the metaphor PLANTS ARE ANIMATE BEINGS. But now they stay in the earth inactive like corpses lying in graves which are cold and low. Nevertheless the inert situation of the seeds buried in the soil will change when the breeze of spring blows, in other words, when spring comes. In the poem, the spring wind is depicted with personification: it is regarded as the sister of autumnal west wind — 'Thine azure sister of spring'. This is another evidence of the metaphor: WIND IS A HUMAN BEING. By employing this metaphor the autumnal wind and the spring wind can be considered as sisters. As is the norm in sunny spring, the color of the sky is always in bright blue, 'azure' is used here metaphorically to modify wind.

In this tercet, six image-metaphors are sparked off. First, the ability and image of the winged animates like angels and birds are mapped onto those of the seeds when the mighty wind blows. Second, the act of animates lying down is mapped onto that of seeds stay still in the earth. Third, the condition of graves is mapped onto that of the place where the seeds are: deep in the earth, cold and low. Fourth, the vision of the corpses in the graves is mapped onto that of the seeds in the earth: 'Each like a corpse within its grave'. Fifth, the relationship between human beings, exactly speaking, 'sisters' here, is mapped onto the relationship between the autumnal wind and the spring wind. Sixth, the pleasantness of the azure sky is mapped onto the sweetness of the spring wind.

In 'Her clarion over the dreaming earth', the spring thunder is understood as the clarion of spring wind. As a clarion is a kind of trumpet and generally speaking, human beings are always the master of it, hence this line carries on the metaphor employed in the ninth line WIND IS A HUMAN BEING. Combined with this metaphor is another: EARTH IS A HUMAN BEING. In line with this metaphor, the earth can sleep and wake up as a person. As when a person plays a clarion he or she will make some sound and if there is someone sleeping nearby, he or she will undoubtedly wake up. In this line there is also the use of metonymy, as when a clarion is kept untouched it won't make any noise. According to the source domain, when the spring thunder happens, the sleeping earth will be awakened. In the following line, the 'sweet buds' is also a metonymical use as sweet buds stand for the whole of flowers. Then the poet compares the spring thunder precipitating the flowers into full blossom with a shepherd driving flocks of sheep with a simile 'Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air'. Just like a shepherd drives flocks of sheep on the prairie, lets the sheep graze and gets them nourished, the spring thunder spurs the flowers to bloom and gets the blooms nourished in the air. Now let's connect line ten with line twelve, then we get that 'Her clarion … fill with living hues and odors plain and hill'.

According to our common sense, the action of filling requires something animate to perform the role of an agent, e.g. a human being. Thus this is another metaphor: SPRING THUNDER IS A HUMAN BEING.

The image metaphors provoked in this tercet are: first, the sound of blowing a clarion is mapped onto that of the spring thunder; second, the image of a sleeping person is mapped onto that of the frozen earth; third, the event that blowing a clarion wakens the sleeping person is mapped onto the event that the spring thunder signals the coming of spring and consequently thaws the earth and sprouts, grows and blooms the seeds in it; fourth, the image of a shepherd driving and feeding his flocks of sheep on the grassland is mapped onto that of the spring thunder spurring the flowers in blossom and getting them nourished in the air; fifth, the visualization of a person fills an empty bottle with water is mapped onto that of the spring thunder stuffs the plain and hill with flowers.

In the thirteenth line of this stanza, the poet compares the Wild West wind to a 'Wild Spirit' which is moving everywhere; hence the metaphorical use WEST WIND IS WILD SPIRIT. The Wild West wind and the Wild Spirit share the similarity that both of them can go anywhere they want. Then the poet refers to the west wind as 'Destroyer and Preserver' because the west wind not only drives away the dead leaves but also brings the seeds to the soil so that the seeds can prepare for their new lives. As a matter of fact, the 'titles [Destroyer and Preserver] come directly from the titles of the Hindu gods Siva the Destroyer and Vishnu the Preserver' (Reiman & Powers, 1977, p221, note 6). When the names of gods are used to refer to the wind, they undoubtedly become metaphorical. As the poet considers the west wind as a human being who can sense, he asks the west wind to 'hear' and end this stanza of the poem with an imperative 'hear, O hear!'

There are four image metaphors sparked off in those two lines. First, the vision of a wild spirit who is moving everywhere is mapped onto that of the west wind sweeping through the forest. Second, the image of the Destroyer Siva is mapped onto that of the west wind damaging the dead leaves. Third, the image of the Preserver Vishnu is mapped onto that of the west wind protecting and carrying the seeds into the earth so that the seeds can breed their new lives. Last, the act of listening by a human being is mapped onto that of west wind. Those are the analysis of the first stanza of the poem on the first level; the next section will be devoted to the elaboration of the same stanza with a metaphorical interpretation.

Analysis at the second level

Ode to the West Wind 'is considered as both a political poem and one of Shelley's best lyrics' (Gong & Guo, 2007, p154, note 1). In other words, this poem can be considered not only as the poet's compliment to the west wind but also metaphorically as a way of the poet to express his emotion towards revolution through the delineation of the west wind. For this reason the west wind symbolizes the revolutionists. The dead leaves represent the outdated world and its tyrannical government. The seeds symbolize the conviction of the revolutionists and the newly-born force. 'Her clarion' — the spring thunder refers to the appeals of the revolutionists and progressives. The sleeping earth denotes the masses. The referral of the west wind as the Destroyer can be explained by the event that the revolutionists overthrow the outmoded society and its tyrannical government. The mentioning of the west wind as the Preserver can be expounded because the revolutionists preserve their own conviction and the newly-born force of the future progressive society.

There are eight image metaphors created in this stanza. First, the event that the west wind drives away the leaves is mapped onto the event that the revolutionists overthrow the tyrannical government. Second, the panic of the dead leaves confronting the blow of west wind maps onto the panic of the reactionaries and the tyrannical government when they face the revolutionists. Third, the event that the west wind drives away the leaves to their dark wintry bed maps onto the event that the revolutionists topple the reactionary government. Fourth, the event that the west wind preserves the seeds is mapped onto the event that the revolutionists protect and maintain the conviction and newly-born force of the future progressive society. Fifth, the event that the seeds lie in the earth in winter maps onto the event that the newly-born forces of the new society save and accumulate their power and await their opportunity. Sixth, the coming of spring maps onto the coming of the opportunity for the revolutionists to act. Seventh, the event that the spring thunder awakens the frozen earth maps onto the event that the revolutionists' appeal awakens the mind of the masses. Last but not least, 'Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere' maps onto the spread of the revolutionary ideas.

3. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the metaphors employed in the first stanza of Ode to the West Wind at two levels adopting a cognitive linguistic approach. On the first level, this stanza is considered simply as a praise of the west wind as a destroyer and preserver; on the second level, the whole stanza is deemed as metaphorical with the west wind symbolizing the revolutionists. As Shelley is a Romantic poet, he employs a large number of metaphors in his poems so that the poems will be vivid, readable and forceful. The poem Ode to the West Wind is typical of his style which is brimming with metaphors. For this reason, this poem is a good example to show the way Shelley extends and compresses a large quantity of conventional metaphors in one poem to reach his aim. Through analyzing the first stanza of Ode to the West Wind, George Lakoff and Mark Turner's view that poetic metaphors are based on conventional ones

and the poets extend, elaborate and compress the conventional metaphors is once again corroborated.

Nevertheless the depth and breadth of this research is quite restricted. Researchers can also do more research on the manipulation of metaphors in poetry, not only English poetry, but also Chinese poetry.

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Review and Thinking of Piano Teaching
in China's Higher Normal School

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Abstract

Study on piano teaching in China's higher normal school from 2000 to 2008 concentrated on the scope of piano teaching reform, teaching model, collective course, improvisational accompaniment and curriculum and strategy. Unprecedented and brand-new changes have taken place in respects of study content, direction, approach, and perspective, and meanwhile, disadvantages have emerged. Therefore, we should take serious consideration in a classified comment and simple analysis and explore the future direction of study on piano teaching in higher normal school in the new century.

Keywords: Higher normal school, Piano teaching, Study

Piano course system in higher normal school is a significant component of pedagogical education system. Analysis, review and summary of the situation and achievements of study on piano teaching in higher normal school facilitates a healthy development of its piano teaching. By analysis of achievements of study on piano teaching in higher normal school from 2000 to 2008, the author analyzes such special subjects as reform of piano teaching, teaching model, collective course, improvisational accompaniment, and teaching method of materials etc, according to proportion of the quantity of theses. Then the author conducts a selective comment and simple analysis, and gives consideration to study on piano teaching in higher normal school.

1. Academic background of study on piano teaching in higher normal school since the 21st century

The eight years since the 21st century is the most active period of study on piano teaching in higher normal school in the history.

In July 2000, the editorial offices of <<Piano Artistry>> and <<China Music Education>> organized and held <<Symposium of Piano Teaching Reform in Higher Normal School>> in Beijing. Experts made an analysis of some existing issues in respects of teaching model, skill training and teaching target in higher normal school. Guo Lanlan thought, all schools had always been keeping up to a teaching model in professional conservatory of music, and hadn't had any of its own teaching reform plan with the feature of teacher college. Either their application of music theory or the specific keyboard could achieve a certain height, which would directly influence the future teaching of their students. Mang Feng believed that, we had partially focused on difficulty, greatness and depth of students' performance, but neglected the training of their fundamental application skills, which made it impossible to measure their comprehensive quality and level. Higher normal schools at that time did have the following issues. Their teaching content was limited to the European Classical Romantic Period, with few contemporary chapters or Chinese chapters; there had not any changes in the teaching materials; curriculum design and teaching model were single; positioning of teaching target was not accurate, etc,. The symposium undrew the prologue of exploration in piano teaching reform in the 21st century.

One year later, the Ministry of Education promulgated <<The Musical Curriculum Standard of the Full-time Compulsory Education >>. In 2002, the Ministry of Education again promulgated <<Developmental Plan of Art Education in Higher Schools (2001-2010)>>. The new curriculum standard laid emphasis on the new perspective on curriculum after the course integration, which was based on criticism and reflection on the traditional "discipline-based" and "knowledge and skill orientation", and which highlighted the idea of "people-oriented". This perspective on curriculum brought a huge attack to the traditional perspective on curriculum, teaching idea and course establishment.

In September 2004, the Music Education Commission of the Chinese Education Society held <<Piano Seminar of

Music Education in Higher colleges in China>> in Capital Normal University, and established the "Piano Academic Council. At this conference, representatives present studies and discussed how training norms and piano teaching in higher normal school should adapt to the reform and development of the national basic music education, perfection and innovation of piano course system, piano collective course, training norm of master graduates in the department of music education, the course design and teaching methodology, etc,. The seminar focused on study on the relationship between piano teaching and fundamental music education reform and development.

In September 2006, the Music Education Commission of the Chinese Education Society and the Music Education Society of Chinese Musicians Association co-hosted <<Seminar of Course Development and Teaching Research of Music Education in Higher Colleges>> in Northeast Normal University. Papers about study on piano teaching in higher normal school were respectively discussed in six special subjects. In September in the same year, the Music Education Commission of the Chinese Education Society held <<The Second Seminar of Piano Teaching in Music Education in Higher Colleges and the Second Annual Meeting of the Piano Academic Council>> in Northeast Normal University. The Chief Yang Ruimin pointed out, "how to train qualified teachers for piano education was the target of piano teaching in higher normal school." The seminar distinctly brought into light the significant subject, namely, feature of teachers, and went into further discussion on training of students' teaching capacity, teaching chapter, teaching form and piano teachers' scientific research, etc,.

What was special for that seminar was that <<The First Paper Competition of Piano Teaching in Higher Normal School>> was held. Those thesis were extensive in subject matter, and involved envision of piano courses in higher normal school, and study on piano collective teaching. The study on children material, piano teaching methodology, and Chinese works was new in its perspective and wide in its scope.

The seminar in 2006 was a weather-vine of the extent and depth of study on piano teaching in higher normal school in China.

2. Study on piano teaching reform

"Reform" has been a concept that has the highest frequency in study on piano teaching in higher normal school in China since the 21st century. Since the 21st century, several aspects such as study depth, study level and study scope of this subject matter has been further explored from the earliest preliminary understanding, to the subsequent positive implementation and then the current sufficient recognition. Of course, the viewpoint has also been more and more definite.

In the <<Symposium of Piano Teaching Reform in Higher Normal School>> in 2000, Zhou Guangren proposed the target of "one specialty with several capabilities", while Wei Tingge proposed the training target of music education "several specialties and several capabilities". And according to the latter, Those with "several capabilities" of banality couldn't become the final "qualified teachers" in higher normal school. These issues were with themselves a general meaning, and were one of the reasons for piano teaching reform in higher normal school. In terms of course system establishment, Ma Xiaohong believed that, "the school should establish a comprehensive course system of piano art based on the overall requirements of training of music talents and on traditional piano courses, with song accompaniment as the core, and with historical review of piano as the theoretical guidance" .

At the beginning of the 21st century, the enrollment of master graduates in piano was expanded, so some new subject matters were introduced, such as training norm of masters in piano, course design, training methodology, and maternal construction etc,. According to Situ Bichun, there were two different directions of training masters in piano, namely, performance and teaching. Masters in piano should lay great importance to the theoretical learning and study of <<Art History of Piano>>, <<Pedagogy of Piano>> and <<Accompaniment Art of Piano>>. They should aim at the target of "teaching", and keep course design, thesis writing and educational practice to the point of "application-based talents". There exists a close connection between piano teaching in higher normal school and professional piano teaching in conservatory of music, but there also has a clear and essential differences between the two, which include training target, source of students, teaching task and teaching time, etc,. Therefore, we should strengthen teaching of basic theory in piano teaching, intensify piano and song accompaniment capacity, open up artistic history courses of piano about China and foreign countries, and bring piano teaching methodology into teaching content and approaches of reform and evaluation.

In his <<The Two-dimensional Illustration of Piano Teaching Connotation in Higher Normal School --- a Translation Based on Music Aesthetic Culture and Cultural Heritage>>, Gao Wei made a new and philosophical analysis about cultural meanings of piano teaching reform in higher normal school from the perspective of music aesthetic culture and cultural heritage. In the <<Piano Teaching Should Focus on Piano Music Culture>> (<<Journal of Xinghai Conservatory of Music >>, No.2, 2004), Du Sichun also believed that, piano teaching should focus on learning of piano music culture, and mentioned the importance of piano music culture in piano teaching. This is a subject seldom studied by piano teaching in higher normal school.

3. Study on piano teaching model and collective course

3.1 Study on piano teaching model of higher normal school

It has been for quite some time since the discussion on piano teaching model in higher normal school. Since the 21st Century, scholars have, without exception, persisted in their own viewpoints, but what is unanimous is that the fixed one-to-one teaching model has been for long an important hindrance of piano teaching reform and development. In 2002, the article <<Primary Exploration of Piano Teaching Model in Higher Normal School>> by He Lv (<<Explorations in Music>> No.2, 2002) was an investigation in teaching model in the earlier 21st century. The author summarizes reasons for reform of piano teaching model in higher normal school as follows: expansion of enrollment causes fewer teachers and more students, and serious shortage of teaching sources; then the training target of the feature of teachers. This analysis is relatively objective. Therefore, the author advocates to open up piano theoretical course, piano collective course and piano appreciation course. The article by Huang Yin <<Reflection and Practice of Expansion of Piano Teaching Approach in Higher Normal School>> (<<Music Research>> No.1, 2007) provides with us a different referential teaching approach. In his <<Study on the Plural Teaching Model in Higher Normal School>> (<<Music Exploration>> No.2, 2002), Chen Guangquan for the first time put forward the concept of plural piano teaching model, and further demonstrated from three aspects the viewpoint that application of plural teaching model in piano teaching in higher normal school is an effective carrier to train students' comprehensive capacity.

3.2 Study on piano collective course in higher normal school

At the symposium of piano teaching reform in higher normal school in 2000, Zhou Guangren advocated to open up piano collective course. She said, "It's a pity that, piano collective course still hasn't been universally accepted by our teachers and students, and this teaching approach is still in its experimental phase." When the year 2007 arrived, we discovered that a large majority of higher normal schools had adopted the form of collective course in their piano teaching. From Zhou Guangren's appealing to promotion of this form up to now, only less than ten years have passed. This form is developed rapidly with the pace of higher education reform in China, and is a teaching reform project among all musical teaching reforms in recent year that is most rapidly developed, has the most extensive influential scope, and has the largest teaching scale. And it is also a remarkable event in musical education reform in the 21st century.

In his article <<Development of <Piano Collective Course> in Normal Education in China>> (<<Piano Artistry>> No.12, 2004), Li Heping gave a historical review on development of piano collective course, and presented the introduction of teaching methodology of American keyboard collective course by normal schools as well as the situation of their research and experiments. Since the introduction of piano collective course, more and more teachers have been positively practiced and summarized experiences. For instance, in his <<Application of MIDI Library of Exemplary Piece in Piano Collective Course in Higher Normal School>> (<<Journal of Xiaogan University>> No.1, 2004), Yang Dehua gave comments on methods of combination of piano collective course with multimedia teaching. A large majority of teachers submitted their experimental report on piano collective course teaching, such as <<Report on Research of Digital Piano Collective Course in Higher Normal School>> (<<Journal of Hubei Institute of Education >> No.3, 2006). As for the subject of exploration in learning model of piano collective course, in his article <<exploration and Practice of Research-based Learning model of Piano Collective Course in Higher Normal School>> (<<Piano Artistry>> No.1, 2007), Ma Tanghua held the view that, "in the piano collective course, we should establish "an inquiry learning model based on problem resolution'". He further studied collective course from the perspective of learning theory. What should be mentioned, scholars began to study collective course from the perspective of a new educational theory. In the article <<The Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Reform of Piano Collective Course Teaching in Higher Normal School>> (<<Chinese Music>> No.4, 2006), Wang Yihong applied Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, and analyzed disequilibrium between intellectual and nonintellectual structures in piano teaching. "We should try to teach piano collective course from a new perspective by means of application of the theory of multiple intelligences in piano collective course", which brings a brand-new research field of view and enlightenment.

Digital piano has become the primary teaching instrument in collective course. In the article <<Application of Digital Piano Teaching System in Musical Education in Higher Normal School>> (<<Beauty & Times>> No.7, 2008), Yang Jing held the view that, digital piano teaching system was combination of piano and modern high-tech, and was a newly born teaching idea and method. Compared with the traditional piano teaching system, the digital piano teaching system has changed the traditional model of former single teaching, widened content of piano teaching and has largely increased efficiency of piano teaching. Simultaneously, it organically combines knowledge of other subjects, and strengthens lateral linkage and intersecting interpenetration among different disciplines. In <<Discussion on a New Model in Piano Teaching in Higher Normal School --- Feasibility of Teaching of Digital Piano Collective Course>>, Liu Lei advocated to explore the modern "one-to-many" digital collective course teaching, to try hard to implement the brand-new trinitarian teaching method of skill, appreciation and innovation, to adapt to requirements of teaching reform and development of the era, and to keep up with targets of all-around development education and training in the 21st

century. She held a positive attitude towards digital piano teaching. However, there is still a long way to in terms of the study depth and breadth.

4. Study on improvisational accompaniment of piano

Improvisational accompaniment of piano in higher normal school is a course with great practicability and close connection with other subjects. Therefore, it demands high comprehensive quality on teachers, and is also one of hot topics in the 21st Century.

In the symposium of piano teaching reform in 2000, it was unanimously agreed that teachers were far from satisfaction in terms of their teaching ability, teaching level and teaching method about improvisational accompaniment. Therefore, we should first of all train qualified teachers, and then improve accompaniment materials. Wei Tingge held an opposite view. According to him, "Essentially, improvisational accompaniment is not teachable, and what can be taught is only piano skill and composition technical theory". The symposium proposed a controversy to that view. In the article "Status Quo of Piano Improvisational Accompaniment Teaching and Reflection on it" (<<Journal of Guizhou University>> No.4, 2004), Liu Zhu thought that "appropriate consideration of the position of piano improvisational accompaniment in the entire teaching and coordination of improvisational accompaniment with teaching reform of courses such as piano, harmony and Harmonic Ear, etc, play a positive role." In the article <<Exploration and Practice of Teaching Reform of Piano Improvisational Accompaniment Course in Higher Normal School>> (<<China Music Education>> No.5, 2005), Zhang Hui and Zhou Dongmei held the opinion that, introduction of "non-teaching factor" in the process of teaching would break the traditional teaching model concentrating on teaching. They suggested that adoption of a heuristic and leading teaching method would be an effective model of accompaniment course, and their practical experiences were worth to be advocated. In the <<Brief Analysis of Learning of Piano Improvisational Accompaniment>> (<<People's Music>> No.1, 2007), Jiang Ying thought that, "the capacity of an accurate, speedy and expressive improvisational accompaniment is a significant capacity teachers should acquire, and is also the primary factor in teaching and assessment. Therefore, training strategy of design of improvisational accompaniment course should center with the three emphasis." This viewpoint is directly to the point of the key in current improvisational accompaniment course. It is the key whether we should teach our students on the basis of training the necessary improvisational accompaniment capacity in music teachers in primary and secondary schools.

5. Study on teaching of piano teaching materials

<<Pedagogy of Piano>> in higher normal school is a new course in the 21st Century, and research of this subject is still in its preliminary stage at present. In << Seminar of Course Development and Teaching Research of Music Education in Higher Colleges >> in 2006, and in his remark about <<Discussion on Property and Design of Teaching Model of <Piano Literature and Teaching Method>, Wang Changkui put forward for the first time the design theory of pyramid-style teaching model of <<Piano Literature and Teaching Method>>. He designed five parts of teaching model of the course, and advocated the viewpoint that, teaching theory with hierarchical coordination, and development of individualized and elastic teaching theory is an effective approach for a more scientific and rational design of teaching model.

In the <<Preliminary Exploration of < Pedagogy of Piano> in Higher Normal School>> (<<Piano Artistry>> No.8,2004), Ma Tanghua thought that, << Pedagogy of Piano >> had better resolved the urgent demand of qualified piano teachers in amateur piano education, but this course usually gave priority to teaching of book theory, difficult to stimulate and adjust students' learning motive. Students in normal school should go deep into practice and learn theories in practical learning. In the article <<Enlightenment of Constructivism Teaching on Piano Teaching In Higher Normal School>> (<<Music Works>> No.4, 2007), Liu Min analyzed methods of piano teaching in higher normal school by means of the constructivism theory and held her own original ideas.

Since the 21st century, few people have conducted studies on piano teaching materials in higher normal school, which are mostly introductive articles. In his article <<Discussion on Selection of Teaching Materials of Piano Collective Course in Higher Normal School --- together with Practical Value of the Course <Basic Training of Piano Playing> by Zhou Guangren>> (<<Piano Artistry>> No.10, 2003), Yang Xiangyong believed that, "teaching and training of skills should become the center of piano teaching". The course of << Basic Training of Piano Playing>> by Zhou Guangren has eight advantages to be promoted. In 2004, People's Music Publishing House published <<Teaching Material of Brand-new Digital Piano Collective Course>>. Li Meige visited America for an investigation of piano collective course earlier, and she set about teaching experiment on it soon after returning to China. In the <<Seminar of Piano Teaching Reform in Higher Normal School>>, Li Meige introduced this set of teaching material. In his <<New Course, New Teaching Material and New Teaching Method --- Discussion from < Teaching Material of Brand-new Digital Piano Collective Course >>> (Piano Artistry>>, No.3, 2005), Xu De introduced the four characteristics of this set of teaching material, namely, keyboard theory and transfixion of knowledge, sight-playing and transposition teaching, solo and ensemble teaching and creation and style simulation teaching. Publication and implementation of this set of teaching material would be a breakthrough of piano collective course teaching reform in higher normal school. In << The Second

Seminar of Piano Teaching in Music Education in Higher Colleges and the Second Annual Meeting of the Piano Academic Council >> in 2006, Tang Chongqing introduced the undergraduate musicology teaching material of <<Piano>> published by People's Music Publishing House and edited by Zhang Hui, Tang Chongqing and Li Heping. This set of teaching material has received a unanimous recognition by piano teachers in terms of its focus on the feature of teachers and its reveal of capacity training, and will play an improving role in a healthy development of piano teaching in higher normal school.

Under the circumstance in which universal piano education has become the dominant channel for exchange of Chinese music culture and the global music culture, Huang Ying advocates to combine Chinese piano literature and significant Occidental piano literature in basic teaching of piano, and to promote these two complementary cultures. She also proposes the envision of nationalization of fundamental piano teaching materials and creation of Chinese Pianolude.

6. Conclusion and thinking of study on piano teaching since the new century

A brief review on research of piano teaching from 2000 to 2007, we discover that there are the following characteristics for research of this period.

1). In terms of the content, study emphasis of this period relatively concentrated on such subjects as teaching reform, course system establishment, teaching model, and collective course form etc, and the study of this period was close to the pace of contemporary information and educational reform, so it has played an improving role in promotion of piano teaching in higher normal school. Its influential force is self-evident. However, width and depth of study in terms of teaching method of materials, role of Chinese works in teaching and fundamental teaching, etc,.

2). In terms of the direction, study of this period began to switch to the direction of fundamental music education and social fundamental music education, but the integration has not been enough.

3). In terms of the method, most studies adopted experiential summary method, which was practical and feasible. However, few studies adopted empirical methods, and some studies were short of reliable data, so the argument was not enough and was not convictive.

4). In terms of the perspective, comparative study of piano teaching in foreign higher normal school was lacking. Study was relatively weak by means of a new educational teaching theory and a new perspective. Furthermore, there were fewer studies from the perspective of aesthetics, philosophy and culturology, and academic profoundness is still open to be strengthened.

In brief, we get the following thought and prospects for study on piano teaching in higher normal schools in the future.

1). To reform the concept of teaching research, and to strengthen service of piano teaching research for fundamental music education and for social fundamental piano teaching. To focus on development of fundamental music education and social fundamental piano teaching, and to open the research fields.

2). To intensify theoretical research of teaching methodology of piano teaching materials, and to explain the modern piano teaching methodology that are changing with an astounding speed by means of a new educational theory and educational concept. The research should be forward-looking, and it should be avoided to remain at a level of empirical and introductive research.

3). Emphasis on music culture of the nation has been a tendency of study on international music education in recent years. To strengthen research and summary of teaching of Chinese piano works in piano teaching in higher normal school, to put forward a theoretical basis for the new piano teaching materials with national characteristics, and to provide practical evidence for piano teaching.

4). Research of piano teaching in higher normal school should establish a multicultural music concept, and broaden research content and scope. For instance, to broaden comparative study of piano teaching in foreign higher normal school, to connect intersecting research of others subjects in the department of music education, and to apply intersecting research of such theories as modern pedagogics, psychology, and sociology, etc. Therefore, research of piano teaching can obtain a new value orientation at a further level.

We believe that, in the near future, with common efforts of a large number of experts and scholars, study on piano teaching in higer normal school will get more varied, and will promote more effectively forward development of piano teaching in higher normal school.

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The Volatility of National Identification:

A Mix-Method Pilot Study of Taiwanese Young Adults

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Abstract

One important critique of deliberative democracy and the practice of public forum is the extent to which controversial, moral, or symbolic issues can be well deliberated through oral discussion. This study attempted to apply multiple methods to study the dynamics of discussion about determining the name of Taiwan. Six young adults, selected from a telephone survey, were invited to attend a forum to discuss a series of political issues, including this most sensitive and controversial issues in Taiwan. The choices of each participant (preferring a new name for Republic of China or continuing to use the old one) in the telephone survey and the group discussion were recorded. Three participants who changed their choices during the deliberation process were interviewed.

Keywords: National identification, Deliberation, Focus group, Public forum, Mixed methods, Taiwan studies

1. Introduction

Current studies of national and ethnic identification in Taiwan politics mostly focus on the percentage change in identifying being "Chinese" or "Taiwanese," which looks at the trend and the meaning of Taiwan national and ethnic identification changes from a more macro perspective. This study is about national identification, however from a more micro point of view, with an attempt to complement the forming or changing process of citizens' national identification with the concepts of individually preferred volatility and inconsistency.

One of the reasons why Taiwan people's national identification is an issue comes from the distrust (or even hostility) toward the political party Kuomintang (KMT) which was originally from China and later came to rule Taiwan (Gold, 1987). After years of democratization, Taiwanese society has gradually developed a different historical and geographical identity than that of the KMT's. This further progressed into two competing identification systems, one treating China as a guest (a different country), one treating China as a host (we are free Chinese in Taiwan). Although Gold (1987) points out that from the perspective of the "one China," identification issue in Taiwan is one of the issues having to do with China, if we take a closer look at conflicting identification (Taiwan versus ROC) or dual identification (Taiwanese and Chinese), we will see that this issue is not completely influenced by the relationship with People's Republic of China (PRC), or the identification pressure from other countries. In order to deal with the uncertainty of Taiwan's international position, and to win democratic elections in Taiwan, the stance on national identification has to be taken seriously. In competing for votes in elections for Taiwan society and political parties, namely between the KMT and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), this is especially true.

At the moment, scholars are still unsure whether there is high relevancy or consistency between party identification and national identification in Taiwan. That is, whether people who support Taiwan to be clearly separate from China are DPP supporters, or whether people who support the legitimacy of ROC are pro KMT. The relevance of consistency needs further verification. Even so, the perceived connection between party image and national identification, that is, DDP being the party that "proactively creates and arouses the consciousness of Taiwanese identity" and KMT as the party that "proactively seeks ties with China," is a very unique phenomenon in the world democracy.

The main reason why this unique phenomenon draws particular attention from political scientists is because it is generally believed that party identification plays a key role in the formation of voters' preferences. That is to say, a political party, its image and the ideology it represents are highly related to voters' judgments on their public policies and candidates. If this logic is correct, the current distribution of Taiwan national identification will be very similar to that of their party preferences, that is, a certain percentage of people are very clear concerning their own national identification while at the same time, there are still many others who are not sure about which party to support and who are ambivalent about national identification.

This issue of the fluidity of national identification is of both empirical and theoretical importance. Empirically, this issue of ambivalent national identification is associated with partisan conflicts, confrontational movements caused by partisan conflicts, and other aspects of negative impacts on the political stability and the policy consistency of the nation. Taiwan is a unique case where political conflict is not only about policy choice and ideology but also about national identification.

National identification is hardly an issue for scholarly discussion in most nations, such as the United States and Canada; therefore, the development of theories or the observation of cases regarding the volatility of national identification will test the limits of the current literature concerning nationality and the malleability of belief systems. Party identification is supposed to be stable and not subject to change due to one's belief system (Converse, 1964), which is composed of one's ideology and values. The mid-1960s, however, saw a rise in political independence that suggested a rise in macro-partisan volatility (Dennis, 1988). Previous studies have identified short-term fluctuations in political independence linked to issue preferences, economic conditions, socialization, and periodic political events such as campaigns and elections (Clarke and Suzuki, 1994; Clarke and Stewart, 1998; Greene, 2002; MacKuen et al., 1989; Niemi et al., 1991; Sears and Valentino, 1997). Weakening party ties leads to an increase in the instability of voter preferences over time (MacKuen et al., 1989; MacKuen et al., 1992), a trend that corresponds to an increase in the number of swing voters and swing states and perhaps indicates the decline of partisanship in the U.S. and Britain (Clarke and Stewart, 1998; Clarke and Suzuki, 1994; Fiorina et al., 2005; Mayer, 2007).   These studies taken together suggest that, one's national identification can be as stable as party identification. Ideally, people of different national identification will eventually find a largest common divisor so the society is balanced. This balance, however, depends on how the ambivalent group forms their identification. This further implies that, national identification, which is constructed through the socialization process, may change when there are more than one way of socialization. In other words, citizens within a country like Taiwan, where there is more than one way of socialization, may experience ambivalence in their national identification.

This study will focus on how Taiwanese people choose between two options for the nation's future—citizens of Taiwan Republic or citizens of ROC—through a deliberative process, in which the ideology of political parties plays a minimum role. Indeed, Taiwan is not yet at the stage of a referendum concerning national name or an amendment of its constitution. However, when the majority of Taiwan people has no problem with the statement "I am Taiwanese" but has diverse opinions on "My nation is…," it is enough for us to believe that this research topic is a significant indicator of what decision people will make when the time comes for them to choose their nation's destiny.

This research will be presented in the next four sections. The next section explains the design and the initial findings of the research; the third section demonstrates the interactive process of the focus group; and the forth section is further interviews with the three members who showed unstable identifications during the telephone interview and the focus group, in an effort to find out the real reasons behind their instability. The conclusion section discusses about the limitations of this research and the worthwhile topics for further research.

2. Research design

To provide interviewees with information to make informed choices, there are currently three methods used. The first is split ballots (Schuman & Bobo, 1988), which has been adopted in America since 1930. As the name suggests, it splits samples into two halves, asks the randomly selected half the adjusted question and then compares the differences of the two sample groups. The second method is choice questionnaire. It also lets interviewees read information before they answer. However, more than information giving, it further offers the predictable results and the chances of those given choices to the interviewees (Neijens, 2004). The third one is Fishkin's (1995) deliberative polling. It selects the most representative sample of the population in demography and gives them the questionnaire. After first questionnaire, the

representative sample of people is put together to further discuss and deliberate for days and then another test is run on them.

Because the entire process of Fishkin's deliberative polling requires a huge budget, I designed the study by combining this with the concept of Neijens' choice questionnaire and then integrating it with survey research and focus group methodologies. To be detailed below, my first step was looking for individuals of different preferences. To obtain the list, I inserted the prepared questions into a national telephone interview questionnaire (the details of the questions are illustrated later in this section). Those who have different answers to the prepared questions are selected and then among them, only those who are willing to be interviewed were contacted. Next, I adopted Fishkin's deliberative idea and made the process of the focus group's discussion like that of public forum as much as possible, while also reserving the effect of the selected questionnaires. Before face-to-face discussing the issues, the interviewees were asked to finish the same questionnaire. During the discussion, the host then brought the stimulating factors to the deliberation and discussion. After group discussion, they were asked again to answer the same questionnaire provided earlier in the telephone survey. The last phase was one on one interviews arranged with those who gave inconsistent answers in telephone interviews and focus group, to find out reasons of their change of choices.

Focus groups have been drawing lots of scholarly attention since 1980's and it is now seen as one of the quantitative research methodologies complementary to survey research methodology (Knodel, Chamratrithirong & Debavalya, 1987; Krueger & Casey, 2000; Morgan, 1996). The way focus group works is that through group discussion on topics given by the researcher, the group members form their point of views via active interpersonal interaction. Users of this method particularly weigh on the process of discussion itself and see group discussion as an important source of information. What distinguishes it from survey research method is that in focus groups, the researcher plays a more active role in the process of data and information collection (Morgan, 1996). Survey researchers have started using focus groups as complementary to statistical data of survey research (e.g., Cheng, 2004; 2005). Nevertheless, because the sample of this method is not randomly selected, there is little room for making inference or generalization. Also, it is widely acknowledged that this method does not necessarily produce a "focus," instead, it studies the uncontrollable reaction to the stimulus. "It uses the stimulus to reveal the unknown issues behind the stimulus so that the normally hidden problems have a way to respond to the stimulus; therefore digging out the potentially critical knowledge…to explain the instability of truth" (Shi, 2003, p. 67; translated by the author). Hence, a researcher by using this method can explore participants' reaction to certain given stimulus during group discussion. Thus, this research will use the focus group as an experimentally small-scale public forum to observe and find out the possibilities of the "choosing nation name" issue from the participants. Below are details about how the three phases of studies were conducted.

2.1 Phase 1: Questionnaire and telephone interview

The purpose of using questionnaire and telephone interviews in this research is to find voters with different preferences and then further invite those who are willing to participate in the focus group discussion in the second phase. The sample data of telephone interview is used by a nationwide telephone interview of a research university's poll survey research center done on January 12th, 2008, after the legislative election.(Note 1) There are a total of 32 questions in the telephone interview, including two questions of choosing nation name and one question of whether willing to have further interviews. The choices of answers of the second question are the same as the first one. The only difference is that the second question adds statements which are meant to stimulate the participants to think further. The first question was inserted into the questionnaire as the 7th question so that the interviewees can answer it easily and quickly without thinking like they answer the first six questions. Interviewers were requested to read only the first two options so the participants are somehow directed to pick one out of the two choices. However if the participants' answer is "I don't know" or "no comments" the interviewers will truthfully record their answers. This question has some theoretical expectations: participants who prefer status quo would, according to their preferred political party, choose "option 2: Current name ROC," while those who prefer Taiwan to be a virtually independent country would, according to their political party, choose "options 1: New nation name."

> If you could decide, will you use (1) own nation name such as Taiwan, Taiwan Nation, Formosa, or Taiwan Republic for Taiwan (including Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu)? Or, (2) current name ROC?
>
>   1. New nation name
>
>   2. Current name ROC
>
>   3. I don't know
>
>   4. No comments

The second question was inserted to the questionnaire as the 17th question. Interviewers are instructed to read this question particularly slowly and give participants about 5 seconds to think. Because more information is provided for this question, participants might feel ambivalent, find it hard to judge, or even change their choices.

This question is a bit long and not so easy to answer. Therefore please listen carefully and tell me what you think. As far as nation name is concerned, many people believe that using a new country name will help us get out of the mire of ambiguous identity in the world and therefore get more international support. However, it will also incur military conflicts in cross-strait relationship so we run the risk of destruction of our economy and even the lives of our friends and relatives because of war. On the other hand, some people believe that by keeping the name ROC, we have more room to negotiate with the cross strait so that our economy and constitution get to last and also peace will remain. However in this case, the cross strait will keep using its one China foreign policy to stop our next generations from participating in international affairs with our nation name and even force us to abandon our own nation identity in international occasions. Therefore, if you could decide Taiwan's future, will you support (1) own nation name for Taiwan (including Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu)? Or, (2) current name ROC?

> 1. New nation name
>
> 2. Current name ROC
>
> 3. I don't know
>
> 4. No comments

A good number of people (856 out of 1,120) answered the first question with 71.3% choosing "current name ROC" and 28.7% "new nation name." 853 people answered the second question with 58.4% choosing "current name ROC," 20% "new nation name," and 22% "I don't know" or "no comments." Among those who picked "new nation name" in the first question, 61.4% keep their answer; for those who chose "current name ROC," 74% remain the same answer. Although this research is not about finding the correlation of the two questions, or the basic qualities of the participants, the results of first phase data collection shown in Table 1 suggest: (1) Telephone interview of providing more information from the idea of "deliberate polling" does have impacts on the participants. (2) The change of voters' choices of identification may not occur in a binary fashion or like taking sides on an issue. Those who changed their answers did not reveal that they made a completely different answer; rather they chose an ambivalent option such as I don't know or no comments.

(Table 1 is about here)

2.2 Phase 2: Discussion of the focus group

Interviewees who changed their choices in the inserted two questions were contacted two weeks after the telephone survey. Among them, those who were willing to and able to participate in a focus group discussion were filtered out and invited to the campus. Due to budget limit and the fact that some interviewees of interest changed mind about participating the public forum, it became very difficult to host a diverse group at this stage as planned in the first place. It turned out that I have to compose a homogeneous network composed of those with similar age and education level (university or graduate degrees), as well as ethnicity (southern Fukien Province or min-nan). The similarity of background is expected to facilitate deliberative conversation instead of arousing conflicts. The focus group was arranged one and half months after the telephone interview (March 1st, 2008, 2pm to 5pm) at the common room of a research institute at a university in southern Taiwan. Six targeted individuals attended.

The topics designed for focus group discussion were not restricted to national identification or nation names; rather, it was only one of the many topics. The reason of doing so was to warm up and lead the participants to the core issue step by step. In the beginning, interviewees' attention was diverted to the topics such as the media usage before the presidential election and the observation of its influences on the society by the host (also the author). It was half an hour before the break time when the more serious topic like nation names was brought into the discussion. The interviewees were first to define the concept of "independence" when using the "Taiwan independence" in their daily life. Later they were handed the first answer sheet (see Attachment 1) and asked to quickly pick or circle an answer and turn it over, then handed it back. (Note 2)

After the short opening, there was about 15 minutes given to the participants for open discussion. Then a second answer sheet was handed to each of them (see Attachment 2). Again the interviewees were asked to pick or circle an answer and then returned it back. Note that during the discussion participants were asked not to sign on the sheets and that they did not know these sheets would be analyzed for their consistency until the third phase. Table 2 summarizes the pattern of changes in national identification.

(Table 2 is about here)

Table 2 shows that No. 1, No.2, and No.6 changed their mind while No.3, No.4 and No.5 were stable in their identification. It is interesting to see that the instability of No.1 and No2 has been detected as early as in the telephone interview phase; they continued to reveal unstable identification in focus group discussion. We also noticed that No.6 was obviously influenced by the group interaction and changed her identification. Therefore, I chose No. 1, No. 2, and No.6 for in-depth interviews. (Note 3)

2.3 Phase 3: In depth trace interviews

No.1, No.2 and No.6 were interview separately on March 23rd 2008. Via one on one interview, I expected to find out and understand the influences they had on them and then the reasons why they changed their attitudes or identification. The next two sections will present the interactions in the second and the talks in the third sections, respectively.

3. The summary of focus group discussion

This section presents how the flow of discussion influenced No.1, No.2 and No.6, the three participants most apparently influenced by the atmosphere of the discussion.

The discussion about national identification after the first answer sheets were collected was initiated by No. 6's comments on the answer sheet:

No. 6: "I think this [list of options] is problematic. This is a question with only two possible answers given. I believe in five years there might be a third choice. Since the situation [of Taiwan's international status] is painful and difficult, how is it possible that the government would allow this [status quo] to continue? That's why I think this [issue] is debatable. The government might create a third or fourth option depending on its diplomatic skills and negotiation status at the time. …At the very least, we shall keep the current situation."

After I made a brief explanation of the research design for No. 6, No.2 made a statement that influenced almost everyone. It is worthwhile mentioning that No.2 circled "choose a new nation name" in the first answer sheet; however, after my restatement of the consequences for the two options, she changed her mind, which was later shown in her choice in the second answer sheet.

No. 2: "I can't image my friends and relatives going to war and never coming back. Wars are very brutal. Take the recent Kosovo's independence war for example, it is very painful. Regardless you are a soldier or not, they take anyone as hostage, even elderly, women and children. Another example is Israel, it is independent for a long time now but the war still never ceases. Should there be a war between Taiwan and Mainland China, it might last for such a long time too. It won't be like that we all get killed in one day, with Mainland China's military being successful, and then the cross strait relationship becomes peaceful hereafter. No I don't think so. I still believe we will be more like the example of Israel."

No.5, who voted for keeping the ROC name, expressed her opinions, which seemed to set the tone for the following discussion.

No. 5: "I am in favor of the second option, keeping the ROC name, based on the principle of choosing the lesser of two evils. If we opt for Taiwan Republic, the consequence is dangerous and immediate…. I think even the example of Hong Kong is not bad at all. The question is, is Taiwan capable of fighting in the war? It is something we have to evaluate. The position Taiwan has in the world is very difficult. …With all these, how does one identity his own life and role? How could we completely cut off and separate [from "China"]? It was mentioned that war is very terrifying. If we keep talking about independence and war stuff, as far as People's Republic of China is concerned, their strong military force is more than easy to take Taiwan anytime. They don't even need military force actually. If they block Taiwan economically, will Taiwan be even able to fight? Therefore I agree with the second option more."

In order to balance viewpoints, I joined the discussion and re-profiled the negative effects of both options:

"Let me recap. The first option is to choose a new nation name, with all other things remain unchanged, just a new name. The possible result is conflicts. However if not changing name and keeping the current situation, time is not necessarily on our side. By the time when the whole world recognizes only one China, our identifications will be forced to change too. It will be more than just an issue of national power and fighting abilities. Even our ID cards have to be changed too, and that is something we will be forced to accept. The issue of national power and fighting abilities can be solved by the government or the new leader. However, that ID cards are forced to change implies the sovereignty of the country has disappeared. …The worst is our identifications will be completely changed. Both outcomes are not certain, but both are the worst possible. We just haven't had time to really think about them. We are not discussing if any of them is going to happen today, but we are discussing the current situation when they are both possible. It is why we are here and also the hardest thing to do."

No. 2: "I'd rather change my ID card than losing my family."

No. 3: "Just like every coin has two sides, everything has a good side and a bad side. For option 1, since people nowadays are very used to comfortable and settled life, no one would like war or to be haunted with fear, or even an unstable life without food. If I can keep my life, I'd rather change an identification name. It doesn't make any big difference to me; it's only a change of name."

No. 1: "When I first heard the question, I thought both options led to Taiwan's independence. Just one is independence immediate, and the other one is quiet and smooth independence, without changing current nation name to a new one. It turned out that the second option is us being smoothly and quietly unified."

No. 2: "Honestly I feel that the two options are KMT and DPP's assertions, individually."

The host: "You may say that these are some parties' declarations. But to a citizen, we are discussing their influences on us, rather than arguing over symbols. We only put forth the results in advance to discuss. As your question was not included in the telephone interview, we are unable to further discuss it."

No. 2: "I am willing to change our nation name since after my children are born, they won't know what Taiwan is anyway."

No. 1: "No matter what, I want to say one more thing about the possible war mentioned before. Everyone of them (in Mainland China), once they know you are from Taiwan, would say to you: 'As long as you declare independence, we will attack you.' So it is not just Chinese government that threatens us like that, even civilians do. …Don't you feel terrible? It's like anyone would attack you anytime when you are on holidays there. Therefore whether we can be independent successfully or get unified gradually, I simply don't want the feeling that once I change names I will be attacked."

During the fifteen minute discussion No.4 didn't take any initiative to speak. He went quiet with no further discussion after No.1's comment. It is noticed that No.1's choice was very much affected by No.2's earlier remark. No.1, who originally voted for "choose a new nation name," after changing her choice, further attempted to convince No.5, who originally voted for "keep current name ROC," but got a bit hesitant after the discussion. Interestingly, No.6, who had been sticking with the option of "keep current name ROC" through the entire discussion, picked the other answer "choose a new nation name" on the second answer sheet after discussion.

4. The summary of in-depth interviews

On March 23rd, 2008, right after the presidential Election Day on March 20th, I arranged three time slots to meet again with interviewees No.1, No.2 and No.6 individually. The purpose is to further explore reasons behind their inconsistencies revealed in the telephone survey and the focus group. The venue is a coffee shop around the Taipei Main Station. Given familiarity developed in the focus group, the three ladies accepted the invitation.

4.1 Interview with No. 1 (Ms. Huang from Taipei County)

No.1 didn't answer the first question on the telephone survey and when asked the second question she picked the answer of "keep current name ROC." In the focus group, she changed her answer to "choose a new nation name," while at the end of the discussion she changed back to "keep current name ROC." That she changed its identification choice was due to the various concerns at the time of answering.

"When I was replying (to the first question) in the telephone survey, I was concerned that if choosing using the name Taiwan, I would be hurt [by somebody around me]. Therefore I thought it was better not to reveal what I truly think first...For the second question, the thought I had was using Taiwan, however, again I was afraid of being hurt. Then I thought that using ROC or keeping the status quo is safer. I felt that to avoid saying Taiwanese I would avoid being hurt. As far as I am concerned, to maintain what we are now, naming doesn't matter much, as long as we can continue to survive. Therefore I finally chose to maintain the current name."

"..I answered Taiwan (on the first answer sheet) in the focus group because I thought that no one would see the answer anyway.(Note 4) …However, when the instructor reminded me of the possible outcomes, I thought no one [in the government] could really do everything that they wanted to due to reality concerns. Therefore, what we really want and the decisions we make based on reality concerns aren't always consistent."

I observed that No.1's judgment was not based on her personal political preferences or decisions she made before, rather it was based on the external given conditions (such as political party or politicians' image) and some stereotypes.

"My (truthful) answer is: no matter what nation name we will use, I just want to be equally treated as all others in other countries when I travel. …If this wish can be achieved, I don't really care what nation name we have. Honestly I don't feel name is such an important issue to me. …Therefore, my choice will change when the conditions change."

I further found that No.1's volatility in national identification was associated with the heterogeneity of her political communication network.

"…Yesterday [the Election Day] I was the first one in the family finishing voting. My father asked me which party I voted for (he is a green camp supporter) and said to me 'You voted for KMT, didn't you?' I told him I casted an invalid ballot by stamping on both KMP and DPP. I lied because I wanted to avoid conflicts. My father was angry and said to me 'OK. If you did cast an invalid vote, then there is no need for your mother to go to vote ….' This is because if I had

said I voted for KMT, then both my parents would have to go vote so that [to them] DPP will win over KMT [in my family]."

4.2 Interview with No. 2 (Ms. Chang from Taichung City)

Unlike No.1 who consciously felt constraints, No.2 made her choices mostly based on the inertia derived from the political or social education she had received. No.2 chose "keep current name ROC" in the first question of telephone interview, but changed her choice to "choose a new nation name" in the second question. As No. 2 explained, in the telephone interview she didn't pay much attention to the interviewer since she was watching television and responding to her relatives talking to her at the same time. Hence, she wasn't very concentrated when answering the first question.

During the group discussion she said she was better able to process information during the focus group discussion "because the question and options was written on paper, and because there was someone in front of me talking, I was more able to process information and think. …Particularly, when the question became longer with three or more sentences I could not follow the interviewer well." However, her answers remain inconsistent: She circled "choose a new nation name" on her first answer sheet but picked "keep current name ROC" in the second answer sheet.

No. 2 recalled, "I circled Taiwan on the first answer sheet. I thought it has something to do with that fact that what DPP has been promoting. That is, changing many symbols used in Taiwan and associated with China to Taiwan, such as changing the name of a state-owned company 'China Petrolic Corporation (CPC)' to 'CPC Corporation, Taiwan,' … I think I was a bit influenced by that."

"…I didn't think too much when answering the first question in the focus group. I felt I am Taiwanese; I never said I am from ROC so I intuitively wrote Taiwan. Actually I thought Taiwan is quite nice too and won't cause confusion. Some children now are quite confused about ROC and even question their teachers why we need to write ROC."

The dramatic change of No.2 from "choose a new nation name" to "keep current name ROC" in the focus group was obviously affected by the discussion about war.

"War's influence on me was particularly big, because I recently read a comic book about war. Its description about war was horrible so I was shadowed by it. I don't think I will be able to face the consequence of a war if a war could really happen. There has been news about Pakistan and Lebanon, which make me felt terrible; not to mention the news about Tibet, which scared me. I am really afraid of the possible casualties."

"I remembered very well that even before the second answer sheet was spread out I already told you I felt so regretful and I wanted to change my choice [on the first answer sheet]. My head was full of images of my father and my brother serving in the army, and even my boyfriend and that they all died and never came back. … [at that time] It was impossible for me to think of other things like economy, national pride or people's dignity. I believe when the security issue was involved, there was no room for dignity concern."

To No.2, this imaginary picture is obviously much stronger than a balance point No.5 made during the discussion: Taiwanese do not understand their own culture and history well and therefore the insistence on national independence is weak.

"I remembered how No.5 sorrowfully mentioned that nowadays the young generation is too cold and cares too little about their own culture and history. …Actually I feel quite upset hearing that because I feel the same way, being someone with still a bit of conscience. I also understand how sorrowful those who care much about ethnic issue feel. Because there are some issues I care much about but I also feel very sad and sorrowful that no one cares. So I understand how she feels…I did take some time to think about what she said."

"It is after the worst situations of both options were read and discussed that I felt that they have different weights. I inevitably thought more towards the option that of greater weight. So, I felt that I shouldn't have so little passion about Taiwan. …I felt that losing the passion for Taiwan will make me gradually forget about my own history. Even though, I still tend to look at things from the point of view that causes the least casualty. After all, culture and history can be recreated while lives cannot. Although No.5's remark made sense to me, the most important value in my life is not a country….To young people who are cold about politics like me, that kind of patriotism no longer exists in our minds. To me, the keeping own family is more important."

No.2's remark also confirmed my previous observation during the focus group discussion: Her being the first to talk, giving strong reactions, and making speeches that set a direction and tone for later discussion.

4.3 Interview with No. 6 (Ms. Yang from Kaohsiung County)

No.6 consistently chose "keep current ROC name" in both of the inserted questions in the telephone interview and the first answer sheet of the focus group session. What made No. 6 a special case is that she changed her answer to "choose a new nation name" after the group discussion.

During the one-on-one interview, No.6 seemed to be a little anxious and reluctant to accept that she changed her choices. She said, "I don't remember the process of making the judgment" many times. She seemed to be very concerned that the research team knew her inconsistency and became defensive during the interview. Although she had my explanation about the design and purpose of this research, the topics of our conversation had to be redirected to other issues to decrease the level of anxiety. Hence, I wasn't able to get complete reasons of her changing in her choice.

The following two passages reveal the principles that No.6 used when making a choice, which are similar to those used by No.1: there should be no wars.

"I would like to choose the lesser of two evils. If there is a war, we would be possibly alive, but it is equally possible that we will be killed. Compared to the downside of the other option about the losing national identity, having a war with Mainland China is mixed of too much uncertainty and cost. Since we were part of China hundreds of years ago, the worst would be going back to that stage and learning history of China all over again. But, at least we should be alive..."

"...The possibility of war determined my decision. If there is a war involved, I wouldn't change nation name and prefer keeping the current name ROC. But if you tell me there won't be a war or serious consequences, I would prefer changing nation name. … If you still put war as the possible consequence of changing nation name, I think the worst scenario is losing national identity, which I would accept."

5. Conclusion and discussion

The volatility of national identification within country is a special phenomenon in Taiwan (and a few other countries such as North Ireland). The current relevant theories concerning volatility of identity did not include and explain the phenomenon of the volatility of national identification in Taiwan (or rather, there is no relevant theory concerning the change of national identification). That is, it requires further clarification when there is a change in people's national identification, whether it is caused by the party ambivalence deriving from the confrontation among political parties or by the policy ambivalence from the inconsistency of preferences of political parties and their polices. Therefore, the present study is not deductively verifying certain or established theories, but attempting to draw conclusive meanings from experiences and phenomenon, as a preparation for establishing new theories.

The key issue of current research on Taiwan people's national identity is to precisely capture voters' national identity via simple questionnaire. The common way is to use options of ethnic identification, "Taiwanese" "Chinese" or "both Taiwanese and Chinese," as an indicator of national identification. Although this method is indeed simple and direct, and easy for interviewees to understand, its merit is also its limitation. The labels "Taiwanese" and "Chinese" carry many complex connotations (such as culturally connected with China, emotional ties with the island of Taiwan, and the geographically concerns of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu) that are not easy for interviewees to clarify in a short period of time. The information collected via this method would also cause difficulties for the researcher. It is hard to discover the reason behind the phenomenon of volatile and vague national identification for those who answer "both Taiwanese and Chinese," or "both Chinese and Taiwanese." Therefore, systematic research is needed to find out what indicators of identification interviewees are using in labeling themselves thus.

The present research cannot confirm if the choice of nation name is the best indicator of national identification, which requires further investigation. This constraint is worth some discussion. Once one person's identification is established, it is hard to change fragmentally, after all. For those who changed their preferences of nation names (such as No.1, No.2 and No.6 in this research), these changes do not necessarily mean there were radical changes in their identification. Rather it seems that their national identification is still in the process of developing, and that process shouldn't be hindered by this investigation or other stimulus. Thus, the indicator of nation name used in this research perhaps captured the political preferences of the participants, rather than their true identification.

Usually, researchers are not concerned with uncovering the "true" or "the deepest" identification of the interviewees. This is because identification is a process of learning and development after all. Thus, this digging for the truth is not that meaningful. For one thing, it is very difficult to carry out the research; for another thing; it is unknown to what extent there is a link between the deepest identification and superficial preferences.

At the very least, this research showed that such a link is very weak. Those who had unstable national identification during telephone interviews and one on one interviews (there were at least two week intervals between the telephone interview, focus group discussion, and one on one interview) did not shape their preferences of nation name based on political parties' images or ideology, but based on situational and conditional judgments. If they have to shape their own identification based on discussion or interpersonal interaction to make decisions, then the discussion or interpersonal interaction at the time would greatly affect their judgment. In other words, superficial choice of nation name will be affected by situations. Also in the process of interpersonal interaction, participants do not necessarily want to reveal or are not capable of revealing their deepest identification.

From the record of the interviews, this paper has shown that the participants' ability to verbally express their ideas (capable participants will bring more information, symbols and opinions to the discussion), the sequences of speaking

and the interpretations and stresses on certain stimuli (such as the terror of war) all influenced the judgment of those who have unstable identification. I discovered it was the participants who spoke first, who had better expression abilities, and who injected emotional factors shaped the profile of the discussion. You could say these participants were throwing driftwood into the sea of linguistic symbols for the others to grab and follow.

However, this does not mean that interpersonal interaction will definitely affect participants' judgment. Concerning the logic of preference change in this case study, it is highly likely that most people would choose "safe options" (such as "both Chinese and Taiwanese") when asked with identification, controversial or politically sensitive issues in a research interview. It is therefore inappropriate to interpret such information as people's true preferences.

The indicators of national identification used in this research may seem too simple. However, they can more or less assist the participants to focus and to convert the cultural or geographical identification into choices that will shape the future of the nation. Therefore, this information would be more meaningful for future policies.

Although the findings of this research cannot be applied to the entire youth population or the majority of voters in Taiwan, the thinking mentioned in these discussions is not completely unrepresentative either. The reasons behind of participants' changes in preferences are possibly quite representative of those who have volatile preferences when asked to make decision on the future of the nation. Voters who have volatile national identification, or belong to a heterogeneous political communication network tend to hide own preferences (such as No.1). Under the auspices of "choosing the lesser of two evils," participants tend to choose identification based on the rational logic of picking the option with the least costs (such as No.2 and No.6). Although the worst case for both options were presented in each telephone interview and focus group discussion to the interviewees, the fear caused by the negative impacts of "choose a new nation name" out-weighted the pressure caused by the negative impacts of "keep current name ROC."

These findings generate some new ideas for the discussion of deliberative democracy. In Taiwan the concept of deliberative democracy has been the subject of actual practice and experiments in the "public forum." This is usually used by the government to justify the legitimacy of policy. The present research echoes the concerns of recent scholars (e.g., Ho & McLeod, 2008): people with volatile identification will not only be influenced by those who have firm identification, but also be further lead by emotions due to the lack of personal belief.

This study also shows that it is difficult to make an important assumption concerning practices in the public forum: the participants in public forums are expected to have a similar level of knowledge and emotions towards the issues and the options. Even after I controlled for the participants' education level, they differed significantly regarding the perception of Taiwanese history, the importance of the civil responsibilities, and even the necessity of national defense in the face of PRC's military threat. This outcome was different from what I had expected before beginning this research—that the negative consequences associated with each option should be perceived as equally severe to the participants. Hence, future studies that aim to further the exploration of how national identification can be deliberated rationally should consider framing questions in terms of losing lives and property in both options. This will increase the difficulty level for participants when they are making decisions.

Last, some other constraints in this study are worth mentioning. First, it was difficult to select participants from the pool of survey participants. Few respondents in the telephone survey were willing or had time to come to the focus group. Therefore, it was not possible for us to balance the distribution of gender in the first place. As a result, it was difficult for us to judge if the inactivity of the only male participant (No.4) was due to the fact that he was the only male participant, or due to his own conservatively defensive attitude. It was equally difficult to judge if the horrifying image of war that was mentioned many times during the discussion would have greater weight for a female participant. Secondly, as mentioned earlier, nation name choice may not be the best indicator of one's national identification. The effectiveness of this measure still requires further verification, even though we did our best to exclude the possible influence of identification with Chinese culture in both the telephone survey and interviews by not mentioning the cultural relationship between Taiwan and China.

Thirdly, the design of questions of this choice questionnaire was fairly subjective and did not quite meet the method of Neijiens', which points out the possibilities of the consequences of every option (even although the possibilities of such can be quite subjective, too). Brain storming is suggested to check if participants with various backgrounds correctly understand the meaning and the consequences of each option.

Finally, I acknowledge that the second phase of the focus group in the research is not exactly what Fishkin defined as public forum. Although the stimulants and the balance points for two options were provided in the process, the materials prepared for discussion were limited; no paper information was provided before the discussion and there was no so called "experts" on site for consultation. As such, emotions may have played an excessively large role in the focus group. Future research, therefore, should explore the extent to which the influence of emotions identified in this research has the same effect on other focus groups.

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Notes

Note 1. The survey was done by Computer Assisted Telephone Interview System—CATI. Survey period was between January 13th and 16th, 6pm to 10pm. The interviews were eligible voters over 20 years old. Sample numbers were 1,120. Sampling error is 95%, 3% more or less under level of confidence. Samples are weighted distribution of sex, age, education level, and geography based on the data of national population.

Note 2. The interviewees were told that this was an anonymous research and therefore they could give answers freely. However for the sake of research, we still marked on their seat numbers so it is still traceable that which answer sheet was written by whom.

Note 3. It is worthwhile mentioning that No.4 had kept a very low profile throughout the group interaction and was not too active in discussion. Therefore his personal identification hardly made any influence through interpersonal interaction. This might further explain that originally unstable No.1 and No.2 were affected by No.3 and No.5.

Note 4. There was no request that focus group participants sign their names on the answer sheets. The purpose is letting participants feel comfortable to reveal their true preferences. I disclosed the procedure to the three interviewees during the in-depth interviews.

Table 1. Consistency (or inconsistency) of the participants' answers of the two questions of the "choice of nation name" in the telephone interview

Question 1	Question 2				
	Choose new nation name	Keep current name ROC	Don't know	No comment	N
Choose new nation name	151 (61.38)	22 (0.09)	13 (0.05)	60 (24.39)	246
Keep current name ROC	14 (0.02)	451 (73.93)	23 (0.04)	122 (0.20)	610
Don't know / No comments	6 (0.02)	25 (0.09)	148 (0.56)	85 (0.32)	264
N	171	498	184	267	1120

Source: Collected by the author. The numbers in the parentheses are row percentages.

Table 2. Basic information of the participants of the focus group

No.	Title	Age	Education	Place	Telephone interview 1	Telephone interview 2	Focus group discussion 1	Focus group discussion 2
1	Ms. Huang	30	Graduate school student	Taipei County	N/A	ROC	Taiwan	ROC
2	Ms. Chang	23	University student	Taichung City	ROC	Taiwan	Taiwan	ROC
3	Ms. Wei	26	University graduate	Keelung City	ROC	ROC	ROC	ROC
4	Mr. Li	20?	University student?	Chiayi County	N/A	Taiwan	Taiwan	Taiwan
5	Ms. Tseng	45	Graduate degree	Yunlin County	ROC	ROC	ROC	ROC
6	Ms. Yang	32	University degree	Kaohsiung County	ROC	ROC	ROC	Taiwan

Source: Collected by the author

Remark: The interviewee No.4 never revealed his true age. We only know that he is a senior high school student. N/A means "Don't know" or "No comments." ROC means the choice of "keep the current name ROC;" Taiwan means "choose a new nation name."

Attachment 1. The first answer sheet of focus group discussion.

(This is the first answer sheet)

If you have the right, the only right, to decide, would you (1) prefer Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu to have our own nation name, such as Taiwan, Taiwan Nation, Formosa, or Taiwan Republic? Or (2) keep using the current nation name "ROC?" <u>Please circle your choice and then turn the paper upside down</u>

I would choose 1

I would choose 2

Attachment 2. The second answer sheet of focus group discussion.

(This is the second answer sheet)

After some discussion, you have heard some different opinions, if you have the right, the only right, to decide, would you (1) prefer Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu to have our own nation name, such as Taiwan, Taiwan Nation, Formosa, or Taiwan Republic? Or (2) best keep using the current nation name "ROC?" <u>Please circle your choice and then turn the paper upside down</u>

I would choose 1

I would choose 2

Social Security and Minority Economic Development

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Abstract

For the thirty years of the implementation of reform and opening up policy, China has made significant achievements in the economic development. And the western region resided by the minorities has also made great progress in the economic growth. However, there is still a great gap compared with the well-developed eastern coastal region. Relatively speaking, the economic development of western region is still backward. People have lower ability of self-protection and the family security and they have stronger desire for social security. Social security, as the means and mechanism to promote economic development and safeguard the social stability, plays an important part in the economic system of the minorities. Under the circumstances that the economy in minority areas needs to be improved urgently, the interaction will become more significant of the social security and economic development of the minorities.

Keywords: Minority economy, Social security, Supply and demand, Social fairness

1. Social security plays an important role in the minority areas.

The western part of China, with the area of about 5,400,000 square kilometers, accounting for 57% of total Chinese land area, is resided by the minorities. It is abundant in natural resources and has great market potentials. However, due to various reasons, the western region is relatively backward in economic development. By now, though reform and opening-up has been carried out for almost thirty years, there are gaps between the east and the west in many aspects. This situation does not only restrict the economic development of the western region, but also induces a series of social problems, and some unrest and turbulence in some places.

To achieve the objective of constructing a comprehensive well-off society, the low level social security in western region must be improved. Take Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region as an example. According to statistics of 2002, workers of Xinjiang participating in old-age insurance, medical insurance, unemployment insurance, were 1,155,000 persons, 1,481,000 persons, 1,312,900 persons respectively, only accounting for 47.68%, 61.13%, 54.19 % of the total workers of that year. Workers of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps participating in old-age insurance, medical insurance, unemployment insurance, were 669500, 875700, 538800, only accounting for 70.10%, 91.69%, 56.41% of the total number of employees in that year.

It is no doubt that social security is of great importance in the minority areas. However, the gap between the east and the west in development is increasingly getting big, which results in the gap of the social security between eastern and western parts of China. In the western area on which the poverty-stricken population dwells, the level of social security is low and problems of shortage of food and clothing are still need to be settled. The establishment of social security system in the western region is to meet the strategic demand of developing the talents, and is one of the fundamental requirements of keeping the local talents, attracting more talents from other places and solving the problem of brain drain. Social security is composed by social insurance, social relief, social welfare, and social allowances, etc. It is the vital part of market economy system. It can promote the social stability, regulate the economic growth, maintain the social fairness, provide basic security for the people with living difficulty, improve the social welfare and the level of society as a whole through the distribution and redistribution. The above functioning in the western minority areas plays a vital role in maintaining and promoting the social fairness, and effectively regulating the local economic growth.

2. Social security works to solve the problem of poverty in minority areas.

The population in western region accounts for 29.1% of the total Chinese, but the extent of poverty is high. The "Eight and Seven National Anti-Poverty Program" lists 592 counties of poverty, among which there are 258 autonomous counties of minorities and 224 counties are located in the western region, accounting for 86.8% of the total

poverty-stricken counties of the minorities. By the end of 2006, in the western region, rural people of absolute poverty (with annual per capita income no more than 693 yuan) are 11,750,000, accounting for 54.7% of the total Chinese population of absolute poverty. There are 19.86 million people with low income in rural area (with per capita annual income no more than 958 yuan), accounting for 55.9% of the overall Chinese counterparts. Governments should put it in the extremely important position solving the poverty problem, provide the local people with material interests and social welfare to win the recognition and support from the local people and the agreement of the existing local systems. Governments in the western region must continue to develop the economy through innovation to get rid of poverty and win the strong support from the local people and get higher authority.

One of the reasons of poverty is the inequitable distribution of wealth. Although it is a means of social development for a few people to get rich first and then lead majorities of people to get rich. However, in the process, polarization will inevitably turn up and the problem of poverty appears. Social security can regulate the inter-generational income redistribution and intra-generational income redistribution, income redistribution among the same generation and the redistribution of national income as well, thus affecting social reproduction, and reducing the inequality of wealth distribution. Social relief, as an integral part of social security, is one of the ways to solve the problem of poverty. Social relief means that the state and society offer the life security and assistance of material or money to those vulnerable groups of the poor and unfortunate people.

Social relief is the last security backing so that members of society can receive the most basic assistance to maintain their basic living when they have no source of income or are in great poverty. The premise that some people get rich before they lead the others to be rich is that they can not make the others get poorer. There is a great wealth disparity between east and west in China. Resources in all aspects are unevenly distributed. But social security can through redistribution give the needy the basic necessities for living, and make the relatively backward western areas enjoy the great achievements of economic development brought about by reform and opening up.

3. Social security can promote economic development in minority areas by regulating the supply and demand.

British economist John Maynard Cairns pointed out that the employment relies on the effective demand, which depends on the tendency of investment and the temptation of consumption. Relative surplus of capital and unemployment is due to insufficient effective demand. Only by the "invisible hand" (the market self-regulation), public resources can not be fully used to achieve full employment. It is necessary for the governments to adopt fiscal policy, welfare policy and other macro-economic policies, to increase national investment and national consumption, enhance social consumption tendency and investment to achieve the purpose of expanding the effective demand of society and promoting full employment and inhibiting the economic crises.

Social security, by regulating the changes of security, the revenue and expenditure of social security fund, realizes its effects on social aggregate supply and aggregate demand, thus effectively contributing to sustained and healthy development of the social economy. Early in the last century, there appeared a serious economic crisis in Western countries. Cairns believes that the absence of effective demand is the main reason for the economic crisis. One of the effective ways is to stimulate effective demand to get rid of it. Today, for the global economic crisis caused by the credit crisis in the United States, governments all over the world, adopting the same measures, put stimulating social effective demand in an important position. And the economic adjustment of social security is also visible. In the period of cold economy when economy grows slowly and workers decrease their income, social security fund has greater expenditure than the revenue, which relatively increases the monetary income of every family. Consumers enhance the relative purchasing power. Aggregate demand goes up. All helps to restore the economic growth and get out of the economic recession. In the period of overheated economy when economy accelerates its growth and workers increase their income, social security fund has more income than the expenditure, which relatively decreases the monetary income of families. Consumers have relatively low purchasing power, which reduces the aggregate demand of the whole society, thereby inhibiting the over-heated growth of the economy.

Economy in western region of the minority areas develops slowly. An important reason of less attraction to investment from the other well-known enterprises is the absence of effective demand. In 2005, the economic growth rate of western region reached 12.7 percent, with GDP of 3339 billion yuan, accounting for 17.0 % of the national total GDP. However, the final consumption rate of the western region only accounts for 30% more. In 2005, the 12 provinces of western region realized the total retail sales of social consumer goods of 1158.1 billion yuan with the growth rate of only 14.0%. The low level of consumption in western minority areas can not have strong attraction to the investment from the strong companies in the eastern coastal region and foreign multinational enterprises, which results in few high-quality businesses, few jobs, and slow income increase. Therefore, enlarging the investment to the social security in minority region and improving the living standards of local people are positive and effective to expand the local effective demand and increase consumption, and promote the economic development.

4. Social security promotes the shaping of sound social and economic environment in minority areas.

For the minority areas in the context of West Development, the sound market and social environment is particularly important for economic growth. If social environment is unstable, socio-economic development would be difficult. Due to various reasons, some disturbing factors and social issues are relatively easy to emerge in the western minority areas, which is detrimental to the healthy economic development in the local places. Thus social security functions evidently in maintaining fairness and promoting social stability. With the continuous improvement and development of market economy, social members have differences in their own qualities, labor capacities and abilities of the competitiveness. The difference in economic income will inevitably lead to the gap of their living standards, or result in social conflicts. Social security pools the fund through taxes and compulsory insurance. Governments redistribute the social wealth and offer appropriate assistance to the vulnerable groups in the social competition, which safeguards the basic livelihood of citizens, enhances their physiological and safety security, and to some extent, maintains the social justice, promotes social stability, and provides an important condition to create a good social environment.

Social security can also provide a very good economic environment for the healthy growth of market economy in the western minority region with its abilities of regulating economy. Capital and labor are the two decisive factors in the economic growth. Savings and investment of social security fund can be turned into capital accumulation to increase the capital reserve of the community as a whole in order to protect the economic development. As for the labor in the western region, social security can raise the level of health care and unemployment insurance, etc., improve the basic living standards of ordinary people, enhance the quality of the labor force, protect the reproduction of labor force and extend the average working life of workers, and further increase the total labor volume. Through the interaction of capital and labor, social security system can effectively promote the economic growth and maintain the good economic environment.

As far as the western minority region is concerned, a good social environment is urgent and necessary to the economic development. Meanwhile, a good economic environment will promote the stable development of the social environment. The establishment and betterment of the social security system in minority areas will undoubtedly promote the sound development of the local social and economic environment.

5. Concluding remarks

Social security has played a positive role in promoting the economic development and is of great significance for the economic reform and development in the western minority areas. In 2008, the global economic crisis resulting from the sub-loan crisis in the United States shows that market economy is not a panacea but has some defects in some respects. Therefore, to make the socialist market economic system run and develop well, it becomes necessary to establish and improve the corresponding social security system, to redistribute social wealth through government and public organizations. With the development of the market economy in the western region and the increasing advanced social productive forces, social security objects should be expanded from urban workers to rural residents as well as all members of society. Social security system in the western region should be further improved to meet the demand of the economic development.

In short, good economic run needs a good market environment. What the western region now needs greatly is a good market environment. And a stable and effective social security policy functions positively and significantly in maintaining the social stability, improving the social and economic environment in the western region, thus effectively promoting the economic development of the minorities.

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Positioning Malaysia as Halal-Hub: Integration Role of

Supply Chain Strategy and Halal Assurance System

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Abstract

HALAL-HUB is a concerted effort among the Islamic organizations/bodies such as Halal manufacturers, Halal traders, buyers, and consumers from all over the world. To be the central trading hub for Halal products, Malaysia must intelligently market itself and achieved Halal-hub main objective of providing a credible platform in connecting global Halal supply-chain and certification for Halal Assurance. Existing literature provides a number of examples that illustrate how supply chain strategy and marketing intelligence improve firm's performance. The literature, however, lacks theoretical support to facilitate an understanding of the magnitude of supply change strategies, structure of halal assurance system and marketing intelligence to support the scope of relational of Halal-hub. This article uses the strategy-structure-performance paradigm to position Halal Hub relative to the nature of relationships within the broader supply chain strategies, Halal Assurance systems and marketing intelligence a firm employs. The framework presented is a first step towards a more holistic and theory-based approach to understanding the link between, supply chain, halal assurance system, marketing intelligence and Halal-hub. This framework also is designed to serve as a basis for future research in this area.

Keywords: Halal-hub, Marketing intelligence, Supply chain strategy, Halal assurance system

1. Introduction

Today, Muslim consumers have given an increase attention to their foods concerning their halalness. This is a very good point in term of Islamic practices and faith. Hence, it has long been a stated goal of the Malaysian government to establish Malaysia as a global *Halal* hub for the promotion, distribution and production of *Halal* products and services to the muslim countries all over the world. This is in tandem with the statement made by Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Najib Tun Razak:

"….Plans to turn Malaysia into a *Halal* hub does not mean operations to produce *Halal* food must be based only in the country. Malaysian investors could invest in countries where research and development facilities and expertise are available to produce and export *Halal* food" (Bernama, 2005).

The Government present focus is on developing relationships between the rapidly expanding Islamic finance and banking industry and the global *Halal* market (Utusan Online, 2004).The Malaysian government, under the visionary

leadership of our Former Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, realizing the importance of this industry and its bright future, has seriously worked towards the implementation of the Islamic values in developing this sector. Since 1959, Malaysia has taken steps which have been regarded as an international pioneer in researching and developing the *Halal* instruments and products as a standard in the financial services field as well as Takaful at the governmental level through the establishment of Syariah Advisory Council by Central Bank of Malaysia (BNM) (Samsudin, 2005). Pioneering efforts are also carried out in the Malaysian Islamic Capital Market by the Malaysian government through the Securities Commission (SC). Today, we find an establish Syariah Advisory Council (SAC) providing the necessary guidelines under eminent Islamic economist and scholar, to mould suitable *Halal* investment instruments. This council also is tasked with the responsibility of classifying the organization listed in the Malaysian Stock Exchange which is dealing in accordance to the Syariah so that the Muslims can participate with a clear conscience in Malaysia's capital market and investment sector (Samsudin, 2005).

Conversely, the Malaysian *Halal* Certification for food and consumable good issued by the sole authority Islamic Development Department Malaysia (JAKIM) or State Islamic Religious Council (JAIS) is also highly recognized and recommended in the international market. Despite its size, Malaysia is the only country whose *Halal* certification is issued by the Government, unlike in other countries whose certifications are endorsed by their respective Islamic associations. JAKIM's *Halal* logo is now among the most widely recognized and respected symbols of *Halal* compliance in the world (Adam, 2006). The launching of the Malaysian *Halal* Standard MS1500:2004 in August 2004 further demonstrates the Government's commitment to the creation of clear and practical guidelines for *Halal* compliance. This MS1500:2004 is developed in accordance with ISO methodologies and is the first *Halal* Standard to be developed by a Muslim nation. After several years of dedicated hard work, the National Body of Standardization and Quality (SIRIM) has completed the "Malaysian Standard MS1500, General Guidelines on the Production, Preparation, Handling and Storage of *Halal* Foods", which includes compliance with GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) and GHP (Good Hygiene Practices). This new standard will further strengthen Malaysian *Halal* certification which is already the longest established and most widely recognized registered *Halal* logo in the world (Badawi, 2004).

Malaysia plans to become a global hub for Islamic *halal* food by 2010, using its edge over other Muslim nations in trading, logistics, banking and *halal* certification (NewsEdge, 2006). The Malaysian government in its 2006-2010 national economic development plans talks about creating a nodal agency to promote the country as a center for *halal* foods that meet Islamic dietary requirements and the religiously approved way of slaughtering animals. Malaysia certification standard for *halal* food moreover is widely recognized. In addition, it has a highly developed logistics network including ports, and is fast becoming a hub for Islamic financing (Bernama, 2006)

The *Halal* market is growing at a tremendous rate; approximating at a global rate of 2 billion Muslim consumers all over the world. However, only 6 million with access to *Halal* products (Bernama, 2006). This is in the researcher's point of view are due to lack of strategic systems and procedures among the *halal* product producers and the government. With such a multiplier effect, Malaysia should question on how they can capitalize on the 25% of the global market and capture the world's *Halal* market. Furthermore, with the onset of global diseases (*bird flu, mad cow disease, etc.*), *Halal* is being recognized as a new benchmark for safety, hygiene and quality assurance even by non-Muslim consumers. Therefore the objective of this paper is to propose the strategy-structure-performance paradigm to position the Halal Hub relative to the nature of relationships within the broader supply chain strategies, *Halal* Assurance systems and marketing intelligence a firm employs. The framework presented is a first step towards a more holistic and theory-based approach to understanding the link between, supply chain, *halal* assurance system, marketing intelligence and *Halal*-hub. This framework also is designed to serve as a basis for future research in this area.

1.1 Position Halal-Hub in Malaysia

With the introduction of MS1500:2004 certification, Malaysia is trying to promote a standard which can be replicated by other countries as a coherent yard stick for *Halal* certification. The first step for Malaysia to position them as *halal* hub is hosting a forum and debate in *Halal* product and services.

As competitive free trade environment, which dominates the world economy, it is crucial for global *Halal* industry players to ensure that *Halal* food products and services find their own strength and capitalize on their market niche. "*Halal"* is an Arabic word meaning lawful or permitted and can generally be translated as "permissible" or "allowed" in English. The opposite of *Halal* is "*Haram*", which means unlawful or prohibited. *Halal* and *Haram* are universal terms that apply to all facets of life. Contrary to popular belief, the word *Halal* is not only used in the context of consumables or products used by the Muslims. It has a wide range of application. From inter human relationship, clothing and manner, social and business transaction, trade and financial services to investments or any others which is parallel to guidance specified by Islam (MITI Online, 2004). *Halal* issue is starting to make its presence felt, and *Halal* is the new defining market force in most Islamic countries. With Muslims now making up close to a quarter of the world's population, it should really come as no surprise that *Halal* is starting to have a significant impact on global markets. This new market force is driven by several factors. Firstly, many Muslim nations are reaching a stage of development

whereby they can begin to impinge on world markets, both as producers and consumers. Secondly, and significantly, items such as *Halal* meat and Islamic banking services are increasingly popular among non-Muslims, enhancing the wide-spread rapid growth in these industry sectors (The Asian World Street Journal, 2005).

The *Halal* marketplace is emerging as one of the most lucrative and influential market arenas in the world today. Geopolitical events, public interest, food related health scares and overall consumer demand have converged to push the *Halal* issue into the forefront of consumer awareness worldwide. In fact, the most important engine of growth of the *Halal* is a shift of perception. *Halal* food, for example, has been around for over fourteen hundred years, but it is only in recent decades, and particularly in multi-cultural societies, that the labeling and branding of *Halal* products has developed. Obviously, *Halal* is no longer just a purely religious issue; it is becoming a global symbol for quality assurance and lifestyle choice. The global market for *Halal* goods and services is developing into a powerful force in the arena of world commerce and finance. *Halal* Products and Islamic Financial Services represent a combined strength of over one trillion USD annually, and market monitoring indicates that the current strong growth trends can be expected to continue over the next five to ten years (The Asian World Street Journal, 2005).

The *Halal* business industry constitutes 112 countries, catering for 1.8 billion Muslim populations, amounting to close to USD 300billiom (NewsEdge, 2006). The best thing is, Muslims are not the only one consuming *Halal* products. The potential in this market is tremendous. Based on the research done by *Halal* Industry Development Corporation (HDC), they found that the acceptance towards *halal* product was increasing not only among the Muslims but also among the non-Muslims. Graph 1 and 2 shows the acceptance level of *halal* product among non-Muslim consumers and potential global *halal* product marketed in the market respectively.

On the other hand, to be the central trading hub for *Halal* products, intelligent marketing and strategic supply chain orientation as well as structured through *Halal* Assurance system must be adopted. Producers of Muslim's products, first of all must understand and study the supply chain and the production process. Whether its supplying canned food to the Middle East, or *halal* cosmetics to the Americas, they must be able to penetrate the whole supply chain. "Malaysian Standard MS1500, General Guidelines on the Production, Preparation, Handling and Storage of *Halal* Foods", which includes compliance with GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) and GHP (Good Hygiene Practices) will further strengthen Malaysian *Halal* certification which is already the longest established and most widely recognized registered *Halal* logo in the world (Badawi, 2004). On the other hand, supply chain strategy is an iterative process that evaluates the cost benefit trade-offs of operational components. An organization may choose a strategy directed at supplier management as a way to remain competitive and establish network with supply chain partners, including suppliers, distributors, customers, and even customers' customers. And for all these reasons, a well executed supply chain strategy results in value creation for the organization. (A UPS Supply Chain Solutions, White Paper, 2005) and hence position Malaysia as *Halal*-hub.

The purpose of this article is to develop a theory-based framework to guide both practitioners and researchers in understanding the role of *halal* assurance systems in supporting integration within the supply chain that facilitates a broader understanding of such inconsistencies. Specifically, we extend the strategy-structure-performance paradigm to the supply chain level and *Halal* assurance position integration within the realm of supply chain management. The resulting framework may be used as a foundation to guide the evolution of future research and practice.

The following section will discuss on the link between strategies namely supply chain strategy and structure (i.e *halal* assurance system and marketing intelligence). The next section proposed conceptual framework of *Halal*-hub positioning strategy followed by conclusion, implication and recommendation for future research.

2. The link between Strategy-Structure and Performance (SSP)

Strategy's impact on firm performance was a focus of research promulgated by Chandler (1962), who postulated that firm strategy drives organizational structure. Study of Chandler then extended by Rumelt (1974) who was first made the link between strategy-structure and performance (SSP). His finding constitute that particular strategy-structure combinations were superior to others with respect to financial performance. Other researchers such as Amiour and Teece (1978); Hoskisson (1987); Teece (1981) further has corroborated the strategy-structure-performance link in other setting. All these researchers conclude the importance of strategy-structure congruency as a necessary requirement for organizational performance (Brewer and Speh 2001; Egelhoff 1988; Galbraith and Kazanjian 1986; Miles and Snow 1984).

By extending the SSP to the supply chain level, issues of strategy and structure take on new meanings. Since competition increasingly occurs at the supply chain level (Christopher 1992), strategic management theory needs to address strategy and structure within the supply chain context. In the context of *halal* food and services firm, supply chains, (which involve collaborative, multi-firm relationships across suppliers, customers, and third parties), will enhance the performance of the firm and further strengthen *halal*-hub position of the country with the interaction of proper structure of *halal*-assurance system. Proposed conceptual framework of *Halal* Hub Positioning is depicted in

Figure 1.

2.1 Supply Chain Strategy

Supply chain management is "the systemic, strategic coordination of the traditional business functions within a particular company and across businesses within the supply chain. Its main objective is to improving the long-term performance of the individual companies and the supply chain as a whole' (Mentzer, 2001). Supply chain management leverages external firm relationships to develop inter-firm coordination resulting in increased operational performance and shareholder value maximization (Christopher and Ryals 1999). Such relational strategy requires that firms create structures and processes that integrate the cross organizational behavior of supply chain partners, creating a common vision and objectives (Rodrigues et al. 2004). Integration is essential to aligning multi-firm operations into a supply chain system. Lambert et al. (1998) complement this definition by emphasizing the importance of integration business processes across supply chain firms of *halal* product and services in order to deliver value to end users and strengthen the position of a country's as *halal*-hub.

Defee and Stank (2005) point out two important dimensions of supply chain strategy. First, they stress the importance of strategic goal alignment. In a multi-firm context, the strategies of many firms must be consistent with each other. The second important dimension of supply chain strategy is a shared belief in the value of the supply chain as a competitive entity (Defee and Stank 2005). Supply chain effectiveness is enhanced when firms share this similar belief (Ellram 1995). When considered together, goal alignment and commitment to the supply chain as a competitive differentiator reflect what Mentzer et al. (2001) refer to as supply chain orientation (SCO). SCO is a management philosophy implying that a firm sees beyond its own borders and understands the strategic importance of managing the various flows across the entire supply chain. (Speier, Mollenkopf and Stank, 2008)

2.2 Halal Assurance System (HAS)

Halal Assurance System is a system, which must be implemented by a producer or company to assure that the products produced are *halal.* This system is set up based on three zero's concept, i.e., zero limit (no *haram* material used in the production), zero defect (no *haram* product is produced) and zero risk (no disadvantageous risk should be taken by the producer or company). (Chaudry, et.al 1997)

For any producer or company who are willing to produce *halal* food or ingredient, they must set up a *halal* assurance system. The system consists of five components, i.e., standard of *halal* management and *halal* system, standard audit of *halal* system, *Haram* Analysis Critical Control Point (HrACCP), *halal* guideline and *halal* database. The general guideline of all of these components must be written and documented in one manual called *halal* manual. The manual includes also *halal* policy of the producer and objectives of the system. The commitment of the producer in producing of *halal* foods consistently can be reflected from this manual (Sumner, 1995).

Hence, for a company producing *halal* product, the structure for *halal*-assurance systems play a critical role in integrating the processes that facilitate the creation of value within firms and across the supply chain (Bowersox et al. 2006; Porter, 1991). The assurance system integration between firm is enables the entire supply chain to become responsive to end-customer needs, potentially producing product with *halal* certification as a means to satisfy customer needs. Thus, effective *halal*-assurance system investments can create competitive advantage for a firm within and across the supply chain as a capability for creating value (Bowersox et al. 2006; Bowersox el al. 1999; Foster 2006).

The previous discussion provides a basis for understanding the strategic role of *halal*-assurance systems within the supply chain. SSP suggests that in order to capitalize on these strategic approaches, *halal*-assurance systems must be configured within the structure of the supply chain in order to "fit" the overall supply chain strategy (Brewer and Speh 2001; Galbraith and Nathanson 1978; Latnbert and Pohlen 2001; Miles and Snow 1984; Stank et al. 2001). Appropriate supply chain structures will be based upon the Integration of processes and decision-making activities across supply chain participants (Defee and Stank 2005). Lack of integration will thwart the ability of multiple firms to work as a cohesive supply chain unit (Bowersox et al. 1999; Brewer and Speh 2000; Chow et al. 1995; Mollenkopf et al. 2000; Williams et al. 1997). Intra- and inter-firm integration become crucial elements to creating a supply chain structure that fits the supply chain strategy. *Halal* management is managing of all the functions and activities necessary to determine and achieve *halal* products. *Halal* system is defined as the organizational structure, responsibilities, procedures, activities, capabilities and resources that together aim to ensure that products, processes or services will satisfy stated or implied aims, i.e., production of *halal* products.

As firms increase their commitment to a supply chain orientation, there will be an increased need to share *halal* assurance leading to *halal* system integration. Higher levels of supply chain complexity and uncertainty lead to greater investments in *halal* assurance system integration (Choudhury 1997; Kim et al. 2005; Premkumar et al. 2005). In sum, firms having a higher supply chain orientation will see greater value in organizational performance if the level of *halal* assurance system integration is higher in order to realize *halal* hub position. Therefore we proposed:

Proposition 1:

Firms having a higher supply chain orientation and invest in higher levels of halal assurance systems integration will create greater value of organizational performance and further strengthen HALAL-HUB position.

2.3 Marketing Intelligence

A marketing intelligence system is a set of procedures and sources used by managers to obtain their everyday information about pertinent developments in the environment in which they operate. The marketing intelligences system supplies data about the market (Kotler 2000). Another definition of marketing intelligence system is that it is a system for capturing the necessary information for business marketing decision making (Hutt and Speh, 1989). The fundamental purpose of marketing intelligence is to help marketing managers make decisions they face each day in their various areas of responsibility. Marketing intelligence systems include marketing research, MISs, and DSSs. DSS shave become the most popular marketing intelligence tool in manufacturing industries because of the rapid development of the Internet and information technologies

Kotler (2000) also believed that there are four steps to improve the quality and quantity of marketing intelligence. First, train and motivate the sales force to spot and because they are the company's 'eyes and ears,'' they are in an excellent position to pickup information missed by other means. Second, motivate distributors, retailers, and other intermediaries to pass along important intelligence. Third, purchase information from outside suppliers/research firms; they gather data at much lower cost than the company could do on its own. And finally, establish an internal marketing information center to collect and circulate marketing intelligence. Marketing intelligence is clearly a broad and complex function whose effectiveness dramatically affects the quality of marketing decisions.

Applying theories and concepts from supply chain strategy, structure, and marketing intelligence, this paper proposes the concept of positioning the *halal*-hub. We suggest that firm's supply chain orientation strategy and the structure of its *halal* assurance system integration will leads into successive of *halal* producer's firm, and in an attempt to position Malaysia as *halal*-hub.

The increasing importance of firm marketing intelligent within many supply chains across a variety of industries is consistent with the Resource Base View (RBV). The RBV emphasizes the link between competitive advantage and the internal organization of the firm (Eisenhardt and Martin 2000). The RBV depicts an interaction between the internal resources of the firm with the external environment where successful firm strategies are a consequence of both external and internal factors because changes in the environment can change the value of resources (Hansen and Wernerfelt 1989). Firms with a clear understanding of their resources are likely to perform more effectively because they can leverage existing resources to develop new processes (Prahalad and Hamel 1990a). Teece, Pisano. and Shuen (1997) introduce the notion of dynamic capabilities where combinations of competencies and resources are developed, deployed, and protected over time. Thus, firms that have made appropriate investments into its internal resources and processes using marketing intelligence system (i.e marketing research, MISs, and DSSs) can help in the positioning of *halal*-hub. Therefore, it is proposed that:

Proposition 2

Firms that has made appropriate investments into its internal resources and processes using marketing intelligence system (i.e marketing research, MISs, and DSSs) can enhance the relationship between the integration of supply chain orientation and halal assurance system

Thus, we argue that the level of marketing intelligence that a firm exhibits will enhance the fit between supply chain strategic orientation and halal assurance system integration structure.

3. Conclusion

Halal produce is fast gaining worldwide recognition and this is not merely because the Muslim Ummah is growing in number, but more significantly, because *Halal* is being recognized as a new benchmark for safety and quality assurance. *Halal* food is highly sought after, not just by the 1.5 billion Muslims around the world, but by people from diverse races and religions who are looking for clean and pure food. Malaysia is serious to position itself to be the *Halal* food hub center in the Asian region and the pioneer in the globalization of *Halal* certification. However, the country must first have a dedicated entity and blueprint to provide a clearer objective and guideline in the industry. Unless we have an agency to drive this, we will not be successful in the *Halal* industry. Currently, Malaysia's strength lies in its certification. Without a blueprint, incentives, schemes or grants provided by the Government, Malaysia will not be able to reach industry players around the world as they will not be aware of the facilities provided for them (Adam, 2006).

To date, no research has been carried out to gauge neither the *Halal* industry's growth locally nor the sectoral involvement breakdown of *Halal* players and its performance index. Although much has been promised to spur the *Halal* industry, there is no dedicated ministry or association given the task of reinforcing the country's hope of becoming a dominant player in this sector. Clearer and stable supervision is crucial to achieve the Government's

objective of becoming a *Halal* hub; otherwise Malaysia will lose out to other non-Muslim countries, which are already dominating the industry. As a matter of fact, non-Muslim countries such as Thailand, Brazil, Argentina, Australia and New Zealand are already actively producing *Halal* certified meat to cater to increasing needs of the Moslem consumers around the world (Adam, 2006).

4. Implications and Future Research

The previous discussion emphasizes the importance of investing in *halal* assurance systems (HAS) relative to the firm's supply chain and relationship strategies. Likewise, investment in HAS adoption may affect the supply chain orientation. The situation would be expected to exist within the context of a relational exchange strategy to affect product *halalness*. The strategy-structure framework developed here provides a means to view the integration and the related *halal* assurance systems in the context of the intended goals and objectives of *halal* hub positioning within a broader supply chain strategic orientation. This context has been missing from much of the literature and research related to the role of *halal* assurance system in supply chain management.

Our framework provides a predictive approach to evaluating *halal* assurance system integration structures that fit the supply chain orientation in determining the success of *halal* products and the producers firm and further strengthening *halal* hub position of a country. Therefore, the primary implication of the framework is to the future researcher on emphasizing the importance of creating a fit between the *halal* assurance system (structure) employed and the relationship with supply chain strategic orientation. A second contribution has both academic and managerial implications. We have emphasized the importance of viewing supply chain relationships heterogeneously, so that *halal* assurance system requirements can be better understood and implemented based on the recognition of differences between supply chain relationships. Poor fit between an halal assurance system and relational objective may account for much of the disappointment often reported as the product is not *halal* in totality (i.e in terms of raw materials, packaging on processes).

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Graph 1.

ACCEPTANCE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF HALAL PRODUCT (AMONG   NON-MUSLIM)

	Frequency	Percentage
IMPORTANT	299	57%
NOT IMPORTANT	158	30%
DON'T KNOW	68	13%
TOTAL	**525**	**100%**
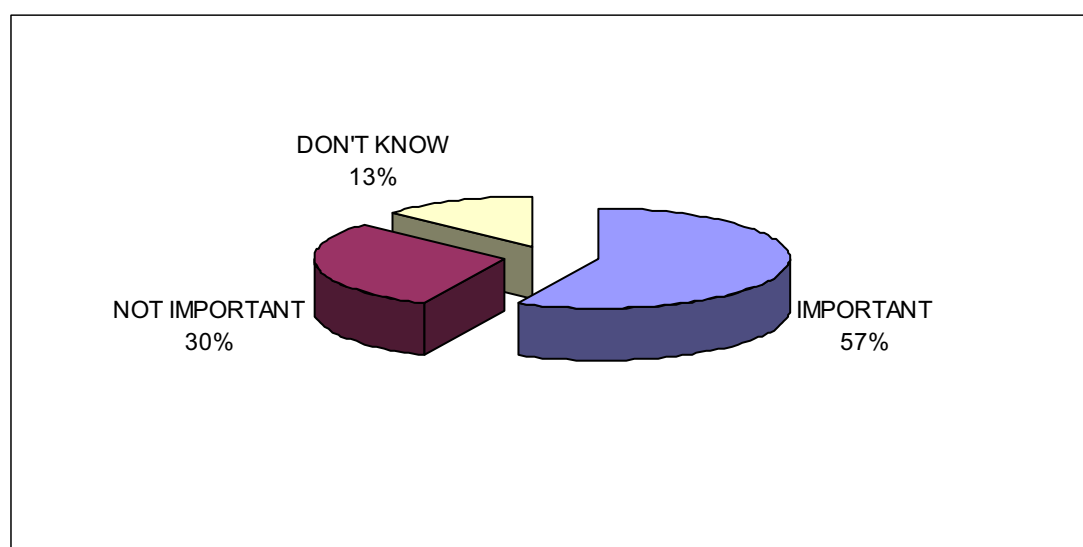
Sources: HDC- Merdeka Centre Domestic Halal Market Study (2005)

Graph 2.

POTENTIAL GLOBAL HALAL PRODUCT

	Percentage
Raw meat	10%
Pharmaceutical	23%
Nutraceutical	6%
Chocolate and sweet	5%
Cosmetic and health care	9%
Bread and cake Product	12%
Processes Food and Drink	35%
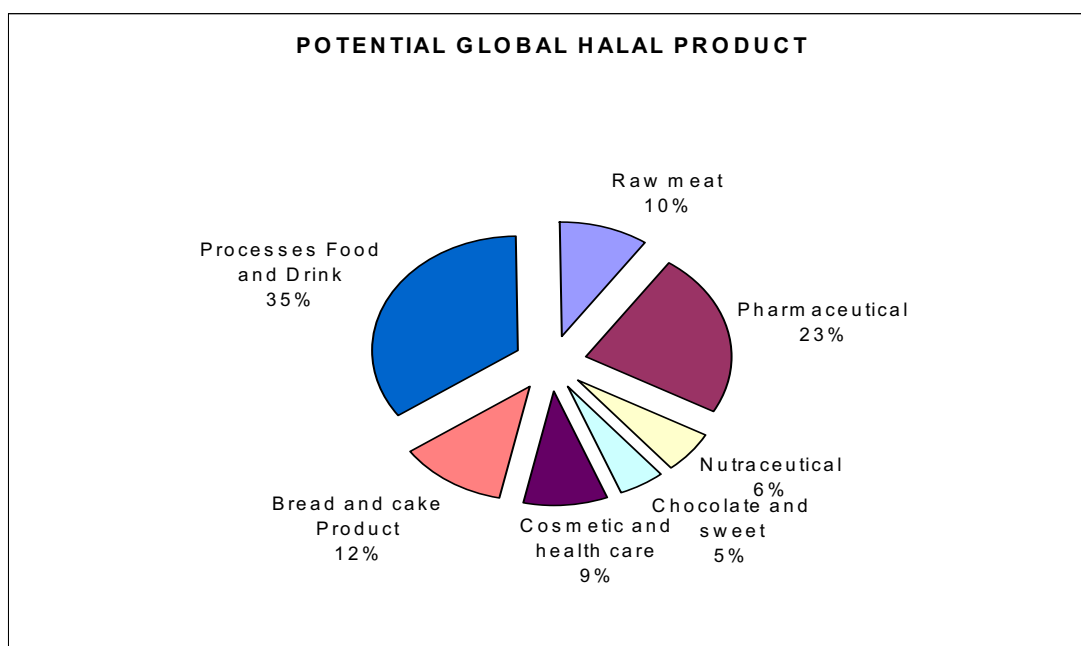
100% = USD2.77 trillion

Potential Global Halal Product

Sources: HDC (2005)
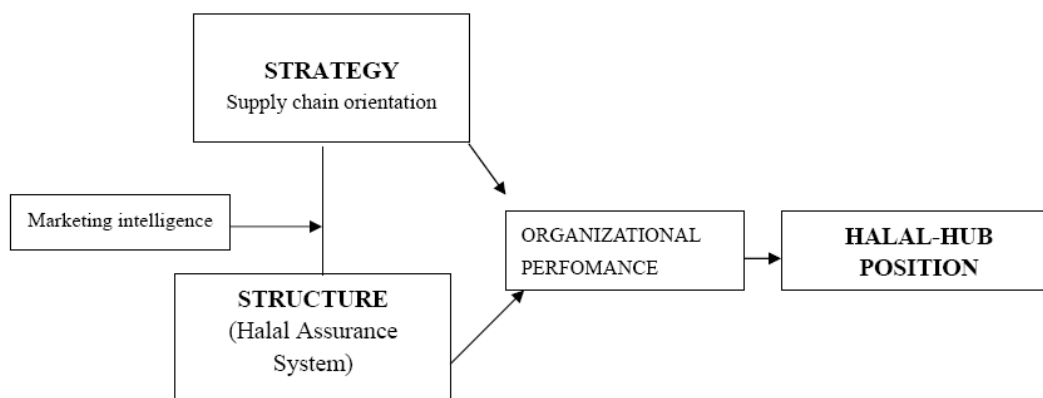
Figure 1. Conceptual framework of *Halal*-Hub Positioning

Analyses on the Way of Changing

the Growth Mode of Circulation Economy

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Abstract

Based on the theory of growth mode in circulation economy, this article analyses current situation and problems of China's commodity circulation. It describes the impact of improving the level of logistics management on changing the growth mode of circulation economy from the perspective of logistics time value, location value and circulation processing value. It brings forward that improving the level of logistics management is the based way of changing the growth mode of circulation economy. It finally brings forward suggestions on improving the level of logistics management among enterprises.

Keywords: Circulation economy, Growth mode, Logistics management

1. Introduction

In the report of the 17th National Congress of the CPC, General Secretary Hu Jintao put forward acceleration of transforming the mode of economic growth and promotion of optimizing and upgrading industrial structure. Having relation to national economy, this is an urgent and important strategic task. It is needed to insist on a new-type way of industrialization, and stick to expanding domestic demands, particularly the principle of consumer demands. The way of promoting economic growth is changed from mainly relying on investment and export to relying on the coordination of consumption, investment and export; from mainly relying on the secondary industry to relying on the coordination of the primary industry, the secondary industry, and the tertiary industry; from mainly relying on increased consumption of material resources to relying on technological development, improvement of labor quality and management innovation." Although China has made great progress in changing the mode of economic growth for many years, the fundamental change has not got achieved overall. A prominent problem in China's economic and social development is still the extensive mode of economic growth. It embodies in the realization of rapid economic growth through enlarging investment scales and large consumption of various resources, which results in low efficiency, low benefits, serious environmental pollution and un-sustainability of the development.

Since the reform and opening-up, China has formed a pluralistic and multi-level circulation system that widens the scale of circulation. But the growth of the circulation economy is mainly extensive, economic efficiency is not high, and there is fierce competition in the circulation industry. The famous economist, Professor Liu Guoguang mentioned that circulation has changed from the end of the industry to the leading industry. Therefore, it is urgent to change the growth mode of circulation economy.

2. Theoretical analyses on the change of growth mode of circulation economy

The concepts of the "extensive growth" and the "intensive growth" were introduced into China from the Soviet Union in 1960s. Prior to this, although the concept of the mode of economic growth had not been used in China's economic circles, a lot of analyses were made towards various low efficiency and high waste in the process of economic growth. Since then, especially in 1979-1980, the issue of the mode of economic growth fully got discussed in China. And the concept of the mode of economic growth was extensively used after the Fifth Session of the 14th Central Committee of

the CPC. For the mode of economic growth, it is accepted and categorized as the extensive economic growth and the intensive economic growth from the perspective of production inputs factors by current theoretical circles. The extensive form of economic growth is to increase the number of products and to promote the mode of economic growth by mainly relying on funding increase and resources input. The basic characteristics are that economic growth is realized by adding and inputting a large number of production factors. That is to achieve it by investing a large amount of funds, using a large scale of labor, and consuming massive raw materials and energy. The intensive form of economic growth is to increase the number of products and improve product quality by mainly relying on scientific and technological progress and labor quality improvement. The basic characteristics are that, to a large extent, economic growth is promoted by driving forces of technological innovation, human resource accumulation, resources transfer, economies of scale and learning effect.

In order to take economic efficiency as the center and to improve the performance of the national economy, circulation industry is required to achieve the economic growth by means of transforming the extensive form of economic growth to the intensive one. The growth mode of commodity circulation is a mode of input, combination and use of various business elements in the field of commodity circulation. It has close relations with its level of productivity, circulation development strategies, level of circulation management and commodity circulation system of China's national economy. From the point of view of inputting the circulation elements, the growth mode of commodity circulation is divided into the extensive growth and the intensive growth. The intensive growth of commodity circulation is to increase the production value of circulation and to achieve the growth of commodity circulation through element increases of capital and labor in commodity circulation. This is a kind of growth mode with high cost, more circulation links, slow turnover and poor efficiency. The intensive growth of commodity circulation is market-oriented and takes the benefits of circulation economy as its center. By improving the efficiency of using various elements, it speeds up the turnover of circulation capital and saves circulation cost in order to increase sales and achieve the growth of commodity circulation. The realization of changing the extensive growth of commodity circulation to the intensive one should pay attention to the following: depending on the efficiency improvement of commodity circulation, reducing circulation costs, speeding up capital turnover of commodity circulation, and improving circulation efficiency and effectiveness.

3. Analysis on current situation and problems of China's Commodity Circulation

China's value-added mode of circulation economy is extensive for a long time, for example, slower turnover of circulation capital, slower speed of logistics, higher cost of circulation, higher commodity stocks and serious waste in circulation. It is reported that the loss rate of China's fruits, vegetables and other agricultural and sideline products reaches 25% - 30% in logistics, while the loss rate of fruits and vegetables in the developed countries is only 5%. The logistics costs of China's agricultural products usually account for 30% - 40%, and fresh goods is more than 60%. But in developed countries, logistics costs are about 10% of the total in general. In 2002, the contribution of China's circulation industry to the GDP was 7.8%, while in the United States, Japan, Britain, France and other developed countries, the number had made a reach over 15% in the middle of 1990s. Still in the same year, the proportion of employment in China's tertiary industry was 28.6%, among which the proportion of employment in wholesaling, retailing and catering was 6.7%, far below the average level of developed countries.

3.1 A large number of enterprises, small scales and low level of systematization

The majority of circulation enterprises in China are operated in localization, which lack of large nationwide retailing businesses, and lack of enterprises of international standards. Circulation enterprises in China are significantly regional. It is relatively limited in scale and in space of development; thus the scale of the overall assents is small and they do not have the capacity of rapid expansion. For instance, Wal-Mart's total global sales was 278.08 billion U.S. dollars in 2003. But Shanghai Bailian Group, being as the largest commercial enterprises in China, only had the total sales of 48.52 billion RMB in 2003. The total sales of Wal-Mart was 476 times than the one of Shanghai Bailian Group. And their low level of systemization results in the incapability of meeting the development requirements of large-scale production. The existence of lots of small circulation enterprises makes the allocation of resources in circulation duplicated and inefficient. And in order to survive, they tend to take unfair competition means, which causes chaos in the field of circulation, affects resources utilization, and has impact on the growth of circulation economy.

3.2 Low level of management in circulation enterprises, serious extensive phenomenon

Take the logistics enterprises in Xuzhou for instance. The main storage resources of Xuzhou in 2005 were about 139,400 square meters, but the actual utilization rate is not high. The existence of decentralized inventory, duplicated inventory and multi-level inventory leads to a vicious circle of increased inventory costs, increased funds, more inventory links, longer production cycle and low economic efficiency. The allocated equipments inside logistics industry are outdated. There are many logistics facilities and equipments that businesses own, but the utilization rate is generally low. Although there are various types of freight vehicles 26,997 and 4,890 ships, the idle rate is high. It is common that the phenomenon of unfair competition exists, such as more waiting time between cars and goods, overloading, over speed and forcing down the price. The logistics cost of most manufacturing enterprises accounted for

20% of the total, alarming the waste of resources. Most manufacturing enterprises with a certain scale have their own fleet and warehousing facilities, but the rate of utilization is not high and external services are not professional; thereby it results in the urgent needs of the market on the one hand, a lot of idle logistics capacity on the other hand. Logistics enterprises are small in scale, single in function, low utilization of facilities, unreasonable layout, more redundant projects, backward management, and idle capital. It leads to high cost of logistics and heavy losses. According to expert's estimation, the national logistic consumption is more than 300 billion RMB. Materials cannot be deployed timely, leading to a large amount of inventory.

3.3 Low technology of the circulation enterprises

Take the logistics industry for instance, the low technological content of China's logistics industry is mainly reflected in the following aspects: from the aspect of storage technology, it is mainly in manual work with low efficiency; from the aspect of information system construction in logistics management, the progress is slow; from the aspect of establishment of international logistics standards, development lags behind; from the aspect of transportation facilities, the level of modernization is low, and so on. The low level of information in circulation leads to high cost and low efficiency, resulting in the phenomenon that the current circulation industry in China is still a labor-intensive industry. For example, it is reported that there is only 6.48% enterprises using e-commerce. Information investment by circulation enterprises is less than 2% of the total, having a large gap compared with the average level of 8% -10% among large foreign enterprises. The low level of information directly or indirectly affects the speed of cash flow and the improvement of profit margin.

4. Impact of improving the level of logistics management on changing the growth mode of circulation economy

The transformation of the growth mode of commodity circulation economy is a complicated systematic project, which needs works from government, industry and enterprises. This article only discusses from the aspect of improving the logistic managerial level by the level of logistics enterprises.

With the development of social division of labor and the increase in total social products, especially together with the economic globalization and the development of information technology, logistics has rapidly developed, and has become a very important component in the socio-economic development. It has extensive and far-reaching impact on the operation mode of traditional commercial, commodity circulation patterns and people's lifestyle. And logistics industry will become an important industry and new economic growth point in economic development of 21st century. The improvement of logistics managerial level reflects on creating logistics time value, location value and processing value through high efficiency and low cost.

4.1 Impact of logistics time value on the growth of circulation economy

The logistics time value is that materials have a time difference between the supplier and the demander. To change the time difference is to create value. Shortening time may reduce logistics losses and lower logistics consumption. It may increase the turnover rate of goods liquidity and improve the rate of commodity circulation. In addition, logistics is a kind of business activities to send commodity at the right time to the right place. It is an important way of improving the efficiency of commodity circulation and is "the source of the third profit". In 2003, the average turnover rate among the top 500 enterprises in China was 2.4 times per year, while businesses in developed countries the highest number is more than 20 times. In 2002, the profit margin of Wal-Mart was 3%, while in China, the profit margin of the top 500 enterprises was averagely 1.06%.

4.2 Impact of logistics location value on economic growth

The logistics location value is that materials have a space distance between the supplier and the demander. Value is created because of the space changing. The process of creating logistics location value needs handling, storage, transportation and other logistics links. Industrial goods are moved from factory to consumers through handling, storage and transportation. At present, the circulation cost usually takes 50% of commodity prices in China. And the number in fruits, vegetables and some chemical products may reach 70% sometimes. In the production of automotive parts in China, more than 90% of the time is taken in handling, storage and transportation. Currently, the logistics costs in China are over 20% in the proportion of GDP, one time higher than the average level in developed countries. Logistics enterprises in China should fully use advanced technology and managerial methods, and create logistics location value by improving logistics efficiency and reducing logistics costs.

4.3 Impact of added value of logistics circulation processing on economic growth

An important characteristic of modern logistics is to take a certain added processing activities in accordance with its own advantages, which will form added value of the target labor. It improves added value to goods, increases the output in circulation industry, and promotes economic growth. In the process of circulation, it is needed to fully consider technological progress, study on the adoption of collection equipment and specialized shipment, rather than using a processing that is not achieved in circulation; and study on transportation technology of less packaging, lower

packaging costs.

5. Considerations on improving the level of logistics management

5.1 Adopt chain operation to integrate small and medium-sized logistics enterprises

Introducing the organizational form of chain operations into the logistics industry is to achieve the intensive organizational form among logistics enterprises. Through chain operation, the whole large-scale logistics management is required to organically integrate with the real decentralized logistics activities. Many small and medium-sized logistics enterprises are organized together as a community of interests. They perform synergetic advantages from a number of functions so as to realize logistics information sharing, high efficiency of coordination and expansion of the market coverage, and to achieve economies of scale. For instance, Jin Cheng International Logistics started from a small little-known freight forwarding company. At present, it becomes a leading company among private enterprises in China. Only using a short period of 15 years does it create a myth that a logistics enterprise in China adopted strategic transformation and quickly grew up. Its secret of the development is to use "chain" as a means of the distribution network, and it puts forward its own set of franchise system. Jin Cheng International Logistics selects local mature and profitable companies to merge into its group. When choosing partners, it does not require too much of the scale and stock holding. An excellent managerial team is the only requirement to the other party. At the same time, the cooperated company must be renamed, and reunify "Jin Cheng" brand. Using the form of franchise makes many small shipping companies of one-man operation together. They force the "snowball" toward one direction, sharing risks and benefits. Thus it gets a "snowball effect".

5.2 Develop the third-party logistics enterprises; improve the profession and social level of logistics

The third-party logistics may enable logistics clients to focus on production, management and cost reduction. Large enterprises, which take the advantages of professional logistics to conduct market distribution, can save the cost of 20% - 30% comparing to setting up networks themselves. The third-party logistics can break the geographical boundaries, distribute logistics to long distances, and play the advantage of quick efficiency in e-commerce. Among the World Top 500 enterprises, over 70% of them think that logistics business should be operated by the third-party logistics. In 1996, the third-party logistics and distribution in U.S.A accounted for 57% of the total volume. Professional providers of the third-party logistics take the advantages of professions and costs in scale production. Through improving the utilization of each sector's capability, they achieve cost saving and reduce capital backlog, which makes enterprises be benefited from the cost structure. The means of the logistics plans and just-in-time delivery that the third-party logistics providers carefully planned minimize inventory and improve the company's cash flow, and achieve cost advantages.

5.3 Increase technological investment; improve technological level and circulation efficiency

Under the support of advanced technology, modern logistics enterprises can directly involve in the logistics management activities. They work out plans together with logistics demanders, and help manufacturers to develop new products, introduce new technologies and new equipments, and so on. For example, Wal-Mart applies a set of advanced and efficient system of logistics and supply chain management. This system centralizes, effectively manages and optimizes Wal-Mart's distribution centers, chain stores, warehouses and cargo transport vehicles worldwide. It forms a flexible and efficient production, distribution and sales network. Therefore, Wal-Mart even spends lots of money and purchase specialized logistics satellite to guarantee the information transmission of this network.

5.4 Introduce supply chain management; achieve the "win-win"

It is found that in a competitive environment of globalized market, any enterprise cannot do business in all the best. It must cooperate with other businesses upstream and downstream and establish a supply chain of linking economic interests and having close relationship to achieve complementary advantages, and to fully use available resources to adapt to the competitive environment of socialized large-scale production. This is supply chain management. Considering how to build up supply chain relationship among businesses, that is to create a win-win mechanism. And the key to realize it is information sharing, the core of which is information flow. Introducing supply chain management can take the whole supply chain into consideration, design inventory replenishment and control strategies of supply chain node enterprises, keep inventory at a reasonable level, prevent more or less inventory, meet the needs of production and sales, reduce capital utilization, and keep the lowest total costs of inventory. These will improve enterprises efficiency.

6. Conclusions

The general requirements of the State 11th 5-Year Development on logistics industry is: taking the scientific outlook on development as guidance, market-oriented, using information technology to support, creating a policy environment of the development of modern logistics, establishing a modern logistics service system with sound and efficient service, vigorously developing the professional and social logistics enterprises, improving the quality and efficiency of logistics services, reducing logistics costs, promoting industrial upgrading and restructuring, providing the corresponding

logistics security for the economy and society as comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable development and full establishment of a well-off society. It provides the direction of the development of the logistics industry. Meanwhile, it will promote the change of growth mode of circulation economy.

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The Social Interaction Learning Styles of Science and Social Science Students

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Abstract

Students have a variety of styles in the process of learning .One of the model of learning styles is the social aspect on how the students interact with their instructors and peers. This research employs the social interaction learning style theory by Grasha and Riechmann. The objectives of this study are to identify the social interaction learning style in relation to the students' age, gender, hometown and academic performance. The study also looks at the differences of learning style between different programs (science and social-science) taken by the students. The instrument, Grasha Riechmann Learning Style Survey (GRLSS) was distributed to 531 students. However, only 77% responded. Some of the findings support previous research, while others are inconsistent. Basically, the social interaction learning style adopted by different students in different programs differed in their independent learning style. With this result, instructors can design a better instructional pedagogy based on the students' learning style.

Keywords: Social interaction, Learning style, Demographic factors, Program, Achievement

1. Introduction

Learning is an interactive process that occurs in a specific environment. There are many variables that affect the teaching-learning process. Students' characteristics, instructors, the environment, classroom variables, and subjects taken can affect the long-term process of learning. An overall understanding on how students learn and where they are in the process, will help the instructors to meet the needs of new students. According to Entwistle (1991), the most influential factor that affects how the students learn is the students' perception of the learning environment rather than the context itself. Thus, learning problems frequently are not related to the difficulty of subject matter but more on how the students perceive the whole process of learning. As empirical evidence has shown that students' motivation and performance improve when the instruction is adapted to their learning styles, educators have to take responsibility to understand their students' diverse learning styles.

The social-interaction model is one of the learning style models discussed in Curry's Onion model (Curry, 1983). The model considers varies strategies adopt by individuals to suit their specific environment and social context. One of the theories in this model is Grasha and Riechmann learning style theory. Grasha Riechmann theory looks at the social and

affective perspective that deals with patterns of preferred styles for interacting with teachers and peers. Their theory revolves around three dimensions which are students attitudes toward learning, their view of teachers and/or peers and their reactions to classroom procedures (Grasha and Riechmann, 1974).

According to Grasha (1996), learning style is a personal quality that influences a student's ability to acquire information, to interact with peers and teachers and otherwise participate in learning experience (p 41). Grasha and Riechmann assessed the learning styles of college students on the different ways individuals approach the classroom environment (Keefe, 1979). As they look from the social and affective perspective that deals with patterns of preferred styles for interacting with teachers and peers, their styles are classified as social interaction scales (Grasha, 1984). They have identified three bi-polar dimensions which are Avoidant-Participant, Competitive- Collaborative, and Dependent-Independent.

Further studies, however indicate that the polar that consistently receive opposite scores is the Participant/Avoidant dimensions (Andrews, 1981; Richmann and Grasha, 1974). Their research also indicates that most individuals show some degree of preference for each of the categories. Research by O'Faithaigh (2000) found that there is a negative relationship between Participant and Avoidant, but no significant relationship between Dependent and Independent dimension. For Collaborative and Competitive, the finding indicates they are independent of each other.

Grasha suggests that each teaching style should coincide with students learning styles. Thus, he recommends using a variety of classroom activities in order to encourage flexibility, adaptability and lifelong learning. As learners have a variety of learning styles, instructors must use a variety of teaching methods so that students are exposed to familiar and unfamiliar ways of learning. Much empirical evidence shows that achievement can be improved if the students know how to monitor and manage their learning styles. (Matthews, 1991; Atkinson, 1998).

Educators have to understand the importance of learning style theories as the theories provide some guidance to improve the teaching and learning process. At the same time, through understanding the learners' style, it enables the educators to reduce the frustration in teaching. Moreover, it is important to understand the learning style as it helps the students to achieve better performance in their study. The reason for such situation is the educators are able to channel the right teaching repertoire towards students' style. To date, locally, only few studies were documented regarding the relationship of social interaction learning style towards students' academic achievement and the influence of individual factors in such style. Hence, this study was conducted to identify the students' learning styles in terms of their demographic factors, achievement and field of study in relation to the social interaction learning style.

2. Methodology

This is a descriptive study on the learning styles of students at a local campus in northern Malaysia. A set of questionnaires was administered to the students in their classrooms during the May –November 2003 semester. It took the whole semester as some of the final year students were on practical training at other institutions and they only returned to the campus in September and October 2003.

The sample was chosen based on stratified sampling methods. The researchers obtained the data on the students' full enrolment from the academic office. From the total number of full time students, the researchers chose 10% from each category, namely from each semester and each program. The total number of respondents for the sample is 531.

The instrument used in this study is the Grasha-Riechmann Student Learning Styles Scale (GRSLSS) as it offers a few advantages over the other learning style instruments. Some of its advantages as mentioned by Hruska-Riechmann and Grasha (1982) are:

a)   it is designed specifically to be used with senior high school and college students.

b)   it focuses on how students interact with the instructors, other students and with learning in general.

c)   It promotes an optimal teaching/learning environment by helping the faculty design courses and develops sensitivity to the students' needs.

There are 60 questions with 6 subscales that represent the learning style dimension. The questions make use of the self-report inventory. In this study, the researchers attempt to assess the students' learning styles using the general class as the questionnaires can also be used to assess individual styles in a specific course (Rayner and Riding, 1997). There are three bi-polar which describe an individual typical approach to a learning situation. The three bi-polar dimensions are Avoidant-Participant, Competitive-Collaborative and Dependent-Independent. Andrews (1981) indicate that Participant and Avoidant most consistently have a negative relationship, Competitive and Collaborative dimensions appear to be independent of each other, while Independent and Dependent dimensions may have a low negative relationship. Learners appear to prefer all six dimensions to some degree.

Psychometric properties of the revised GRSSL indicate that the cronbach alpha for Avoidant, Collaborative and Participant is acceptable as 7 out of 9 values are above 0.7 while for Competitive is 0.74 (O'Fathaigh,2000). Studies by Bourhis and Stubbs (1991) indicate the reliability of GRSSL as follows: 0.5 Dependent, 0.68 Competitive, 0.55

Independent, 0.81 Avoidant, 0.77 Collaborative and 0.78 Participant. Curry (1983) reported that an average test-retest correlation of 0.80 across scales within the measures.

3. Results and discussion

A total of 407 (77%) students answered the questionnaires distributed. Based on the responses, 31.4% of the students were from 18-20 years age group, 31.43% were in the 21-23 years age group, 2.9% from the range 24-27 years, and only 0.2% was more than 27 years of age. In terms of gender, males made up 35.9% of the respondents whereas females 63.9%. While for field of study, out of 407 respondents, 52.6% were science students and the rest 45.9% were social science students. In terms of hometown, 43.0% of the respondents were from rural area while 49.9% were from urban area. Majority of the respondents 43.7% had their cumulative grade point average (CGPA) more than 3.0.

In order to achieve the objectives, the researchers used several tests such as cross-tab analysis and independent sample t-test.

Table 1 shows the cross tabulation analysis between age and each construct of learning style. Students in the range of 18 to 20 years of age have higher scores on the Avoidant (75.8%) and Independent (71.2%) learning styles.

In order to identify the relationship between age and students' interaction styles, a Chi-Square test was conducted. The result in Table 2 indicates that there is a significant relationship between the students' age and the Avoidant learning style (p= 0.001). Therefore, students' age appears to influence their learning style on Avoidant where the younger age group, mostly in the second semester, did not like to participate with students and teachers in the classroom and they were not interested and were overwhelmed by most classroom activities.

Cross tabulation analysis between gender and learning styles is indicated in Table 3. It is found that female students have higher scores in the Collaborative (62.8%), Participant (62.5%), Dependant (61.4%) and Competitive (61.4%) learning styles than male students. However, a Chi-Square Test shows that there is no significant association between gender and all the learning styles. Thus, gender does not influence the students' social interaction in the classroom.

Cross tabulation analysis between the respondents' hometown and learning styles is shown in Table 4.0. From the table, the respondents that came from urban area have higher scores in the Avoidant (58.1%) and Competitive (54.7%) learning styles than those from the rural area. However, the Chi-Square Test reveals that there is no association between students' hometown and their learning styles. Thus, the hometown of the students does not influence their learning styles (Table 5).

The result in Table 6.0 indicates that there is a significant (p = 0.021) relationship between the Collaborative learning style and the students' academic achievement. Thus, the Collaborative learning style appears to influence the academic achievement of the students.

In order to test on the significant differences between the social interaction of science and social science students and their academic achievement, an independent T-Test is conducted. The result shows there is a significant difference in Independent learning style (p = 0.035) between science and social science students (Table 7).

4. Conclusion

The study provides some inconsistent result as compared to the previous findings.

i)   In the previous studies, when age is taken into consideration, young learners are found to prefer Avoidant and Competitive styles (O'Faithaigh, 2000; Elison and Moore, 1979) while older learners prefer Dependent and Participatory learning styles. However, the cross tabulation analysis shows students between the age of 18 to 20 years have higher scores on the Avoidant (75.8%) and Independent (71.2%) learning styles. The result of Chi-Square Test indicates that at a significant level of 0.05, there is a significant relationship only for Avoidant (p = 0.001).

ii)   Previous studies by O'Faithaigh (2000) and Kraft (1976) show that males adopt more Independent and Competitive styles than females. Women normally would experience fear of failure and they depend on teachers. From the analysis, it is found that female students have higher scores in the Collaborative (62.8%), Participant (62.5%), Dependant (61.8%) and Competitive (61.4%) learning styles than male students. However, the Chi-Square Test shows there is no significant association between gender and social interaction in the classroom.

iii)   Students that came from urban area appear to be more Avoidant (58.1%) and Competitive (54.7%) than those from the rural area. However, the Chi-Square Test shows that there is no significant association between hometown and social interaction.

iv)   There is a significant difference in Independent learning style (p = 0.035) between science and social science students.

By understanding the social interaction of students in the classroom, educators are able to identify those who would require help. Thus, the educators can design an instructional pedagogy to meet the style preferences of students. In addition, the educators can implement several strategies to improve on the learning process that is being reflected in the

students' academic achievement. Besides, they can also assist the students to become effective learners. Thus, as a conclusion, the researchers suggest that educators vary the teaching style so that it touches on the different aspects of students preferences. This would help the students to enjoy learning and simultaneously, it encourages them to learn on the other aspects of learning styles as well. For example, the study found that social science students and science students differ in terms of Independent Style. Hence the educators should encourage more independent study and self-paced instruction and at the same time, they must not forget to use techniques that encourage participation such as discussion and cooperative learning in order to tackle the students Collaborative, Competitive and Participant styles.

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Table 1. Cross Tabulation Analysis Between Age And Social Interaction

Age	Independent	Dependent	Collaborative	Competitive	Participant	Avoidant
18-20 years	47 (71.2%)	111 (64.2%)	208 (63.8%)	243 (64.5%)	49 (68.1%)	25 (75.8%)
21-23 years	16 (24.2%)	56 (32.4%)	105 (32.2%)	122 (32.4%)	21 (29.2%)	7 (21.2%)
24-27 years	3 (4.5%)	6 (3.5%)	12 (3.7%)	11 (2.9%)	2 (2.8%)	1 (3.0%)
> 27 years			1 (0.3%)	1 (0.3%)		

Table 2. Chi-Square Test between Age and Social Interaction

Learning Styles			Age
Independent	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	11.505
		Significance	0.074
		N	392
Dependent	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	2.472
		Significance	0.872
		N	393
Collaborative	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	5.999
		Significance	0.423
		N	397
Competitive	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	2.847
		Significance	0.416
		N	395
Participant	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	2.448
		Significance	0.874
		N	388
Avoidant	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	24.051
		Significance	0.001
		N	317

Table 3. Cross Tabulation Analysis between Gender and Social Interaction

Gender	Independent	Dependent	Collaborative	Competitive	Participant	Avoidant
Male	32 (48.5%)	66 (38.2%)	121 (37.2%)	134 (35.6%)	27 (37.5%)	16 (50.0%)
Female	34 (51.5%)	107 (61.8%)	204 (62.8%)	242 (61.4%)	45 (62.5%)	16 (50.0%)

Table 4. Cross Tabulation Analysis between Hometown and Social Interaction

Hometown	Independent	Dependent	Collaborative	Competitive	Participant	Avoidant
Rural	30 (50.8%)	81 (49.1%)	142 (47.0%)	159 (45.3%)	34 (51.5%)	13 (41.9%)
Urban	29 (49.2)	84 (50.9%)	160 (53.0%)	192 (54.7%)	32 (48.5%)	18 (58.1%)

Table 5. Chi-Square Test between Hometown and Social Interaction

Learning Styles			Hometown
Independent	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	0.918
		Significance	0.632
		N	364
Dependent	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	4.800
		Significance	0.091
		N	366
Collaborative	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	0.337
		Significance	0.845
		N	369
Competitive	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	0.136
		Significance	0.712
		N	367
Participant	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	1.235
		Significance	0.539
		N	363
Avoidant	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	3.544
		Significance	0.17
		N	296

Table 6. Result of Chi-Square Test between Social Interaction and CGPA

Learning Styles			CGPA
Independent	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	3.211
		Significance	0.782
		N	390
Dependent	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	9.668
		Significance	0.139
		N	391
Collaborative	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	14.880
		Significance	0.021
		N	395
Competitive	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	3.879
		Significance	0.275
		N	393
Participant	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	11.175
		Significance	0.083
		N	386
Avoidant	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	11.371
		Significance	0.078
		N	316

Table 7. The Independent Samples Test of Science and Social Science Students on Independent Learning Style.

		INDEPENDENT	
		Equal variances assumed	Equal variances not assumed
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	F	.203	
	Sig.	.652	
t-test for Equality of Means	t	2.111	2.108
	df	384	374.450
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	.036
	Mean Difference	.1102	.1102
	Std. Error Difference	.05223	.05228
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Lower	.00754	.00743
	Upper	.21293	.21304

Study on the Independent Director System

in Corporate Governance

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Abstract

As a system arrangement in corporate governance, implementation of the independent director will help improve structure of corporate governance, maintain interests of all stockholders, and protect rights and interests of small-and-medium size of investors. There exist such many issues as insufficient information of independent directors, weak independence, low enthusiasm, and shortage of talents in the practice of the independent director system in China. Therefore, we should strengthen and optimize the independent director system with a Chinese characteristic.

Keywords: Corporate governance, Independent director, Insider control

1. Significance of establishing the independent director system

The so-called independent director refers to a director who doesn't hold a managerial position in the company in which he holds the position of director, and who doesn't have a close relation with top management in terms of economics or relative interests. America is the country that established the independent director system earliest and perfect. Since 1930s, America has recommended public joint stock companies to establish "non-employee director". The reason for introduction of the independent director system in corporate governance, on one hand, was that the director should express his opinions when an independent director makes a decision, especially some significant decisions about enterprise merger, connected transaction, stock repurchase, and interest conflict between large and small stockholders. This can prevent stockholders from conducting any behavior that is unfavorable to the company and its medium and small stockholders, and can weaken contradictions of large stockholders and medium and small stockholders in the aspect of interest conflict. On the other hand, the independent director is not subject to the controlling shareholders and the top management, so he can observe, assess and supervise the top management by means of his transcendent position, so as to effectively check and balance the controlling shareholders and supervise the operators, ensure that the Board of Directors considers interests of all shareholders, reduce insider control and large shareholder manipulation, and to effectively protect interests of medium and small shareholders. In addition, the independent director can promote scientification of decisions of the Board of Directors with his professional knowledge and independent judgment, improve transparency of the Board of Directors, make his decision-making process easily understood by other external parties, and attract excellent partners and potential investors, so as to upgrade the value of the enterprise.

2. Practice of the independent director system in China

On August 21, 2001, Chinese Securities and Futures Commission issued the <<Guiding Opinion of Establishment of Independent Director Systems by Listed Companies>> (short for <<Guiding Opinion>> below), which meant that independent director had entered Chinese listed companies as a significant system to standardizing and improving the governance structure of listed companies and to protect interests of medium-and-small size of investors. At present, introduction of the independent director has played a definite role in development and standardized operation of listed companies. However, as a newly born concept, the independent director is still at a groping stage, and there still exist several issues in the practice.

2.1 The information an independent director grasps is not sufficient.

The independent director doesn't participate in operation and management of a company, and he comes to understand the company merely through introduction of the managerial personnel or the financial statement. That is to say, "independence" of the independent director is embodied in his not engaging in the operation and management or in his understanding of the company according to the field of vision established by the governor in advance. In the situation of information asymmetry and incomplete contract, two sorts of behaviors of the managerial personnel might affect judgment of the independent director. One sort of behavior is incomplete or distorted information disclosure mentioned by Williamson, especially purposeful misguide, distortion, concealment and confusion, etc. The other type of behavior is non-deceptive information misguide or incompleteness of information, namely, significant omission of information disclosure. Therefore, actual judgment made by the independent director is encountered with great danger of distorting the truth. Under such a circumstance, it's not possible for the independent director to effectively supervise behaviors of managerial personnel.

2.2 Independence of the independent director is not enough.

Criticism on "vase" has always been perplexing the independent director of listed companies. According to relative investigation, 33% independent directors never say "No" in the decision by vote of the Board of Directors, and 35% independent directors never express any divergent opinions from major stockholders or top managers of listed companies. "Dependence" has been the primary crisis among independent directors. However, it is exactly design defect of systems which include nominating, hiring, and remuneration that result in this crisis.

2.3 Work enthusiasm of the independent director is not high.

It is stipulated in the <<Guiding Opinion>> that the independent director shouldn't be absent from the Board of Directors for consecutive three times, and, meanwhile, that he has to express his special opinion as for such significant matters as associative transaction. However, it hasn't been stipulated whether the independent director should be authorized to vote when he doesn't attend a meeting, whether the independent director should review and express his special opinion about periodic report of listed companies, and how the independent director should be punished if he violates the <<Guiding Opinion>>, so some independent directors are often absent from the Board of Directors, and transfer their vote rights to chairmen and general managers who are not independent directors of the company. When there happens a problem in the company and it is put on record and investigated, the independent director is not only absent from relative meetings, but doesn't sign his name on correlative records, so he can be remitted from administrative penalty. Besides, interrelated civil accountability system is not sound, so there is no way to look into the civil liability.

2.4 Introduction of the independent director is incompatible with the system of Board of Supervisors.

The independent director system originated from countries with a law system of US and UK in which the Common Law is the primary law. These countries usually adopt the Board of Directors system structure of "single system" in the shareholding organization of corporate governance and there isn't any independent Board of Supervisors in corporate organizational structuring. Therefore, the companies strengthen independence of the Board of Directors, introduce the independent director system, try to reform the supervision mechanism within the existing "single system" framework, and to enable the Board of Directors to exercise the supervision responsibility on the managerial authorities, so as to regress controlling power of the shareholders and to balance the insider control. China adopts the structural organizational framework of continental law system "binary system" in its corporate legislation, namely, to set up Board of Directors and Board of Supervisors under the General Meeting of shareholders, which respectively exercise decision-making right and supervision right. The Board of Supervisors is an especial organization to protect interests of the shareholders, to supervise the Board of Directors to perform any resolution of the General Meeting of shareholders, and to supervise the board members and managers. According to institutional economics, function of system design lies in rationally defining limit of rights, only with which can the responsibility be explicit, and can the operating cost of the system be reduced so as to decrease external effects. As things are, if rights and liabilities of Board of Supervisors and the independent directors are not clear-cut, then dispute and prevarication between these two organizations due to the psychology of "hitchhiking" might reduce the only supervision performance to nothing. As for how to coordinate relations between the independent director and the Board of Supervisors, Shenzhen Stock Exchange avoids this issue in its <<Growth Enterprise Market Trading Rules>>, while Shanghai Stock Exchange attaches the right of financial examination simultaneously to these two organizations in its <<Corporate Governance Guideline for Listed Companies>>. Therefore, both are responsible for the supervision, only with a result of wasting resources or mutual prevarication. Securities and Futures Commission doesn't mention any relation between the independent director and the Board of Supervisors in its <<Guiding Opinion>>.

2.5 Strength of guide and supervision of the independent director is not strong.

Introduction of the independent director system is an innovation of the governance model in binary companies in China.

Theoretically, this innovation helps make up for disadvantages of the Board of Supervisors in terms of the subsequent supervision. However, in practice, the supervision function of the independent director is not as what is originally expected. One important reason is the fact that, after the implementation of the independent director system, the stock supervision department neglects administrative guide and supervision on the independent director, excessively believes in and depends on self-conscious play of the supervision function of the independent director, and put its constraint mostly on the moral level of the independent director.

2.6 There is a shortage of talents among independent directors.

Currently, most of independent directors hired by listed companies are technical experts. The primary role of the independent director is to perfect the corporate governance structure in the company. However, it is far from enough for a technical expert to hold the position of an independent director who is merely proficient in the main business of the company. Especially, under the circumstance when the ownership structure is extremely irrational, a listed company not only requires the technical expert to give suggestions on developmental strategy of the company, but needs a relatively impartial independent director to play his supervising and balancing role in the corporate governance structure, capital utilization and management of the company, so as to achieve the target of improving its corporate governance structure and protecting interests of medium-and-small size of investors.

3. Improvement and perfection of thought on the independent director system

Practice of many countries indicate that the independent director system plays an extremely important role in specialized operation of a company, in the judgment and supervision of the operators and top managerial personnel and in protecting interests of medium and small investors. However, if there isn't a series of perfect institutional arrangement for guarantee, then this system might soon become just a decoration. Therefore, full play of the role of the independent director calls for a set of independent director systems that fits in characteristics of Chinese listed companies and also for support from a harmonious external environment.

3.1 Reinforcement and perfection of Board of Supervisors

The independent director system is an assistant mechanism in the corporate governance. Even in US which has successful experiences in operation of the independent director system, the role of its independent director is often challenged because there lacks the target of shareholder interest maximization in its independent directors, and their supervision is restricted by time and information. As for listed companies in China, it's most important to reinforce and perfect formulation and operation mechanism of the special supervisory organ and to play the supervision role of the Board of Supervisors. After all, as a standing supervision organ within the joint-stock company, the Board of Supervisors helps with precaution beforehand, timely standardization and subsequent supervision, and tries to resolves an issue with internal corporate mechanism, which not only increases efficiency of problem resolution and saves social cost and resources, but also may try not to publicize disputes within the company, so as to affect confidence of investors and the image and reputation of the company, and to prevent some business secrets from being divulged during internal controversy and investigation or litigation of any external power.

3.2 Coordination of functions of the independent director and the Board of Supervisors

Supervision of the independent director has the characteristics of close integration of supervision beforehand, internal supervision and decision-making supervision, while the Board of Supervisors has the characteristics of frequent supervision, subsequent supervision and external supervision that the independent director system doesn't have. Full play of the arrangement functions of these two systems depends not only on perfection of each system per se, but on coordination of these two systems. In order for the independent director and the existing corporate governance structure in China to "switch in seamlessly", it is necessary not only to play the role of the independent director and the Board of Supervisors, but to avoid functional conflicts and the situation of no one being responsible. Therefore, (1) the company should define and integrate functions of the independent director and the Board of Supervisors. Since it has been expressively stipulated in the <<Common Law>> on the Board of Supervisors, then the company should take up strengthening the supervision function of the Board of Supervisors. Functions of the independent director can be concentrated on examining and approving significant associative transactions, nomination of internal board members, audit and control of salary of internal board members and managers and financial information of the company, etc. (2) The company should establish a negotiation and cooperation mechanism between the independent director and the Board of Supervisors. It is necessary to regularly hold a meeting which is only attended by the independent director and the Board of Supervisors, in which they can exchange information and report any new conditions. The meeting can be convened by the independent director and the Board of Supervisors in turns. The independent director can have access to and utilize the financial audit report of the Board of Supervisors, and can recommend the Board of Supervisors to give a specific audit on a certain financial item.

3.3 Perfection of selection and employment mechanism of the independent director

What's special for the independent director is his "independence" and "being sensible". Firstly, he is required to be

"independent". That is, he should have independent property, independent personality, independent business, independent interest and independent operation. Secondly, he is required to be "sensible". In order for the independent director to play his proper role, he is required to have high qualifications in terms of professional ethics, professional knowledge and social qualifications, etc. The number of the listed companies in which the independent director can hold a position should exceed three, so that he can have enough time and energy to participate in the operation and decision-making of the company. He should be in good condition, with the age from 35 to 60 being the optimal choice.

Selection and employment of the independent director is the key to ensuring personality independence and exercise independence of the independent director. In order to isolate relations between the independent director and major shareholders from the selection and employment of personnel, a listed company should set up a Nominating Committee of the independent directors, which is particularly responsible for selection and supervision of board members. The Nominating Committee should be constituted by supervision organ, professional personnel and medium and small shareholders. Therefore, it is suggested that the first selection of positions should be nominated by the Board of Directors, Board of Supervisors, or those shareholders who hold above 1% of issued capital stocks individually or together with others, and also that the cumulative voting system should be introduced, so as to ensure that medium and small shareholders can select an independent director who represents their will. Afterwards, the Nominating Committee constituted by the independent directors can decide to select candidates the next independent directors, which should be submitted to the General Meeting of shareholders for vote. The General Meeting of shareholders adopts competitive election. Besides, the independent director should be regularly replaced, and his term of office should not be too long (a term of 3-5 years being best), so as to ensure his independence.

3.4 Establishment and improvement of incentive and constraint mechanism of the independent director

The independent director is not merely a consultant, because medium and small shareholders expect him to play an actual role and even to go against the controlling shareholders in terms of right-safeguarding. Therefore, the legal rights of the independent director should be effectively guaranteed in the legal system. Only if the rights of the independent director are guaranteed in the legal system, can he play a proper and due role.

Motive of the independent director originates from the reputation and remuneration mechanism. (1) Reputation mechanism. Reputation is one of the significant mechanisms to ensure implementation of a contract. As for the independent director, maintenance of his reputation is an important motive to prompt him to perform his duty. Reputation mechanism may stimulate the independent director to supervise the executive director and managers, so that collusion between the independent director and the executive director and managers can be avoided to a certain extent. In market economy, formulation and perfection of the market selection mechanism and judgment system of the independent director is a precondition and fundamental guarantee of the functioning of reputation mechanism (2) Remuneration mechanism. As a primary means to stimulate hard work of the independent director and to play his important role in the corporate governance, rationality of remuneration has a direct effect on enthusiasm of the independent director. Remuneration of an independent director is an intractable issue, because too high remuneration might result in his dependence on the company, and too low remuneration can't stimulate his enthusiasm. The role of the independent director is to supervise and restrict administrative authorities of the company. Once he is excessively dependent on the remuneration, he might lessen due inquiry and counterviews from the managerial personnel, and consequently, his independence might be destroyed. Given the above consideration, a common practice is to pay his remuneration in the form of annual fee and conference expenses, etc, nothing related to the corporate performance. However, with view to the role of the independent director that is to supervise and balance managerial personnel of a listed company, and to the fact that remuneration plays an important role in stimulating enthusiasm of the independent director, it is also feasible to offer the stock option to the independent director in addition to actual fixed monetary remuneration in order to bring interests of the independent director and shareholders into correspondence. In such way, a great variation emerges intangibly in the total remuneration of the independent director, which can stimulate his enthusiasm in taking part in decision making of the company.

As an agent, the independent director also has an opportunistic behavior just like an industrialist. In order for the independent director to exercise his rights impartially and equitably, nothing can go without a constraint mechanism in addition to above-mentioned incentive mechanism. Only when constraint on the independent director is emphasized, can the independent director be established upon the basis of the system, but not merely on the basis of the individual initiative and self-consciousness. (1) To make clear legal liabilities of the independent director and to strengthen legal constraints o him. In order to avoid nonfeasance or immoral conducts of the independent director, definite stipulation should be made on the liabilities he should assume and on the legal consequences. If an independent director doesn't properly perform his duty, doesn't fully play his role in the listed company, or is bribed by the major shareholders, then he should not only be punished in terms of his morality, but should also assume civil compensation liability for any loss of the company or other shareholders. In order to avoid the independent director from being absent from the board meeting, his absence should considered as approval of any decision made by the Board of Directors from the

perspective of the law, and he should also assume proper obligation. To strengthen integrity and diligence obligation of the independent director. Considering the general weak consciousness of among the independent directors currently in Chinese listed companies, a lowest requirement should be made for their duty performance time each year. When on post, they are required to make a commitment that they will have enough time and energy to perform their duty. Besides, responsibility investigation mechanism should be intensified for their breach of duty. (3) The company should establish and improve performance assessment system among independent directors, and regular assessment should be made among them. Their performance assessment should be primarily based on the performance situation of their functions (supervision function, assessment function, and strategic function), together with several indices. Performance indices of the independent directors include frequency and time of their participation in the Board of Directors and in relevant committee meetings, their attitudes towards significant decisions and their votes, their suggestions on the Board of Directors and its Committee and the implementation performance, their opinions and assessment on the corporate operation, their advisory opinions on the operational strategy, and their views on authenticity of disclosed information about the listed companies. (4) To actively cultivate the independent director market. Establishment of the independent director can, on one hand, provide impartial and equitable evaluation on human capital of the independent directors, which facilitates training of talents among the independent directors. On the other hand, its establishment can connect closely the reputation and behavior of an independent director by means of the mechanism to publicize information through the market, so as to formulate a convincing constraint on the independent director.

3.5 Establishment of self-regulatory organization of the independent director

For establishment of the independent director system which matches China's actual conditions, it is also crucial to establish such self-regulatory organizations as independent director association, and independent director office, etc, to work out a practice standard, to improve the market system of the independent director, to establish and improve the "business reputation" system of the independent director, and to strengthen training and self-regulatory education among the independent directors. Establishment of the independent director association with a membership system can reinforce training and education among the independent directors, which can form a specialized independent director level, intensify construction of the independent directors, standardize and restrict behaviors of the independent directors. Compared with the independent director association, operation of the independent director office tends to marketization. The independent director office can transfer liability of a natural person to liability of a legal person. It is a carrier which constrains the independent director and can replace the independent director to assume the liability. In the situation when the "business reputation" system of professional persons hasn't been established in China, the independent director can directly standardize and restrict behaviors of the independent director, which is propitious for the independent director to play the role of independent judgment, supervision and management, and which is helpful for actual implementation of professionalization of the independent director.

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A Study of Collaborative Learning among Malaysian Undergraduates

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Abstract

This study was to investigate Malaysian undergraduates' preference for collaborative learning activities that were carried out during English lessons. Gender, location and programme were studied in order to determine their influence on the undergraduates' preference. The study was carried out on four groups comprised of science and social science undergraduates. The respondents were asked to respond to a set questionnaire that was adapted from Cantwell & Andrews' Feelings Toward Group Work Questionnaire (1998) & Reid's Perceptual Learning Questionnaire (1987). The results indicated that all the undergraduates preferred to participate in collaborative learning activities during their English lessons.

Keywords: Collaborative learning, Malaysian undergraduates

1. Introduction

Collaborative learning is defined as classroom learning techniques which require students to work together in groups or pairs in learning tasks (Colbeck et al., 2000). Students from different levels work together for a common goal as they are responsible for their own learning and for others in their group. Johnson, Johnson, and Smith, (1991) indicate that collaborative learning requires elements of positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, appropriate use of collaborative skills and group processing. Students are given opportunities to learn by inquiry under the guidance of a teacher and at the same time developing communicative skills, leadership skills and interpersonal skills (Bean, 2001). Learners will have more opportunities to interact with peers, present and defend ideas, exchange diverse beliefs, question other conceptual frameworks and be actively engaged in collaborative learning setting (Srinivas, n.d.).

In second language learning, students find difficulties to utilize the language skills outside of language classrooms as

there are fewer opportunities to do so due to poor language environments. Thus, teachers need to ensure that students use English in discussing and communicating with each other in the classroom. Yet students find it difficult to utilize the language due to the class size, learning style preferences and teachers' approaches to teaching. On the other hand, teachers are concerned about the low proficiency level of the students and the large class size that they need to deal with as a typical class could reach up to 55 students.

This paper investigates how students responded to collaborative learning activities. It aims at finding how useful students consider collaborative learning activities in learning English by discussing and solving tasks classmates in groups. 162 students at semester two were chosen to respond to questionnaires in English regarding the usage of collaborative learning activities in their language classes. Questionnaires were distributed to get the information needed to see if students enjoyed collaborative learning activities with peers. It is expected that students find collaborative learning activities useful toward their formal curriculum. The significance of the study is to provide teachers much informed decisions in their selection of English classroom activities. The research was carried out to determine whether the second semester Universiti Teknologi MARA Perlis students prefer collaborative learning during English lessons and to determine whether there was a significant difference in students' preference for collaborative learning by gender.

2. Literature Review

Collaborative learning differs from traditional teaching approaches because students work together rather than compete with each other individually. It can take place any time students work together like when they help each other with homework or when students work together in the same place on a structured project in a small group. Collaborative learning helps students become actively and constructively involved in content, to take ownership of their own learning and to resolve group conflicts and improve teamwork skills.

In language learning, Harmer (1991) proposes that collaborative learning provides maximum opportunities for students to interact and cooperate with one another as they work towards a common goal by using four language skills such as speaking, listening, reading and writing. Regardless of their different language proficiencies and personalities, students work better in groups as Delucchi (2006) reports that students preferred collaborative learning on language activities as these activities enabled them to exchange more opinions and ideas. This was because they felt less anxious, so they could perform better than when they worked alone. This situation is explained by Krashen (1988) as learning English in less anxiety situations that result in effective learning. Regarding the number of members for collaborative learning, Dillenbourg & Schneider (n.d.) observe that small groups seem to function better than large groups in which some members tend to be 'asleep' or excluded from interesting interactions. Davis & Bass (1993) suggest that a group should have a number of no more than six students. According to them, a group larger than six has several weaknesses. It is too easy for students to become passive observers rather than active participants, students may not get the opportunity to speak fluently since there are so many people, students' sense of community and responsibility may be less intense in large groups.

Students' present learning preferences are heavily influenced by their past learning experiences. Anis Maesin (2006) in her study on a group of UiTM students finds that students regardless from urban or rural areas equally preferred collaborative learning. Reid (1987) conducted a study on six learning style preferences on graduates of ten groups of students from different language backgrounds; Malay, Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese and English speakers. In the study, Reid finds that 113 Malay students preferred group learning style as their favorite learning style meanwhile the English speakers chose group learning style as the least favourite learning style. The finding indicates previous educational experiences influence students' present learning style preferences. Web (1982) explains the nature of Asian students as being submissive, anxious and talk less in classrooms so through collaborative learning, Asian students are able to learn better and more effectively.

In a class setting whereby it consists of many races as such in many higher learning institutions in Malaysia, students are able to learn to work will all types of people from different backgrounds. Therefore, they will find many opportunities to reflect upon and reply to the diverse responses their friends bring to the questions raised. Small groups also allow students to add their perspectives to an issue based on their cultural differences. This exchange will definitely help students to better understand other cultures and points of view. In addition, Norhayati et. al (2005), in their research on on-line collaborative learning (used the collaboration tool to discuss and complete the project given) find that on-line collaboration-learning group scored higher than the traditional collaboration-learning group (face to face discussion on the project).

Participating in collaborative learning allows students to be critical in their thinking. Critical thinking among undergraduates is dictated by learning environments and the teachers' approaches to teaching. Gokhale (1995) finds that students who participated in collaborative learning performed significantly better on critical thinking than students who studied individually. According to Johnston et al (2000), collaborative learning through problem solving encourages critical thinking as it allows knowledge retention as students apply knowledge in other contexts. At the same time, it enhances interpersonal skills. It is imperative for teachers to know their students' learning style preferences as Yazici

(2005) indicates that by knowing students' preferences for collaborative learning, teachers can take appropriate measures that enhance learning of English. Raja Maznah (2004) in her study on web-based collaborative learning activities finds out that the students involved in the research reported that they were able to expand and stretch their creativity to think of innovative ideas.

Gokhale (1995) in her investigation on the effectiveness of individual learning versus collaborative learning in enhancing drill-and-practice skills and critical-thinking skills finds that collaborative learning fosters the development of critical thinking through discussion, clarification of ideas and evaluation of others' ideas. If the purpose of teaching and learning is to enhance critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, then collaborative learning is more beneficial than individual learning. However, if the purpose of teaching and learning is to get factual knowledge, then both methods individual learning and collaborative learning should be adopted. To sum up, collaborative learning activities do contribute well in students' ability to work together in groups that further enhance their creativity and thinking skills.

M.Z. Kamsah & R. Talib (2003) discover that the lecturers and the final year engineering students at Faculty of Chemical and Natural Resources Engineering (FKKKSA) at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Skudai agreed on the importance of group work activities in classrooms. Both groups also agreed on the effectiveness of group work on cognitive skills. They agreed on the improvement of the understanding of materials through discussions, solving assignments and increasing memory retention and thinking skills. Brown (2008) in her research on students' perceptions of collaborative learning (CL) in University of Botswana discovers that most students claimed to have derived academic benefits such as better comprehension and improved performance and acquired generic skills-enhanced communication and problem-solving skills. She also finds that most students agreed that CL practices should be encouraged and continued. They also found that CL is enjoyable and they can make new friends through it.

2.1 Existing patterns of individual learning

There is a conventional perception towards Asian learners in general regarding their approach to learning. Asian students are assumed to bring with them learning experience that favour 'rote, reproductive, surface, teacher-centred and dependent approaches to learning' (Ninnes, Aitchison, & Kalos, 1999; Ballard & Clanchy, 1997; Devos, 2003; Gribble & Ziguras, 2003 as cited in Ling, et. al., 2005). Wong (2004) in a study of Asian international undergraduates in a university in Australia reveals Malaysian undergraduates experienced teacher-centered learning, rote memorizing and `spoon-feeding' during high schools in Malaysia. The undergraduates were lost at the beginning of the semester at the university as a result of different learning and teaching styles practiced by the university. However after two months, these undergraduates were able to adapt to new learning styles adopted by the university. The undergraduates confessed that they preferred learner-centered learning styles as they were able to have more freedom and in control of their learning.

Mohd Hanif and Norsafinas (2006) in their study of 1193 undergraduates of three universities in Malaysia state that most undergraduate programs are course works which comprise of assignments, groups projects, presentations and class discussions .The course works require undergraduates to work in groups and collaborate with each other. This requirement results in undergraduates of adopting collective learning styles rather than individualistic learning style. In a research done by Othman, Wong, Shah Christirani and Nabilah (2009) on 'Uncovering Malaysian students' motivation to learning Science", they find that the majority of the respondents think that peers not only helped to clarify concepts that they were uncertain, but also these peers have become the source of information. Besides, these respondents also saw their friends as motivators where they promoted healthy competition in ensuring who would perform the best among them. Based on their research on strategies for facilitating the participation of Asian and other students in Problem-Based Learning, Remedios, Clarke and Hawthorne (n.d.) find that it is common for Asian students to limit their verbal contribution due to their concern over the quality and accuracy of their information. Besides, these Asian students found it hard to enter discussions since they had the belief that local students were better at presenting information.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research subjects

The purpose of the study is to find out the preference for collaborative learning activities among Part Two Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perlis students. The students comprise of the Malay students who have had about two semesters of English language class in UiTM Perlis. The students' classes consist of about 30 to 35 students of mixed gender and posess various levels of English proficiency. They have completed a semester of English course that was designed to raise students' level of basic English proficiency. The students were selected as samples for the study because they have had experienced participating in group activities in English lessons during the previous semester of study. The students are of between 19 to 20 years of age. This group of students reflects a typical classroom in Malaysia which comprises diverse socio-economic and sociopolitical variables, namely urban-rural students, socioeconomic status, reasons and motivation to learn English, and attitudes toward learning English (Mukundan & Seng, 2002). They

are also most likely affected by these factors. One aspect that is exceptional is that they are all of the same race, Malay. Therefore, it is assumed that the students' cultural inclination would be very similar. However, for the purpose of the study, only two factors are taken into account; gender and programme enrolled in UiTM Perlis. These factors were investigated in relation to students' preference for collaborative learning. A total of 162 students were selected to participate in the study. 93 of the students were from the science programme and 51 from the social science programme. The respondents were 87 male students and 72 female students.

3.2 Research instrument

The survey method was used in the procedure of data collection for this study. The respondents were asked to respond to a set of questionnaire that was adapted from Cantwell & Andrews' Feeling Toward Group Work Questionnaire (1998) and Reid's Perceptual Learning Questionnaire (1987). The respondents' responses are ranked on a Likert scale of (1) to (5). (5) in the Likert scale indicates "strongly agree", (4) "agree", (3) "not sure", (2) "disagree" and (1) "strongly disagree". The Statistical Package for the Social Science 13.0 (SPSS) for Windows was used for the analysis of data collected using the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and the independent samples t-test were used to analyse the students' responses.

4. Results and Discussion

The level of students' preference toward collaborative learning has been put into three categories; high preference, medium preference and low preference. Table 1 illustrates these categories of scores. (Table 1)

The overall result of students' preference for collaborative learning is illustrated in Table 2. It was found that none of the 162 respondents had a low level of preference for collaborative learning during English lessons. 12 respondents (7.4%) had an average level of preference and 150 respondents (92.6%) had a high level of preference. This strongly indicates that all the respondents preferred collaborative learning during English lessons. In fact, more than three quarter of the respondents had a high level of preference compared to the average level of preference. This means that there were overwhelmingly more respondents who had a high level of preference than those who had an average level. In short, the findings show that the whole sample preferred to participate in collaborative learning activities during English lessons. (Table 2)

The level of preference for collaborative learning based on the respondents' gender is illustrated in Table 3. It shows that, for the male respondents, none had a low level of preference, 6 respondents (6.9 %) had an average level of preference, and 81 respondents (93.1%) had a high level of preference. As for the female respondents, none had a low level of preference, 4 (5.6 %) had an average level of preference, and 68 (94.4%) had a high level of preference. In other words, this means that not a single male or female respondent had a low level of preference for collaborative learning during English lessons. Therefore, all the respondents had either an average or a high level of preference for collaborative learning. For both the male and female respondents, the percentage for those who had a high level of preference is strikingly higher than those with an average level of preference. This shows that both the male and female respondents generally preferred collaborative learning. In fact, there were more of them who had a high level of preference than an average level of preference. (Table 3)

The findings of the level of preference according to the programme that they enrolled in are illustrated in Table 4. It was found that none of the science programme respondents had a low level of preference for collaborative learning, 9 respondents (9.7%) had an average level of preference, and 84 (90.3%) had a high level of preference. As for those respondents who enrolled in the social science programme, none had a low level of preference for collaborative learning, only 1 respondent (2%) had an average level of preference, and the rest, 50 respondents (98%) had a high level of preference. This clearly shows that almost all the respondents from both science and social science programmes preferred collaborative learning during their English lessons. (Table 4)

An independent samples t-test was carried out on collaborative learning preference and gender showed that there was no significant difference in the students' preference towards collaborative learning by gender [t(159)=0.336, p>.05]. In other words, the students' preference for collaborative learning during English lessons was equally shared by the male as well as the female students. Even so, the *means* for the male respondents (M=80.28, SD=9.27) was slightly higher than the females' (M=79.85, SD=6.80). This indicated that the male students had a slightly more preference toward collaborative learning compared to the female students.

Another independent samples t-test that was carried out on collaborative learning preference and programme showed that there was a significant difference in the students preference for collaborative learning when it comes to the different programmes [t(159)=-3.476, p<0.5]. In short, the students' preference for collaborative learning during English lessons varies according to the two programmes that were selected for this study. The *means* for the two groups showed that the social science respondents' (M=83.29, SD=8.30) was higher than the science students' (M=78.62, SD=7.37). It can be concluded that the social science students preferred collaborative learning more than the science students.

5. Conclusions

The transitions of Malaysians students from schools to higher institutions of learning may be difficult because of the existing patterns of learning that emphasize more on surface learning, rote memorization and dependent learning rather than deep learning that is more exploratory and analytical. According to Noorizah Mohd. Noor (2006), a few studies conducted by Malaysian educationists found that Malaysian students were not independent enough (Farida, 1995) and they were expected to be "spoon-fed" with information and notes (Sarjit & Salasiah, 1996). This approach to learning caused failure in studies at tertiary level due to lack of effective study skills, reading, writing time and stress management skills (Ellis, 1996 as cited in Noorizah Mohd. Noor, 2006). The biggest problem that has been the outcome of individual learning amongst Malaysian students in general is the inability of Malaysian graduates to communicate effectively, in English in particular. This problem has been repeatedly highlighted in some of the national newspapers. Even though students in Malaysia have gone through years of learning English, it appears that it has been somewhat ineffective. For instance, many students are found not confident and in fact, afraid to use English in public (Fauzi, 2005). It was also found that Malaysian university students are generally weak in communication as they are unable to communicate effectively and produce sound arguments due to their inability to adapt to team learning that is largely used in universities (Muhammad Hasan, 2001).

This study has found that almost all of the students preferred collaborative learning activities. As educators, our utmost concern is to enhance our students' learning. Therefore, obtaining information about our students' learning preferences could be one of the ways in achieving this. We should be aware of their needs as well as what they want to experience in their English lessons. With such information, language instructors will be able to prepare and select activities that would cater for their students' learning preferences. This will result in achieving better academic performance (Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh, 2004) as well as other positive learning outcomes (Cruickshank, Bainer & Metcalf, 1995).

A study such as this will provide language instructors with a valuable insight of their own group of learners' learning preference. There are a number of studies which have been carried out by foreigners on foreign learners. Even when the studies were carried out on Malaysian students, the findings might not necessarily reflect the preference of the group of students that one is teaching. Thus, this shows that language instructors need to find out for themselves in order to know the learning preference that is specific to their own group of students in its local setting.

To fulfill the students' interest to work collaboratively, language instructors can select or prepare language activities that will enable students to work collaboratively during English lessons. They can plan their lessons according to the students' preference by incorporating collaborative language activities such as group projects and small group discussions into their lessons to practise all four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. This will help them to feel at ease in using English. In other words, they will be able to learn, practise and use English in a comfortable atmosphere as a result from working together in enjoyable and meaningful collaborative activities.

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Table 1. Levels of Collaborative Learning Preference

Total Scores	Level of Preference
0 – 29	Low Preference
30 – 69	Average Preference
70 – 100	High Preference

Table 2. Overall Students' Preference for Collaborative Learning

Level of Preference	Frequency	Percentage
Low	0	0
Average	12	7.4%
High	150	92.6%
Total	162	100%

Table 3. Students' Preference Level According to Gender

	MALE		FEMALE	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
High Preference	81	93.1	68	94.4
Average Preference	6	6.9	4	5.6
Low Preference	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	87	100	72	100

Table 4. Students' Preference Level According to Programme

	SCIENCE		SOCIAL SCIENCE	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
High Preference	84	90.3	50	98
Average Preference	9	9.7	1	2
Low Preference	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	93	100	51	100

Analysis and Appraisal of the Venture Financing of Farmers

Losing Land to Urban New District Construction

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Abstract

Taking Luonan New District as an example, from the aspects of financing channels, financing scales, financing costs, financing income and financing efficiency this article analyzes the venture financing of farmers losing land to urban new district construction. It is believed that internal financing plays a main part, but its proportion decreases year by year; the limitation of self-accumulation and institutional supply makes the financing demand of farmers losing land unable to be met; and internal financing efficiency is higher than external financing efficiency. Therefore, a resultant force from the farmers losing land, the government, the society and the community should be formed, so as to solve the problem of the venture financing of farmers losing land.

Keywords: Farmers losing land, Venture financing, Analysis and appraisal

1. Research approaches and elucidation

The analysis in this article is mainly based on a survey of the venture financing by farmers losing land in Luonan New District in Luoyang City, including questionnaire, forum, interview, literature and data gained without participation and observation.

This time there are two questionnaires, one of which is entitled "Questionnaire of the Venture Situation of Farmers Losing Land". The sampling of the survey is according to the resettlement communities in Luonan New District in Luoyang City. The government of Luonan New District has resettled all the farmers losing land by building eight communities: Longxiang Community, Longtai Community, Longrui Community, Longhe Community, Longxing Community, Longfu Community, Long'an Community and Longkang Community, which covers 1,500,000 square kilometers and in which more than 50,000 people can reside. We carried out a community-by-community research, and chose 80 samples from No. 4 Building and No. 8 Building of each community, altogether 640 samples (Note 1), among which 603 ones are valid (see Table 1).

Insert Table 1 here

The other one is called "Questionnaire of the Venture Financing by Farmers Losing Land". Among the 603 valid samples of "Questionnaire of the Venture Situation of Farmers Losing Land", 76 ones are entrepreneurial farmers, and we surveyed all of them in the form of questionnaire.

Besides, we also carried out some research work in the form of forum. Five forums are held respectively by the Development Office of Luonan New District in Luoyang City, the Government of Luolong District in Luoyang City, the Kaiyuan Road Office in Luolong District in Luoyang City, the Baicun Village Committee in Luolong District in Luoyang City, and ten Baicun villagers.

2. Analysis of the venture financing of farmers losing land to new district construction

Self-employment is an effective way to increase employment of farmers losing land as well as their income, so it merits our close attention. However, on the one hand, there exist many problems and obstacles in the venture process of farmers losing land, among which the biggest problem is financing (35%), and the following ones are talents (17%),

projects (14%) and skills (14%) (Figure 2). On the other hand, the farmers' demand for venture financing is heavy. From Figure 2we can see that on the whole the farmers' demand for capital tends to be heavy, for the proportion of "very heavy" is 27%, over a quarter, while the proportion of "heavy" is 40%, more than one third. Thus, there is a discrepancy between financing demand and financing reality, which merits our attention and thought. The venture financing of farmers losing land will be thoroughly analyzed and discussed as follows.

Insert Figure 1 here

Insert Figure 2 here

2.1 Analysis of financing channels

The capital of farmers losing land mainly comes from compensation for expropriated land, family savings and loans from relatives (Figure3), among which family savings are of the biggest proportion (36%). This demonstrates that the present venture financing of farmers losing land mainly takes the form of self-owned funds and their venture mainly depends on their own accumulation, which is in accordance with the basic rules of Chinese farmers' self-accumulation and self-development. Loans from relatives is also of big proportion (28%), which is in fact a further demonstration and extension of consanguinity, the band that holds together the venture of farmers losing land and Chinese petty farmer tradition. Compensation for the land expropriated also takes a higher proportion (18%). But on the whole it is limited, because most of the compensation money is spent by farmers losing land on purchase of the new house supplied by the government as well as daily expenditure in the interim. Besides, a certain amount of the compensation money hasn't been granted in time. For instance, though the original standard is 27,000 yuan per mu, what the farmers actually receive ranks from 10,000 yuan per mu to 20,000 yuan per mu, not as much as they should receive.

Insert Figure 3 here

Insert Figure 4 here

Bank loans, which are supposed to play an important role in the venture financing of farmers losing land, only takes a tiny proportion in the real venture financing practice by farmers losing land (4%). From Figure 4 we can see that the main reason for entrepreneurial farmers' failure of loan is the lack of guarantee (42%), and another important reason is that they do not know how to start with this. They have no connection (23%), and they have no idea of the basic procedures and rules of loan (11%). In these entrepreneurial farmers' view, bank loans are impossible and beyond their ability.

In addition, government venture funds and cooperation funds should be a very good channel for government's as well as civilians' venture financing. However, during the research we find that these two channels take a rather small proportion (5%), which shows that the government hasn't done enough to direct and support the venture by farmers losing land, and that the entrepreneurial farmers' sense of venture cooperation financing is not strong enough. Though civilians' financing is more active (9%), its overall scale is limited and it also lacks support.

2.2 Analysis of financing scale

From the overall financing scale of our research samples we can see that it is in an ascending state (Figure 5). From 2003 to 2007 it rises from 580,000 yuan to 860,000 yuan, a 48.28% growth. On the other hand, the annual growth rate of the venture financing by farmers losing land is in an ascending state (Figure 6). Especially in 2007, the growth extent grows rapidly to 16.22%.

Insert Figure 5 here

Insert Figure 6 here

Meanwhile, we noticed that the average annual financing scale of farmers losing land is very small. In 2003 it is less than 6,000 yuan, and until 2007 the average annual financing of farmers losing land is only 13,120 yuan (Figure 7).

Moreover, the financing scale of the sample farmers losing land is mostly smaller than 10,000 yuan (53%), and the proportion of 10,000-30,000 yuan financing scale is not small either (23%), but the proportion of 50,000 yuan financing scale is only 8%, and the proportion of 100,000 yuan financing scale is even smaller, only 4% (Figure 8). On the whole, the venture financing scale of farmers losing land is very limited.

Insert Figure 7 here

Insert Figure 8 here

2.3 Analysis of financing cost

In the common sense of economics, financing cost is the outcome of the division of capital ownership and capital access. The essence of financing cost is the recompense given by capital users to capital owners. Because enterprise financing is a market dealing activity, as long as there is a deal there is dealing cost, and in order to get capital access capital users have to pay some related fees. In fact, enterprise financing cost consists of two parts: financing fees and capital

utilization fees. Financing fees refer to the all kinds of fees charged in the process of the enterprise's capital raising, and capital utilization fees refer to the recompense paid by the enterprise to the capital supplier. What is worth mentioning is that the meaning of financing cost talked above is just the financial cost of the enterprise's financing, which can be called explicit cost, too. Besides financing cost, there is also opportunity cost in the enterprise's financing, which can be called implicit cost, too.

Here we mainly talk about capital utilization fees and financing fees. Capital utilization fees refer to interest rates. We chose the venture financing of 52 farmers losing land in 2007 for discussion. As for financing terms, most of them are short-term loans shorter than one year, and loans longer than one year only take 12% (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 here

On the whole the interest rate of cooperation funds is the lowest, the interest rate of bank loans is the second lowest, and the interest rate of civilian loans is the highest. Take the average annual interest rate of 6 months to 12 months for example, the interest rate of cooperation funds is 4.05%, the interest rate of bank loans is 6.93%, and the interest of civilian loans is 24.5%. The interest rate of civilian loans is 504.93% of that of cooperation funds and 253.54% of that of bank loans.

As for the financing fees paid by entrepreneurial farmers losing land, which mainly include treat, presents, transportation fees, communication fees, etc., we chose the venture financing of 52 farmers losing land in 2007 for discussion. Though the interest rate of civilian loans is the highest, its financing fees are the lowest. The financing fees of bank loans are the second lowest and those of cooperation loans are the highest (Figure 9). The average fees of a single loan of cooperation funds are 117.65% higher than the average fees of a single loan of bank loans, and 30.03% higher than the average fees of a single loan of civilian loans.

Insert Figure 9 here

Insert Figure 10 here

2.4 Analysis of financing income

Financing income refers to the income brought about by the capital financed through all kinds of financing channels for the financing party. Financing income is an important yardstick to measure the utilization performance of financing capital, and also an important yardstick to assess financing efficiency.

There are quite a few yardsticks to measure financing income, and here we mainly chose two of them to research on: yearly income (gross output value) which is an absolute yardstick, and the transformation of living standards which is a psychological reception yardstick.

Among entrepreneurial farmers losing land we selected those who had financing activities from 2003 to 2007, and research finds out that their financing income is fairly satisfactory no matter it is measured by gross, the average level or the growth rate of average annual income (see Table 4). The average venture financing income of entrepreneurial farmers losing land from 2003 to 2007 is 123,180 yuan, and the growth rate of average income is 34.72%.

Insert Table 3 here

Research on the transformation of the living standards of entrepreneurial farmers losing land indicates that "obvious improvement" and "improvement" of living standards take 75%, which shows that their living standards have mostly improved and venture has played an obviously important role in the improvement of their living standards. Only 10% of entrepreneurial farmers losing land feel that their living standards have degenerated (Figure 10). They are mostly units that have failed in venture, and they bear great pressure after their entrepreneurial failure, which merits our close attention. The first point is how to direct and educate farmers losing land to start venture, and the second point is how to solve the basic living problems of the farmers losing land who have failed in venture. But on the whole, the living standards of entrepreneurial farmers losing land tend to improve, which proves that the venture financing benefit of farmers losing land is very apparent.

2.5 Analysis of financing efficiency

Financing efficiency refers to the financing capability which may create venture value for farmers losing land. Specifically, it refers to the ratio of the cost of the capital financed by the venture enterprise run by farmers losing land through different financing methods to the utilization efficiency of the capital, and the extent of the optimal allocation of the capital resources.

The ratio of the cost of the capital financed by the venture enterprise run by farmers losing land to the utilization efficiency of the capital can be reflected by three factors: financing cost, capital arrival rate and capital utilization ratio. The extent of the optimal allocation of capital resources may be embodied by the standardization extent of financing mechanism, the liberty extent of the financing subject and capital liquidity. From the six factors mentioned above this article mainly analyzes the financing efficiency of three different financing methods and the overall financing

efficiency[2] of the enterprises run by entrepreneurial farmers losing land. The three financing methods refer to the internal financing which includes family savings, compensation money for the expropriated land and money borrowed from relatives, debt financing which includes bank loans and civilian loans, and equity financing which includes government venture funds and cooperation funds.

Single-factor financing efficiency comparison can only reflect a certain factor's influence over financing efficiency, so the conclusion is not sufficient. In order to get more reasonable evaluation results, fuzzy analysis method should be employed to synthetically evaluate the financing efficiency of venture enterprises run by farmers losing land.

By adopting Delphi Method we get the following weight set of six factors: financing cost, capital arrival rate, capital utilization ratio, capital liquidity, the standardization extent of financing mechanism and the liberty extent of the financing subject.

$$F = (f_1, f_2, f_3, \cdots f_m) = (0.25, 0.20, 0.18, 0.15, 0.12, 0.10)$$

The single-factor matrix of the three financing methods is as follows:

$$R_{\text{internal financing}} = \begin{matrix} 0.8 & 0.2 \\ 0.8 & 0.2 \\ 0.8 & 0.2 \\ 0.2 & 0.8 \\ 0.8 & 0.2 \\ 1 & 0 \end{matrix} \qquad R_{\text{debt financing}} = \begin{matrix} 0.6 & 0.4 \\ 0.4 & 0.6 \\ 0.7 & 0.3 \\ 0.6 & 0.4 \\ 0.4 & 0.6 \\ 0.2 & 0.8 \end{matrix} \qquad R_{\text{equity financing}} = \begin{matrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0.4 & 0.6 \\ 0.4 & 0.6 \\ 0.3 & 0.7 \\ 0.6 & 0.4 \\ 1 & 0 \end{matrix}$$

Through fuzzy transformation of the single-factor matrix and the weight set mentioned above, we get the following fuzzy overall evaluation model:

$$R_{\text{internal financing}} = FOR_{\text{internal financing}} = (0.73, 0.27)$$

$$R_{\text{debt financing}} = FOR_{\text{debt financing}} = (0.51, 0.49)$$

$$R_{\text{equity financing}} = FOR_{\text{equity financing}} = (0.37, 0.63)$$

According to Maximum Membership Degree Law, among all kinds of financing methods, the internal financing by entrepreneurial farmers losing land is of highest efficiency, 0.73, while equity financing is of lowest efficiency, 0.37.

According to fuzzy distribution law, the order of the maximum membership degree of all kinds of financing methods is: 0.73.>0.51.>0.37. So we can draw the conclusion that the order of the financing efficiency of all kinds of financing methods adopted by entrepreneurial farmers losing land is: internal financing efficiency.>debt financing efficiency.>equity financing efficiency.

3. Appraisal of the venture financing of farmers losing land to new district construction

Through the above quantitative description and analysis, we can see some basic facts and features of the venture financing by farmers losing land which are discussed as follows.

3.1 Internal financing playing the main part with an annually decreasing proportion

There are mainly two methods for entrepreneurial farmers losing land to get capital: internal financing and external financing. Research analysis shows that the financing scale of venture enterprises run by sample farmers losing land tends to expand, and the amount of internal financing is always greater than that of external financing. By the end of 2007, the amount of internal financing by sample enterprises has reached 540,000 yuan, 320,000 yuan greater than that of external financing. Analyzed from the internal financing structure of venture enterprises run by sample farmers losing land, the four main sources of internal financing are family savings, resettlement compensation money, capital and retained earnings. Since internal fund raising is mainly internal stock-holders' fund raising, no venture enterprise run by sample farmers losing land has ever adopted the method of staff fund raising.

From the proportion internal financing takes in financing total we can see that the proportion of internal financing decreases year by year from 2003 to 2007, from 83.72% in 2003 to 62.79% in 2007, a 20.93% decrease. What is opposite to it is the proportion external financing takes which increases from 16.27% in 2003 to 37.21% in 2007, a 20.94% increase. Therefore, in the financing structure of small and medium-sized enterprises, though internal financing

plays the leading role, the proportion of external financing grows year by year, which demonstrates that the external financing environment for small and medium-sized enterprises is improving step by step.

3.2 Limited self-accumulation and insufficient institutional supply unable to meet the financing demand of farmers losing land

The demand for venture financing from farmers losing land is very heavy, but this demand can hardly be satisfied and there is still a gap. It is an indisputable fact. Then what is the underlying problem?

On the one hand, the self-accumulation of farmers losing land is rather limited. Venture enterprises run by farmers losing land are mostly small-scaled (Figure 11). Due to the insufficiency of management experience and ability as well as the young age, venture enterprises mostly make small profits, and some of them even suffer loss (Figure 12). Under such a situation, many enterprises can simply maintain their business, and their internal financing ability must be affected and limited.

Insert Figure 11 here

Insert Figure 12 here

On the other hand, institutional supply is insufficient. Venture financing by farmers losing land can not only increase employment, but also effectively increase the income of farmers losing land. So it is good for the country as well as the people, and deserves the government's encouragement and support, esp. institutional support for the venture financing by farmers losing land. But during the research we find that the government's support for the venture financing system for farmers losing land is rather limited. The total of bank loans, government venture funds and cooperation funds is insufficient (less than 16% in 2007). Moreover, because of the inland location, civilian financing hasn't developed sufficiently (less than 4% in 2007) and thus cannot play a very supportive role in the venture financing by farmers losing land.

Of course, besides these there are problems such as policy imperfection, guarantee difficulty and the imperfection of credit system; anyway, the demand for venture financing by farmers losing land cannot be well satisfied.

3.3 Internal financing efficiency higher than external financing efficiency

As for the external financing by farmers losing land, due to the increase of farmers' financing cost resulted from credit restriction and the discrepancy between their loan cycle and production cycle, its utilization efficiency is affected. The large number of entrepreneurial farmers losing land, their small scale and great dispersion determine the following features of the capital demand from entrepreneurial farmers losing land. Firstly, the scale of family businesses determines the small amount of loans needed by entrepreneurial farmers losing land. Secondly, because they have few assets for mortgage or guarantee entrepreneurial farmers losing land hope to use loans with little mortgage or no mortgage at all. Thirdly, entrepreneurial farmers hope that the loan procedures are simple, flexible and timely, because their loan demand is greatly restricted by time and season and trivial procedures will dally away time. There is no special small-amount credit service for farmers losing land in formal Chinese financial departments, but the frequent risks faced by entrepreneurial farmers losing land mean an increase in their dealings with financial departments. Furthermore, the small amount of loans causes the operating cost of financial institutions to increase, and the possibility for farmers to get loans decreases due to a lack of mortgage. Our research also finds that formal financial organizations have complicated rules and regulations, they need mortgage or guarantee, the procedures are trivial and the cost of fulfilling credit contracts is too high. Therefore, most entrepreneurial farmers losing land are unable to obtain satisfactory credit services from formal financial organizations, and thus entrepreneurial farmers are discouraged to apply loans from formal financial institutions. In order to obtain loans, high costs must be paid, and in the utilization process they are restricted by the loan cycle and utilization direction, which makes its utilization efficiency greatly decreases.

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Note 1. We only chose one member from a family as a sample to represent the whole family.

Table 1. Basic Information about the Research

Research area	Research sample	Gender		Age					Education background			
		Male	Male	Below 18	18~30	31~40	41~50	Above 15	Below elementary school	Elementary school	Junior high school	Senior high school and above
Longxiang Community	78	64	14	1	12	33	21	3	5	36	25	12
Longtai Community	73	57	17	2	8	30	33	2	7	32	26	8
Longrui Community	76	48	28	1	16	32	28	4	3	40	21	13
Longhe Community	74	51	13	3	11	32	24	2	4	34	27	9
Longxing Community	74	57	17	2	8	32	30	6	4	34	25	11
Longfu Community	76	66	10	1	8	34	32	2	3	29	32	12
Long'an Community	73	62	11	2	6	32	30	1	7	36	21	9
Longkang Community	78	66	12	3	9	34	30	3	2	35	28	13
Total	603	471	122	15	78	259	228	23	35	276	205	87

Table 2. Interest rates of the venture financing by farmers losing land (2007)

Year	Less than 3 months Average annual interest rate (%)	3 months to 6 months Average annual interest rate (%)	6 months to 12 months Average annual interest rate (%)	More than 12 months Average annual interest rate (%)
Cooperation funds	3.65	3.88	4.05	4.95
Bank loans	6.04	6.12	6.93	7.02
Civilian loans	21.4	22.8	24.5	26.2

Table 3. Venture income of farmers losing land

Year	Annual gross income (10,000 yuan)	Number of financing units	Average income (10,000 yuan)	Growth rate of average income (%)
2003	253	44	5.75	
2004	469	42	11.17	94.26
2005	674	56	12.04	7.79
2006	768	48	16.00	32.89
2007	865	52	16.63	3.94
Total	3029	242	12.318 (average)	34.72 (average)
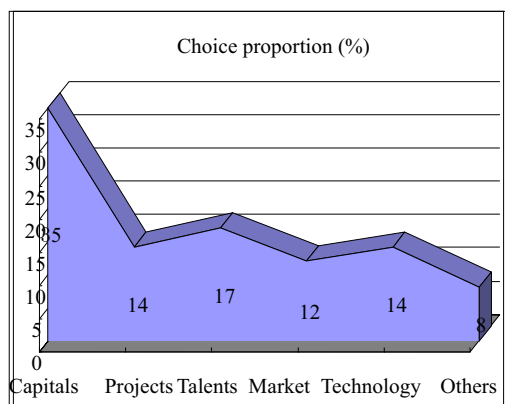
Figure 1. Restricting factors of the venture
financing of farmers losing land
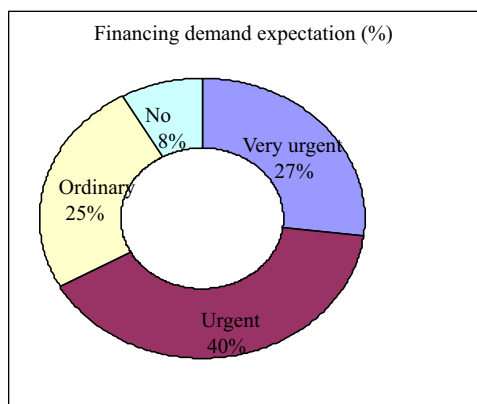
Figure 2. Demand expectation of the venture
of farmers losing land
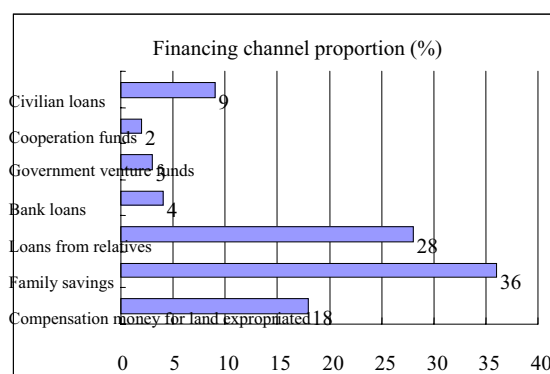
Figure 3. Proportion of the venture financing
channels of farmers losing land
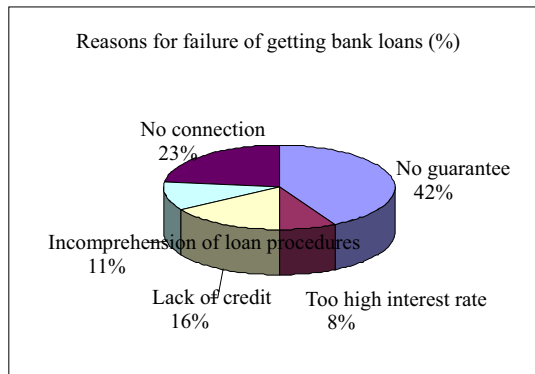
Figure 4. Proportion of the reasons why entrepreneurial
farmers losing l and fail in getting bank loans
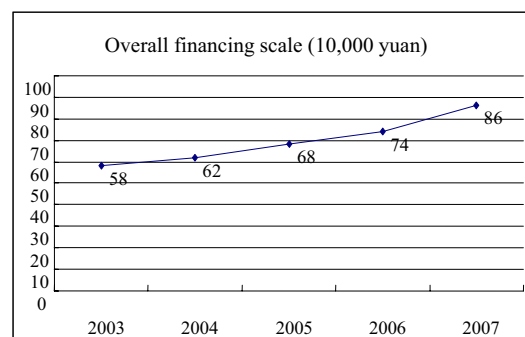
Figure 5. Transformation of the venture
financing scale by farmers losing land
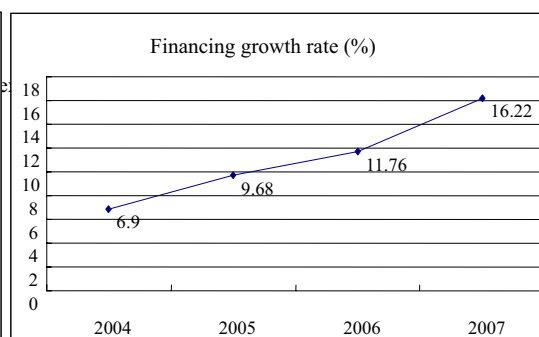
Figure 6. Transformation of the annual growth rate
of the venture financing by farmers losing land
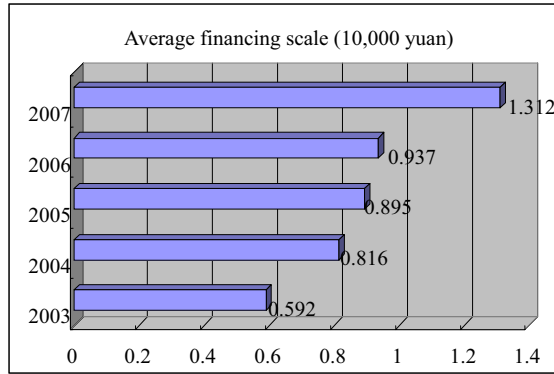
Figure 7. Transformation of the average annual venture financing scale of farmers losing land
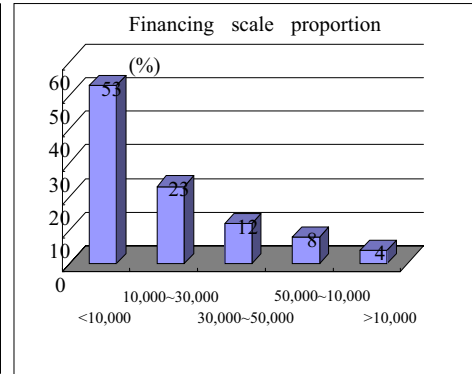
Figure 8. Proportion of the venture financing scales of farmers losing land
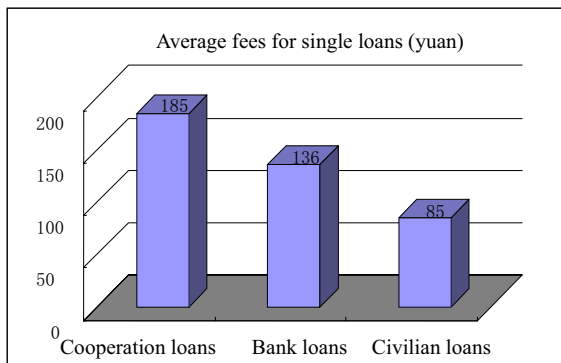
Figure 9. Average fees of a single loan of the venture financing of farmers losing land (2007)
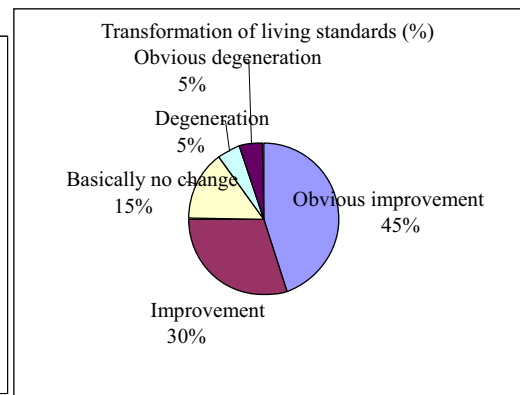
Figure 10. Transformation of the living standards of entrepreneurial farmers losing land
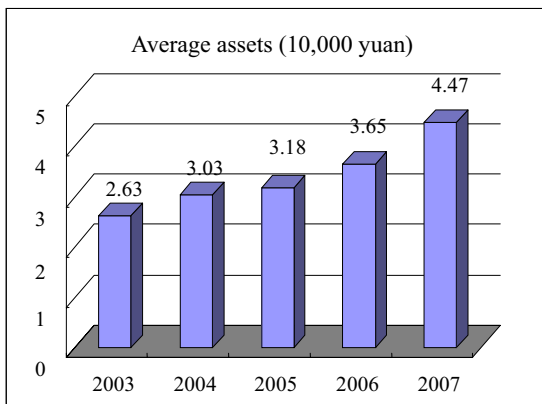
Figure 11. Transformation of the average annual assets of the ventur enterprises run by farmers losing land
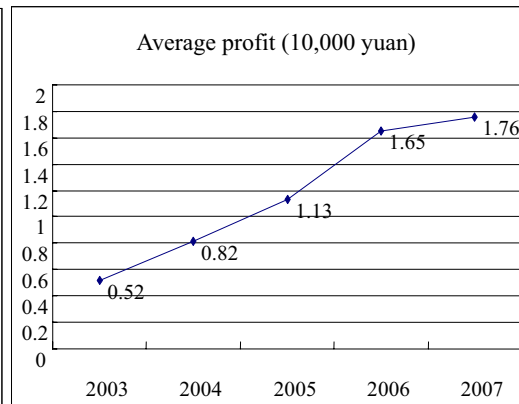
Figure 12. Transformation of the average annual of the venture enterprises run by farmers profit

Why Firms Award Stock Options

-- Examining the Design of Employee Stock Options

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Abstract

This study explores whether firms grant employee stock options to motivate and retain employees by examining the determinants of the use of option grants and how firms design vesting and maturity restriction terms. The results show that there is a relationship between the granting of stock options and the retaining of employees and motivating long-term profit-maximizing behavior. This study also finds that a firm sets more rigorous restrictions on exercising options when retaining employees is a high priority for a firm. The results suggest that firms not only grant stock options to provide performance and retention incentives for employees, but also amplify the effects of incentives by fine-tuning the rules governing the exercising of option grants.

Keywords: Employees, Stock options, Incentives, Retention, Restriction terms

1. Introduction

Employee stock options are a well-known incentive compensation tool. Nowadays, U.S. companies widely use employee stock options, which are becoming more prevalent in European and Asian companies too. Despite their popularity, employee stock options are increasingly controversial (Hall & Murphy, 2003). In the ongoing debate, some critics have pointed out the overuse of employee stock options, which partly stems from focusing only on the number or the value of the options granted and overlooks their design (Brande, Dharwadkar, & Lemesis, 2003). Alan Greenspan, at the 2002 Financial Markets Conference of the Federal Reserve, pointed out that stock-option grants, when properly constructed, can be highly effective in aligning the interests of corporate officers with those of shareholders as well as maximizing the long-term market value of the firm. Neglecting the design of option grants may simplify their function but dilute their impact on a firm's value.

A firm structures an employee stock option in the form of a call option on the firm's stock with some extra restriction terms added. Besides a pre-specified exercise price and expiration date, the option contract includes terms that specify when the option may first be exercised (i.e., vesting schedule) and how to modify the vesting schedule and expiration date whenever employees leave a firm. These restriction terms can be devices for providing performance and retention incentives to employees, which can have an extra impact on an employee through a subtle choice of terms. For example, if a company incurs high costs for replacing existing employees it can set severe restrictions by shortening the options' expiration period for leaving employees, thereby providing a strong retention incentive.

Restrictions on vesting and maturity are basic and important aspects that companies can utilize to design effective stock options (Brandes et al., 2003). Investigating how companies design the restrictions in option plans is important for evaluating whether firms grant employee stock options efficiently. However, previous research pays relatively little attention to these contractual terms when addressing this subject. Brandes et al. (2003) mentions that firms can design the terms of stock options to implement their strategy; however, few empirical studies have addressed the issue of what determines these restrictions. Kole (1997) examines a variety of vesting schedules used in the option grants of U.S. firms, but provides no related discussion on the exercising restrictions of leaving employees.

This study investigates whether firms grant employee stock options to motivate and retain employees by examining what determines the use of option grants and how a firm designs the restriction terms. The study uses listed non-financial firms in Taiwan from 2001 through 2003 as its sample. Examining the option grants of Taiwanese firms is especially useful for this purpose because option grants are the only equity-based incentive compensation available in

Taiwan. This research can remove the effect of restricted stocks when investigating the relationship between a firm's considerations and the use of option grants.

The organization of the remainder of this article is as follows: the next section presents arguments on what determines the use of employee stock options and illustrates how firms design restrictions on vesting and maturity. The subsequent section provides sample and data descriptions followed by the empirical results and then a discussion and conclusion.

2. Hypotheses development

Employee stock options are contracts that give an employee the right to buy a share of a firm's stock at a pre-specified exercise price and for a pre-specified period. Stock options give employees an exercise price equal to the market price on the date of the grant and typically qualify for exercising for up to ten years. Usually, a grant of stock options cannot be exercised immediately but only over time. The exercising of the option depends on the vesting schedule; for example, 25 % might become exercisable in each of the four years following the grant. When a stock option can be exercised, then the option is said to be "vested". Employee stock options are not tradable and typically are not transferable except when an employee dies, in which case the spouse inherits them. An employee usually forfeits the option grant if the employee leaves the firm before the option is exercisable. Firms usually shorten a vested option's expiration period when an employee leaves but the related regulations differ among firms.

The effects of stock option incentives on employee performance relate to the link between the option's payoff and to the stock price. Employees cannot sell the options, and the option grant must be held for a considerable amount of time before it can be exercised, which should provide a long-term effect. Employee stock options can have a retention effect by forcing the employees to forfeit or exercise them shortly after leaving a firm. In the following sections, the study will discuss how the objectives of motivating and retaining employees affect the use of employee stock options and the vesting and maturity restriction terms.

2.1 Determinants of stock options

According to incentive contract theory, firms with high growth opportunities and large research activities are more likely to grant stock options to their employees. The impact of R&D and investing in intangible assets on a firm's value is uncertain until some time in the future (perhaps years). Theory suggests that motivating managers to make such decisions appropriately requires long-term contracts with stock option grants included as incentives (Fudenberg, Holmstrom, & Milgrom, 1990). Theory also suggests that firms with high-growth opportunities and large research activities are more likely to grant employee stock options because stock-based measures provide a more accurate assessment of managerial effectiveness (Lambert & Larcker, 1987).

A firm is more likely to issue employee stock options when retaining employees is a high priority for a firm (i.e., when a firm is large, when a firm is rapidly expanding its workforce, when a firm has great growth opportunities, and when a firm is involved in intensive R&D activities). Because the investment in training employees increases with a firm's size, larger firms can receive especially greater benefits from retaining existing employees (Barron, Black, & Lowenstein, 1987; Haber, 1991; Lynch & Black, 1998). Ittner, Lambert, and Larcker (2003) suggests that retention is more important to firms with a rapidly growing workforce. Retaining employees avoids the large cost of training new recruits. Firms with substantial growth opportunities and extensive R&D activities have a great need for firm-specific human capital (Smith & Watts, 1992). The retaining of key employees who have technological firm-specific knowledge, or who are essential to a firm's competitiveness is extremely important to these kinds of firms.

Firms operating in an environment of high volatility are also more likely to grant stock options to retain employees. Oyer (2004) points out that the value of option-based pay packages is contingent on a firm's value, which relates to the state of the economy and the value of human capital in the labor market. When industry variance is high and competition for able employees among firms in the same industry is volatile, a firm will be more inclined to use option grants to avoid the cost of adjusting wages to reflect the state of the labor market.

Hypothesis 1: A firm is more likely to issue employee stock options when it has greater growth opportunities, when it has intensive R&D activities, when it is larger, when it is rapidly expanding its workforce, and when it is operating in an environment of high volatility.

2.2 Design of option contracts

A vesting schedule is a method of amplifying the impact of option grants on encouraging employees to make decisions with a long-term perspective. This study predicts that a firm will set longer vesting periods when trying to motivate employees working on long-term projects essential to its value (i.e., when a firm is involved in intensive R&D activities and has great growth opportunities).

Longer waits required before exercising stock options imply that there is more uncertainty about the value of the grants and the need to take more risks by those who hold the options. According to agency theory, which posits that there is a negative relationship between risk and incentive, this study expects that higher-volatility firms will set a relatively

shorter vesting period.

Vesting schedules and the exercising restrictions on departing employees are important tools for encouraging employees to remain with their firm (Core & Guay, 2001; Hale, 1998). Because firms typically forfeit the unvested options of leaving employees, longer vesting periods provide an incentive to stay on. In addition, firms usually shorten the maturity period of departing employees' vested options, which reduces the value of the option grants and raises the cost of leaving. A firm will set a longer vesting period and more rigorous restrictions on exercising options for leaving employees when retaining employees is more important to a firm (i.e., when a firm has greater growth opportunities, when it has intensive R&D activities, when it is larger, and when it is rapidly expanding its workforce). This study proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2: When firms grant employee stock options, a longer vesting period will be associated with greater growth opportunities, intensive R&D activities, lower volatility, larger size, and a higher workforce growth rate.

Hypothesis 3: When firms grant employee stock options, rigorous restrictions on exercising options for leaving employees will be associated with greater growth opportunities, intensive R&D activities, larger size, and a higher workforce growth rate.

3. Methods

3.1 Sample

In contrast to U.S. companies, who have been using option-grant plans for decades, Taiwanese companies only started to use stock options for employee compensation in 2001. Taiwanese companies could not offer stock-option grants to employees until the government amended Article 28 of the Securities and Exchange Law in 2000. Option grants are important to Taiwanese firms who want to provide incentive compensation to employees because there is no other equity-based compensation vehicle available in Taiwan. The awarding of stock bonuses is prevalent in Taiwanese firms, especially in the information technology (IT) industry. However, firms do not have the authority to prevent employees from selling stocks granted as bonuses. In addition, Taiwanese law forbids firms giving restricted stock awards (which U.S. companies employ) as part of an employee compensation plan.

For its sample, this study used non-financial Taiwanese companies listed on the stock exchange during the period 2001 to 2003. The number of firms who granted stock options in each sample year was 34, 115, and 114, respectively. After excluding firms whose option contracts were not available or had incomplete data, 189 remained for study. Stock option contracts of Taiwanese firms provided the details of the option grants used in this study. The annual financial data of these firms came from the Taiwan Economics Journal (TEJ) dataset.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample firms who granted stock options by industry classification code. It shows that the majority of firms offering option grants are so-called "new economy" firms (following the definition of Ittner et al., 2003). New economy firms are organizations competing in the computer, software, internet, telecommunications, and networking fields. Of the sample firms, 93.66% are new economy firms: 90.48% from the electronics industry, 0.53% from the communications industry, and 2.65% from the software industry. The remaining 6.34% come from the chemical, biotech, and healthcare industries and other traditional manufacturing industries.

Table 2 presents the terms of stock-option contracts in detail. The longest expiration period is ten years (the maximum allowed by law) and the shortest is three years. The minimum waiting time allowed before the granted option is exercisable is two years. The vesting of option awards generally takes place over a number of years following the granted date. This study follows Kole (1997) to calculate the average waiting time by assuming that an employee exercises an option as soon as the restrictions lapse. If an option award has a vesting schedule that includes a minimum wait of two years before exercising only a quarter of the option grant, the remainder of the award becomes available in equal installments over the next three years. The average wait for the award is thus 3.5 years (0.25[2+3+4+5]). The longest waiting time in the sample is 5.2 years. On average, the waiting time is 2.72 years (32.6 months), which is longer than Kole's (1997) findings for U.S. companies. Kole (1997) uses 371 firms from Fortune 500 firms of 1980 as a sample, and finds that the average waiting period before exercising to be 23.6 months.

One hundred and sixty nine firms in the sample set rules on exercising option grants for resigning employees. All these firms require the forfeiture of unvested options when an employee resigns. However, a variety of restrictions on vested options exists. On average, firms force employees to exercise their vested options within 0.12 years (1.4 months) after resigning. Some firms insist on the forfeiture of both vested and unvested option grants.

Of the sample contracts, 184 set rules for retiring employees. Firms usually have truncation rules, which shorten the life of options for retiring employees. On average, firms insist that an employee exercises all option awards within 0.81 years (9.7 months) after retirement. However, there is a great diversity of exercising periods for retiring employees. Some firms set no extra limits on exercising options, while other companies treat retiring employees far less generously and force them to forfeit all option grants at once. In contrast to the restrictions on resigning employees, the restrictions

on retirees are relatively lenient.

3.2 Dependent variables

This study focuses on what determines the issuing of employee stock options and how firms design restrictions on vesting and maturity using a logit model. The dependent variable in the logistic regression is whether a Taiwanese listed firm grants stock options to its employees (i.e., if a firm grants stock options ESO Plan=1; otherwise, ESO Plan=0).

This study used three dependent variables (i.e., Average wait to exercise, Time to exercise after resignation, and Time to exercise in retirement), respectively, to examine Hypotheses 2 and 3. Following Kole (1997), this study employed the average waiting period before exercising a stock option (i.e., Average wait to exercise) as a proxy for the option grants' vesting periods. This study employed the two variables, Time to exercise after resignation and Time to exercise in retirement, as proxies for how firms treat their departing employees. The longer the period for exercising an option after leaving, the more generously a firm treats its departing employees.

3.3 Independent variables

This study followed Gaver and Gaver (1993) to measure a firm's growth opportunity by using market-to-book ratio of assets. R&D spending scaled by sales was a proxy for a firm's R&D intensity (Baysigner & Hoskisson, 1989). The natural logarithm of the number of employees measured firm size (e.g., Ittner et al., 2003). The calculated percentage growth in employees actes as a proxy for the expansion rate of a firm's workforce (Ittner et al., 2003). Following Oyer and Schaefer (2005), two variables, firm volatility and industry volatility, acted as proxies for any variance in a firm's operating environment. Firm volatility was measured by the standard deviation of monthly stock returns; industry volatility was calculated by the standard deviation of monthly average stock returns of the industry to which a firm belongs. This study also controlled for any potential period effect by including a series of year dummies (2001-2002) in the regression model.

The regression model for determining the use of option grants controlled for other parts, including return on assets (ROA) and cash flow. Prior studies suggest that cash-strapped firms tend to use equity grants in place of cash compensation (Yermack, 1995). In addition, firms may grant stock options in place of cash pay to reduce the impact of compensation on earnings when profitability is poor. This is because cash compensation appears on the financial statements as an expense whereas the value of stock option grants appears only in its footnotes (Core & Guay, 2001). Return on assets (ROA) was calculated with earnings before interest, tax, and depreciation to total assets by percentage. Cash flow was measured by the net cash flow from operations minus capital expenditures, divided by total assets.

4. Results

To test Hypothesis 1, non-financial companies listed in Taiwan from 2001 to 2003 provided a sample. After excluding firms with incomplete data, 2,160 firm-years remained, composing 189 firm-years with options granted and 1,971 firm-years without options granted. Table 3 and Table 4 present descriptive information on the variables included in the study. Table 3 provides the means, standard deviations, and correlations. Table 4 shows the univariate comparisons of firms that offered option grants and those that did not. The tests show that significant differences in company characteristics between the two kinds of firms exist. Firms that granted stock options had higher market-to-book ratios, R&D expenditures, volatility, and employee growth. They were also larger and more profitable. The results are consistent with Hypothesis 1. To estimate the partial effects of these variables on the determinants of granting employee stock options, the study also used a logistic regression model.

Table 5 presents the results of the logistic regression. Standard errors are presented in parentheses. Asterisks ***, **, and * denote statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively. The findings in Table 5 provide support for Hypothesis 1. The coefficients of the market-to-book ratio of assets and R&D spending are positive and highly significant, indicating that R&D intensity and growth opportunities influence the decision of whether to grant stock options to employees. As expected, the coefficient estimates for firm volatility and industry volatility are positive while only industry volatility has a highly significant effect on the probability of using stock options. This finding means that a firm operating in a highly volatile environment is more likely to award stock options to employees. The probability of offering stock options relates positively to the growth in the workforce and firm size, which shows that firms with greater expanding workforces and of a larger size are more likely to offer stock options to their employees; but only the coefficient of firm size is statistically significant.

The findings partially support Hypothesis 2. Column 1 of Table 6 shows that the coefficient of market-to-book ratio, as expected, is positive and significant. In addition, as predicted by Hypothesis 2, the coefficient estimates for volatility variables are negative; but only the estimate for firm volatility is strongly significant, indicating that firms with lower volatility set a longer vesting period. The average vesting period is not significantly associated with R&D spending or the growth rate of the workforce, which does not support Hypothesis 2. Surprisingly, the firm size coefficient is significantly negative, which is quite the opposite of that predicted by Hypothesis 2.

The findings also partially support Hypothesis 3, which proposes that a firm will set less generous restrictions on exercising options for leaving employees when retaining employees is a high priority. In column 2 of Table 6, the dependent variable is Time to exercise after resignation, which was employed as a proxy for how firms treat resigning employees. The coefficient of employee growth is significantly negative, which supports Hypothesis 3. The coefficients of market-to-book ratio and R&D spending, as predicted by Hypothesis 3, are negative but not statistically significant. In contrast to the prediction of Hypothesis 3, a longer period to exercise the option after resignation is significantly associated with larger firm size. In column 3 of Table 6, Time to exercise in retirement acted as a dependent variable to proxy for how firms treat retirees. The coefficient estimate for R&D spending is negative and highly significant, which supports Hypothesis 3. However, the time to exercise in retirement is not significantly associated with market-to-book ratio, employee growth, or firm size. Firm volatility and industry volatility were included in the regressions as control variables. The coefficients of volatility variables are negative and significant, indicating that more rigorous restrictions for leaving employees are associated with the high volatility of a firm's operation.

5. Discussion and conclusions

Restrictions on vesting and maturity are basic and important features in employee stock options, which are a device for providing performance and retention incentives to employees. This study investigates whether a firm grants employee stock options in order to motivate and retain employees by examining the determinants for the use of option grants and their restriction terms. The results of the logistic regression show that firms with greater growth opportunities, more intensive R&D activities, and of a larger size are more likely to grant employees stock options. This finding is consistent with previous arguments that the granting of stock options relates to retaining employees and motivating long-term profit-maximizing behavior (Kole, 1997). In addition, the significantly positive relationship between the probability of granting employee stock options and industry volatility supports the argument of Oyer (2004). Oyer (2004) suggests that the option grant is a cost-saving strategy for employee retention when industry variance is high and competition for able employees among firms in the same industry varies.

Previous studies suggest that firms use stock options to motivate and retain employees but little research has examined the relationship between the contractual terms of option grants and their two objectives. This study explores the relationship and finds that the vesting period of option grants significantly relates to growth opportunities, firm volatility, and firm size. Firms that have higher growth opportunities grant stock options with a longer vesting period to enhance the incentives for staying with a firm and maximizing long-term performance. This finding is consistent with the arguments of Kole (1997). A firm with a higher risk sets a shorter vesting period to reduce the uncertainty of pay. The result supports incentive contract theory, which indicates a negative relationship between risk and incentive. Larger firms set a shorter vesting period when issuing employee stock options, indicating that they grant stock options to provide retention incentives but do not use a vesting schedule to magnify the effect.

After examining the determinants of restriction terms, this study finds that firms keep employees by setting restrictions on exercising options for leaving employees. The time required to exercise options after resignation has a significant relationship to firm volatility, workforce growth rate, and firm size. The impact of firm volatility and workforce growth rate is negative, indicating that when granting stock options, firms with higher firm volatility and a faster workforce growth rate set stricter rules for employees who resign. Locating and training new recruits is costly. The findings show that to retain existing employees, firms with higher volatility (where a firm finds it difficult to keep good employees) and a higher growth in the workforce encourage employees to stay on by having stringent rules requiring the quick exercise of options when they resign (Zuber, 2001; Ongori, 2007). The time required to exercise options after resignation has a positive association with firm size, indicating that in larger firms employees have a longer time to exercise their vested stock options after resigning. This finding suggests that larger firms have generous rules for resigning employees when granting stock options. Larger firms have more devices, such as better opportunities for internal promotion (Griffeth & Hom, 1995; Wilson & Peel, 1991) and more sophisticated human resource practices (Terpstra & Rozell, 1993), to encourage employees to stay. These features may explain why larger firms set such generous rules governing the exercising of options for resigning employees.

This study also finds that firms discourage employees from retiring by setting rigorous rules governing the exercising of their stock options. Time to exercise in retirement has a significant and negative relationship with R&D intensity and firm risk, indicating that firms with more intensive R&D activities and operating in an unstable environment set a shorter period for retiring employees to exercise their stock options; this reduces the value of the options when employees retire and, consequently, deters retirements. The result is consistent with previous research on the relationship between age and performance. Avolio, Waldman, and McDaniel (1990) suggests that long-term experience would benefit performance in jobs that are stimulating or that enhance skill development over time. Firms with large investments in R&D provide continuous job-specific training and retraining for employees to maintain product innovations (Tan & Batra, 1997; Lillard & Tan, 1986). In addition, firms facing a higher fluctuation in product demand offer more training to core employees (in contrast to contract workers) on whom they rely (Frazis, Gittleman, & Joyce,

2000).

The results contribute to employee stock options literature in several ways. First, they confirm the contention of earlier literature that the contractual terms of the option grant is a method of retaining employees. Recent studies have started to pay attention to the retention benefit of employee stock options, suggesting that employee retention is an important objective (e.g., Ittner et al., 2003; Oyer & Schaefer, 2005). However, none of the empirical studies explores the determinants of restriction terms used for exercising options in an option-grant contract. After examining the rules governing the exercising of options for resignations and retirements, this study finds that firms amplify the extent of retention incentives for employees intending to resign or retire by fine-tuning the exercise period. This study also finds that firms do not treat resignation and retirement the same, which explains why firms, in practice, usually have separate rules for resignations and retirements rather than one set of rule for all leaving employees.

Second, the results suggest that to understand the comprehensive effects of option grants, multi-dimensional treatments should be employed to capture the features of each option contract. Previous studies use a one-dimensional treatment, such as the number or the value of the option grants, to characterize option grants and treat all stock options as equal. However, firms can exert different influences on employees by the way they design stock option grants. In other words, if employees of two comparable firms receive the same payout from stock options, it does not mean that the firms provide the same level of incentive in their employee option awards. An option grant, for instance, that stipulates a shorter time for its exercise after resignation will provide a greater incentive for employees to stay on.

This study focuses on how the performance and retention considerations of firms affect the design of the restriction terms, and not on the efficacy of these restriction terms. The results would be more powerful if both points were taken into consideration. Future research might investigate the impacts of option-grant-restriction terms on a firm's employee turnover, long-term investment decisions, and performance.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the sample

	Number of observations	% of sample
Food	1	0.53
Plastics	2	1.06
Electric & Machinery	3	1.58
Chemicals, Biotech & Healthcare	4	2.11
Electronics	171	90.48
Communications	1	0.53
Software	5	2.65
Others	2	1.06
Total	189	100.00

This table presents the distribution of the sample firms who granted stock options by industry classification code. For its sample, this study used non-financial Taiwanese companies listed on the stock exchange during the period 2001 to 2003. The number of firms who granted stock options in each sample year was 34, 115, and 114, respectively. After excluding firms whose option contracts were not available or had incomplete data, 189 remained for study.

Table 2. Details of stock option contracts

	Sample (numbers)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Max.	Min.
Expiration date (years)	189	6.25	1.69	6	10	3
Average wait to exercise (years)	180	2.72	0.37	2.75	5.20	2
Time to exercise after resignation (years)	169	0.12	0.09	0.08	0.5	0
Time to exercise in retirement (years)	184	0.81	0.52	1	3.5	0

This table presents the terms of stock-option contracts in detail. This study follows Kole (1997) to calculate the average waiting time by assuming that an employee exercises an option as soon as the restrictions lapse.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and correlations

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. ESO Plan (ESO Plan=1)	0.087	0.28	1.00							
2. Market-to-book ratio	1.19	0.72	0.22***	1.00						
3. R&D (%)	2.24	4.43	0.27***	0.28***	1.00					
4. Firm volatility (%)	19.25	10.31	0.06***	0.08***	0.07***	1.00				
5. Industry volatility (%)	13.59	4.49	0.11***	0.24***	0.14***	0.41***	1.00			
6. Firm size (in logarithm form)	5.89	1.89	0.07**	0.05**	0.005	-0.15***	-0.009	1.00		
7. Employee growth	0.012	0.29	0.09***	0.24***	0.08***	-0.03	-0.08***	0.05**	1.00	
8. Cash flow (%)	3.40	10.64	0.02	0.16***	-0.03*	-0.04**	0.08***	0.13***	-0.008	1.00
9. ROA (%)	6.17	9.33	0.06***	0.59***	0.01	-0.17***	-0.01	0.19***	0.31***	0.24***

Asterisks (***, **, and *) denote the statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

Table 4. Comparison of firms that offered option grants and those did not

	Option grants (ESO Plan=1)			No option grants (ESO Plan=0)		
	Median	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Mean	Std. Dev.
Market-to-book ratio	1.44	1.70	0.92	0.94***	1.14***	0.67
R&D (%)	3.76	6.16	7.33	0.65***	1.86***	3.84
Firm volatility (%)	18.24	21.48	10.44	16.84**	19.03***	10.27
Industry volatility (%)	10.71	15.19	5.65	12.08	13.44***	4.33
Firm size (in logarithm form)	5.90	6.17	1.23	5.82***	5.86***	1.18
Employee growth	0.034	0.105	0.47	-0.013***	0.003***	0.27
Cash flow (%)	2.37	4.11	14.05	3.01	3.33	10.25
ROA (%)	8.16	8.04	11.05	5.77**	5.99**	9.13

Asterisks (***, **, and *) denote the statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

Table 5. Logistic regression of determining the use of option grants

	ESO Plan (=1, having option grants)
Intercept	-6.168***
	(0.564)
Market-to-book ratio	0.562***
	(0.124)
R&D (%)	0.092***
	(0.014)
Firm volatility (%)	0.012
	(0.008)
Industry volatility (%)	0.089***
	(0.024)
Employee growth	0.279
	(0.221)
Firm size (in logarithm form)	0.334***
	(0.072)
Cash flow (%)	-0.006
	(0.008)
ROA (%)	-0.010
	(0.011)
Likelihood ratio χ^2	205.617***
Observations	2160

This table shows the results of logistic regressions with fixed year effects. The dependent variable in the logistic regression is whether a Taiwanese listed firm grants stock options to its employees (i.e., if a firm grants stock options ESO Plan=1; otherwise, ESO Plan=0). The market-to-book ratio is derived from the sum of the market value of equity and the book value of debt, divided by the book value of total assets. R&D (%) is measured as the ratio of R&D spending to sales. Firm volatility is measured by standard deviation of monthly stock returns. Industry volatility is calculated by standard deviation of monthly average stock returns of the industry to which a firm belongs. The natural logarithm of the number of employees measured firm size. The employee growth is calculated by the growth rate in the number of employees. Return on assets (ROA) is the percentage of earnings to total assets before interest, tax, and depreciation. Cash flow is the net cash flow from operations minus capital expenditures, divided by the total assets. All regressions include a series of year dummies (2001-2002). Standard errors are in parentheses. Asterisks (***, **, and *) denote statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

Table 6. Regressions for the determinants of restriction terms

	Dependent Variable		
	Average wait to exercise	Time to exercise after resignation	Time to exercise in retirement
Intercept	2.989***	0.086***	1.942***
	(0.094)	(0.030)	(0.211)
Market-to-book ratio	0.038***	-0.004	0.018
	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.52)
R&D (%)	-0.003	-0.0007	-0.019***
	(0.003)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)
Firm volatility (%)	-0.007***	-0.001***	-0.006*
	(0.0005)	(0.0003)	(0.0038)
Industry volatility (%)	-0.011	0.0015	-0.078***
	(0.007)	(0.0025)	(0.005)
Employee growth	0.019	-0.009**	-0.048
	(0.045)	(0.004)	(0.069)
Firm size	-0.017**	0.006***	-0.013
(in logarithm form)	(0.008)	(0.0007)	(0.008)
Adjusted R^2	0.004	0.005	0.192
Observations	180	169	184

This table presents the results of regressions for the contractual terms of option grants. Dependent variables are: Average wait to exercise, Time to exercise after resignation, and Time to exercise in retirement, respectively. Average wait to exercise is the average waiting period to start exercising option grants. Time to exercise after resignation is the period for exercising vested options after employees resign. Time to exercise in retirement is the period for exercising option grants after employees retire. All regressions include a series of year dummies (2001-2002). Standard errors are in parentheses. Asterisks (***, **, and *) denote statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

On the Traditional Letters and E-mail Relationship

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Abstract

The emergence of the Internet has enabled us to communicate more easily and conveniently, the emergence of E-mail makes the letter to be transferred quickly and easily, but compared with the traditional letters it also exists a certain disadvantages.

Keywords: Traditional correspondence, E-mail, Comparison, Advantage, Defects

With the development of the computer technology and network technology, more and more people's lives can not be separated from the computer than ever before .It changes our lives, to narrow our distance with the world, so we can contact with our distant friends very easily. People can even hear real-time remote friend's voice and see a friend's life images, which is our predecessors dream. However, we can still find the wisdom of our ancestors flashing in our everyday lives. Therefore, we must have innovative succession in our life. The combination of traditional letters and network technology gave birth to E-mail. E-mail correspondence in terms of traditional forms to content has undergone enormous changes.

E-mail is one kind of network tools based on the computer and communications network's information transmission service, which provides electrical signal transmission and storage of information for users to send e-mail, the document digit fax, the image, the digitized pronunciation and so on various types information. It is based on the computer as a tool, the network as the foundation, communicating information through planning to writing - - sending - - transmitting- - receiving- - memorizing and other means to achieve the ultimate goal. But the traditional correspondence takes the language or the writing as a tool and the paper as the carrier, by hand delivery to achieve the ultimate purpose. We can say that E-mail is one kind of computerization correspondence shape which rises along with the computer network development, and also the modernization variant of traditional correspondence. Compared with the traditional correspondence, E-mails have the very big superiority and also certain shortcoming. This article is intended to elaborate on this issue.

1. The advantages of E-mail correspondence compared with the traditional correspondence mainly manifested in the following areas

1.1 Across time and space constraints, improve work efficiency

Traditional delivery of correspondence by natural conditions and the transportation vehicle and other detached condition's restriction, at least a few days, or a few weeks, longer if sending abroad, even the fastest Speedpost take 24 hours to mail sent to other side of the ocean. If just like Wang Shunyou's (mailman) postal route, we don't know the transmission of correspondence is how long, but he did not know how much hard work to be subject. But E-mail is carries on the transmission by the speed of light, almost in your mouse on the moment the letter served on each other's mail server, regardless of you are spatial in the ends of the earth perhaps the universe star, so long as you meet the receive requirement, you will very easy receive mail, therefore, there is no ancient " The white hair is shorter, does not use the hairpin nearly "that kind of restless anticipation feeling. E-mail almost has no concept of distance, so that people's means of communication has had a fast-growing and it easily, greatly accelerated the rhythm of life and work. In order to raise the efficiency, if we compile all friends' E-mail address of the preparation group, when send an E-mail, it can be served on all objects, so that all our friends share our good and bad in life. But the traditional correspondence Wastes the time and the strength, because we copy personally certain, and distribute one by one.

1.2 Forms of information various forms and of large quantities

The traditional correspondence takes the paper as a carrier, Takes the expression form by the writing mark and the picture. But E-mail broke this kind of limit, takes the multimedia achievement as a performance method. So-called multimedia, including the writing media, the sound media (including music, pronunciation), the image media (including graph, image, animation, video), has realized the new artistic combination of different media. E-mail may insert the character pronunciation or the background music, a section of animation or video camera so the reader is possible to use visual, auditory and other sensory organs to savor the feelings of friends, moreover may they according to need to freely choose the media. The E-mail author's and receiver even may carry on the interactive communication through the media. The hypertext way's utilization, causes us to carry on the explanation, instruction, answer the question, and provide author's cultural background and the writing motivation become very easy. The hypertext is an open structure, is one kind of interconnection data, and it is mainly composed of the node and the chain. The information is stored in the node, the context relations are expressed by the chain. So long as the reader clicks on a color phrase or graphics by the mouse, the browser will jump to another location or another super-text. The hypertext is similar to human's netted memory structure. It uses the misalignment network structure to organize massive information, without having the permanent order. This information system is like the overlap of a total informative, multi-dimensional, several heavy space and time. Network Storage, Annex paste and other ways provide the storage space for us, facilitate information transmission, the memory and the extraction, but the traditional correspondence text structure is closed ,and is unable to extend, its information content is also unable to compare with the E-mail.

1.3 Saving a great deal of resources and saving a lot of money

The traditional correspondence's transmission needs to establish a huge organization, for example, it must establish the every large or small post offices, put in the massive manpower and resources, like transportation vehicle, administrative personnel, mailman and so on, and also the envelope, the paper, the postage stamp and so on, the fund spent is a huge digit, but we send E-mail at an expense less than 1 cent money one time. The traditional letter's postage is 0.6 Yuan one time in this city, the outside areas 0.8 Yuan, several Yuan toward overseas, if the overload postage must be double. But Surfer expense is 45 Yuan one month, if the entire day accesses the net, then only uses 1.5 Yuan every day. Along with the technical progress, his expense must be reduced. However sending an E-mail, probably needs dozens of seconds, spends 1 cent money, moreover has no much length limitation.

1.4 Accurate, confidential

Because the transmission process of the traditional correspondence s is complex, the middle link are too many, there are problems sometimes. For example, lost, forgot or others private opens and so on, and it will bring the very big loss for the letter author and the receiver. While E-mail has a special transmission path, since the depositing mailbox also needs a password to open, which avoids the traditional correspondence's some possible shortcomings. E-mail may also hide the information transmission's specific address, the address is only a contact mark. It has demonstrated the specific positioning bit world, but not the primitive world geographic coordinate, so it is difficult to determine the specific position of the author. As long as you have one computer terminal to connect the Internet network, no matter where you are, as long as you enter the E-mail address correctly, it will be very loyal to pass the information in a second to the other side, and meanwhile, you can also accept any E-mail from any place. As long as your friends may contact through the E-mail address with you, but they are actually unable to know your physical location, so that you avoid any person to disturb, have a free space for leisure without any disturbance.

1.5 To bring enormous business opportunities to businessmen

First of all, as a network operator provides network services, through a variety of ways to attract customers, to attract consumer's spending. Commodities operators also seize this channel to sell their own goods. So when we open the website and land own mailbox, we will find all kinds of ads filled in our vision, of course, we also browse the products we care about, or even directly from the online do shopping. It is more than the traditional correspondence on the envelope attractive, and wider range of transmission. The E-mail service's tender creation's advertisement benefit can not be compared with the traditional correspondence. Therefore, E-mail facilitates the commercial activities greatly.

2. Defects of E-mail correspondence compared with the traditional correspondence mainly manifested in the following areas

2.1 Network language's snack-rization makes people's feelings too explicit

The traditional correspondence is a kind of essential tool for human being in the field of study, work, life and in human communication in the real life. It requests lucidity, accuracy for good effects, in order to achieve the good effect. An author wrote to his\her relatives and friends, not only may transmit his/her own thoughts and feelings, give the recipient of letter a warm felling of "on seeing this letter as if talking to you face to face", but also both can make sides have a kind of anticipation feeling in the correspondence contact. Meanwhile as both sides can only use language or images to exchange feelings, the hazy and ambiguity of language makes the author keep the blank in the language aspect in order

to let the reader carry on the imagination and the association. Therefore the authors need to work at dition and structure with special care, in order to move and touch by its sentiment, and matter, and hope to achieve the effect of" Grieved over the years, flowers make us shed tears; Hating to part, hearing birds breaks our heart." And readers will also be anxious about author's urgency, and be sensitive to the feelings of author. Realize "the most moving is emotional, language, sound and moral."

E-mail receives the quick rhythm of the network culture and the multimedia method`s influences, its language style presents the simple and brief characteristic, the emotion too straight dew. E-mail writing has a fixed pattern, makes people always the same feeling. The signifying writing's application of sign language promotes, raised the written speed, saves time and space, and is also cost-saving, People use symbols and abbreviations briefly to replace some complex things such as feelings and images to accelerate the speed of information transmission. For example: -) expresses the ordinary smiling face, @>>-->-- expresses bunch of attractive roses. LOL is "Laugh out loud'. Is laughing", VG is "I am Very Good". Application of symbolic language is precisely its emotional explicit disadvantages. The words in the hypertext are frequently, presented discolorative bodies. They have the link function, and are the hypertext open produces the spot. Clicks on these characters, you can enter into a new document which is related. It is precisely because the node of discolorative characters enables E-mail with a hypertext open mesh structure, and to obtain an unlimited connotation theme. Infinite extends simultaneously also enables the reader to drift away from the theme the text, inquires into asks of the source, so dilute the people's feelings and waste readers` time .The multimedia applications cause the sense of hearing and the vision at the information dissemination synchronize disturbance, thus sometimes Audio-visual communication channels is not as good as only leading to a sensory as effective channels of communication. Therefore, multi-media works of the more vivid, the image of concrete, then the reader`s the space of imagination world be smaller. In this sense, the traditional correspondence through the imagery and metaphor and other means to fully mobilize the main recipients of the creative imagination is better than multi-media works.

2.2 Network virus bring us harm

Compared with the traditional correspondence the biggest harm for e-mail is network virus. Network virus is a kind of faster, more harmful computer viruses. Such as " kills the virus beautifully ", it has demonstrated the new characteristic of attacking method: Taking advantage of people's most common network services - e-mail and word processing software WORD attack. " kills the virus beautifully "'s dissemination way is no longer through the floppy disk copy, but through the network transmission of e-mail message conveyed in the annex to fast networks. When the user opens the e-mail and activate it, the virus in a user's computer address book of the communications collects the first 50 addresses, then sends out e-mail. It is trouble. Although it seems only the practice of a virus hoax, but in fact with some simple transformation, it is entirely possible to collect to the user computer's secret information, and sends it through e-mail. The virus itself has already been the headachy question. However, along with the pioneering Internet development, the network virus appeared, it is the virus which disseminates in the network and brings the disastrous consequence for the network. In short, network viruses like a hateful guy, after he puts on "e-mail"'s the coat, makes us in using so cute "e-mail" have some misgivings. These worries are not in the traditional correspondence.

2.3 It is difficult to appear as tradition letter form's literature competitive products

The network literature has brought changes for the new time's literature from the content to the form, but also has brought the unprecedented impact on the correspondence, then the literature commentary's standard cannot be irrevocable. Therefore, Wang Meng has boldly predicted that it can also appear literary master in the future, but in his imagination, present's master will perhaps not be like Mr. Lu Xun, but it will be sits peacefully there, and whisper to the reader gently through the network. Therefore we cannot use the original standard to the correspondence to judge whether is the high-quality goods , from Wang Meng's enlightenment we can imagine that E-mail will also with appear the high-quality goods in the future, but will not be our tradition form, perhaps as Wang Meng said. But, it will give us a little bit sorry, will let the human be reluctant to part with the traditional culture, and will miss traditional culture.

In short, E-mail is a new combination of technology and literature and the emergence of a new style of application. Like the tradition of practical, it has both advantages and shortcomings, which is a very normal phenomenon, so we should treat it correctly, carefully protected. It can not be immersed in the memories of traditional, to left obliterate its tremendous role. I firmly believe that with the continuous development of network technology, E-mail will also usher in a new spring to play a greater role.

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The Perception of Students towards the Community Colleges' Courses That Offered in Malaysia

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Abstract

Government has allocated funds to build and upgrade the present infrastructures to deal with the increasing capacity of students at community colleges. Among its reasons were the needs to strengthen the training and skills enhancement system and to encourage participation from SPM leavers. However, in fact not many of them interested to enroll and fill up the available quota. Therefore, this study was conducted to get views on SPM leaver's perception towards community colleges and the courses offered. The quantitative survey designed which used questionnaires as an instrument. Samples of 105 respondents who were attending the National Service Training Program (NSTP) at Semberong Camp were chosen to represent the whole population of SPM leavers for the year of 2007. Findings showed that the perceptions of SPM leavers towards community colleges were at a moderate level, such as their acceptance towards the courses offered. At the same time, they were alert and informative pertaining to community colleges and the courses being offered. Others aspects have also taken into account such as participations, triggers, interest in courses and demographic factors. In summary, SPM leavers' perception and acceptance towards community colleges and the courses offered were at a moderate level and it illustrated tendencies towards positive perception.

Keywords: Perceptions, Technical courses, Technical and Vocational education, Community college

1. Introduction

Malaysia is now a developing country towards vision 2020. Within this context, the government has worked out to put on effort in looking into infrastructures development and economic revitalization. The essential steps to work on infrastructures before moving to the next steps which is more focusing on economic revitalization that based on

knowledge (Malaysia Ministry of Finance, 2008) was seen as good in potential. The first emphasized element is to intensify training and up skilling workers to develop the valuable human capital.

About of RM 2 billion had been allocated for training and up skilling the workers program (Malaysia Ministry of Finance, 2008). The amount was distributed accordingly to particular firm such as Pusat Giat MARA (PGM), Industrial Training Institutes (ILP) and National Youth Training Institutes (IKBN) (Malaysia Ministry of Finance, 2008). The allocated funds were also used to increase the numbers of Public Skills Training Institutes (ILKA) which is core business in focusing skills enhancement, technical and vocational training such as community colleges (Malaysia Ministry of Finance, 2008).

Community college is a place to get a valuable knowledge (technical and vocational knowledge and skills) that requires by the community and employers (Emeagwali, 2007). Technical and vocational knowledge which form the basic skills in undertaking task is the case in point (Jacobs and Grubb, 2003; UNESCO-UNEVOC International Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, 2006; Oketch, 2007). Inline with the opinion, Jacobs and Grubb (2003) have expended broader definition where the community college plays dominant roles in producing workers. Thus from this view, we could understand that ready workers constitute skilled workers, while the community college is the place for producing those particular skilled workers. Hence, in response to the current industrial demands, the government rationale behind the invention over community college was seen crucial.

Community college is a technical college under Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) which dedicated to provide platform and opportunity for societies to improve their technical and vocational skills. As cited from Jabatan Pengajian Politeknik Dan Kolej komuniti (JPPKK) (2006) web portal, the main purpose of the community college is to provide a dynamic and quality education and training at all levels of societies for workplace. In particular, community college is to provide second chances for those SPM leavers to further study and also to get them ready before they involve into workplace (JPPPK, 2006). The community college invention objectives aimed for more details are as follows:

(i)   To host and provide alternative pathway to secondary school SPM leavers

(ii) To host and provide lifelong learning knowledge to the community (*learning communities*).

(iii) To provide training and up skilling and re-skilling for the local labor need.

(iv) To provide strategic networking for social strengthening activities.

For the year 2006, 34 community colleges were currently in operation and have successfully produced a number of 4061 graduates in various fields (Malaysia Ministry of Higher Education, 2007). It is the government hopes that the number of skill workers would increase inline with the number of community college will rise to one community college for each Parliament. At the same time, the several choices of courses offered could manage to attract youngster to enroll in the institution.

The unique of community college is the curriculum design which is developed from the collaboration between Malaysia Ministry of Higher Education and industrial bodies. The number of 33 private companies including Telekom Malaysia Bhd, MIMOS Bhd, DRB-Hicom Bhd and etc have being in consensus (MOU) to ensure the industrial related curriculum (JPPKK, 2006). As such, this is considered as the best strategy to provide marketable graduate of the community college.

Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination is a national examination which is important to assess academic competencies for fifth form of secondary school student in Malaysia. The main purpose is to stratify and assist to determine the students' academic pathway towards further education at tertiary level (Wikipedia, 2008). According to Wikipedia, SPM examination is equivalent to British General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and is taken by those who ages 17 years old. However, for those who attended pre-secondary school would take the SPM examination at the age of 18.

The SPM leavers are students who have sat the SPM examination at particular year of examination. In the report of Bernama (2007), there are 439255 candidates who have sat for the examination for the year 2007. If we seek to review on the pass several years as in 2006, the amount of 416717 candidates had sit for the exam and 437896 for the year 2005. However, the number of candidates increase and likely to rise in the forthcoming years inline with the increasing of Malaysian occupation statistic projection towards year 2020.

2. Background of problem

Cited from Oketch (2007), Technical and Vocational Education field is closing related to workplace and training. Inline with the government mission, youths and youngsters role should not be neglected within this field. Though, as provision for producing skilled workers, they were expected to fill up the jobs market especially in service field that will be invented along with our country's development pace toward advance (Jacobs and Voorhees, 2006). In addition, as statistic projection by Western, illustrating that most of the future jobs opportunity emerge would be in the service sectors (Jacobs and Voorhees, 2006). Therefore, technical and vocational field should emphasize in producing

manpower in services sectors and other sectors too including automotive, manufacturing, construction, business, and engineering and information technology.

If we look into current scenario of manpower usage, these sectors were not filled up by the local youths and youngsters. As consequences, almost 2 million immigrants work in various sectors including manufacturing, construction, agriculture and household maid instead (Mohd. Yusof, Rajudin and Buntat, 2007). The circumstances depicting that our country has shortage in manpower to replace them. Is this circumstance the consequences of the overlooked by the government to emphasis on this sector from the beginning? If negative, why these jobs opportunity not filled up by the local youngsters? Are these local youngsters doing not have the skills in the particular area? Or probably not interested? And the most important question is, are the immigrants all skilled workers?

In 2006, 37 community colleges had been in operation and capable to train 23300 students at a time (Utusan Malaysia, 12 November 2007). These big number provides opportunities and chances for those and it is believed to be increased every year inline with the increasing number of community colleges as in plan. However, according to the enrolment report on community colleges, it is apparently low especially from those SPM leavers and local community. At this point, the question raise is about why they seem not interested to enroll in the community colleges especially for those failures to get place in the university?

3. Statement of problem

Government intended to encourage the young and youth participations in skills training program. For this to occur, yearly national investment budget had allocated big amount of money purposely for that means. The funds were used to build and upgrade the present infrastructures to increase the capacity of students particularly for community colleges. As a result, it can now providing SPM leavers with wider opportunities and alternatives especially for those who are weak in academic streams and failure to get place in university. Although, the SPM leavers increase each year, in fact not many of them interested to enroll and fill up the available quota. Therefore, this study was conducted to review the perception of SPM leavers towards community colleges' and the courses offered which portraying their expectation towards courses being offered and the community colleges itself.

4. Research questions

The research highlighted the outline area of:

a)   What is SPM leaver's perception towards community college and courses offered?

b)   What is the SPM leaver's information level towards community college and courses offered?

c)   What are the promotion methods that assist student to get informed pertaining to community college and courses offered?

d)   Are the lists of courses offered fulfilled SPM leavers' interest?

e)   What are the attributes considered which influence their decision to join community college?

f)   Is there a significant different between perception and socio demographic factors with:

i) Gender

ii) SPM result

iii) Race

5. Perceptions

Perception defines as perceives or views, it also synonym with word acceptance (Liu and Gentle, 2005; Smart and Cappel, 2006; Maniam and Liong, 2007) or could be best described with depicting or portraying or thinking about something (Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka, 2005). Therefore, it is important to get views on SPM leavers' perception towards community colleges. Furthermore, perception shows an evaluation made by persons (Choi, Kim and Lee, 2000). Thus, how could they join community colleges if priorly they have made negative evaluation on them? In addition, the information level is believed could influence their perception regarding on certain things (Abd Ghafar, 2003).

Several previous researches demonstrated a different findings pertaining to this matter. As the case in Brunei, the researcher has found that the local citizen barely accepting the industrial and private sectors in Technical and Vocational Education (Minnis, 2000). The circumstance likewise occurs in Africa, most African has concerned bad image and low status on vocational courses (UNESCO-UNEVOC International Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, 2006). This exhibits with gender stereotype that occurs within this field wherein, information technology and electrical engineering were dominated by males (Stanwick, 2006). In addition, they also have found different perception between males and females towards Technical and Vocational Education in Poland (Lobodzinska, 2000).

Some researches have met valuable findings regarding perception towards vocational courses offered especially in community colleges. From this information, it revealed certain hidden keys and formed a turning point towards

improving Technical and Vocational Education field image and status. This information becomes a valuable input for the aimed cohort to entice those joining community colleges. The authorities could drill down the root of the problem to solve it besides taking the others country experiences as valuable lesson.

6. Methodology

The study applied quantitatives research design uses survey questionnaires. The random sample among PLKN Semberong Camp constitutes 105 respondents to represent the whole population of SPM leavers for 2007. According to Bernama (2007), SPM leavers' population for that particular year was 439255 nationwide. The descriptives analysis involves mean and percent for research question 1 to 5. While for inferential statistic was using independent t-test. For the Likert Scale questions, the mean score determination were according to the range listed as in Table 1 (Kiong, Arof, Omar and Yan, 2005)

Insert Table 1 here

The questionnaire was developed referring to the survey questionnaire by Liu and Gentle (2005). The items were modified and adapted to drive toward objectives and research questions and also to meet the respondent level. Subsequently questionnaire was tested for reliability and validity. Repeated pilot test were run to ensure the wording and statements given firms in meaning and to decrease the possibility of confusing. Furthermore, it also to ensure the combination of items could delineate the desired output as stated in objectives (Johnson and Christensen, 2000; Wiersma, 2000). The pilot test was run on different group of fifth and sixth form student at the nearest secondary school. The first test was involved 8 samples of sixth form student, thus some rectifications were made, and 10 samples of fifth form student for the second test and the third test took 14 samples among fifth and sixth form student. The reliability analysis Alpha Cronbach is 0.89. The pilot test was repeated as that pace is to see the effect on the first modification on the previous test. According to Johnson and Christensen (2000), it is adequate to take 5 to 10 sample as respondent to test the questionnaire instrument developed. In addition, a set of questionnaire were checked and verified by three experience lecturers.

7. Findings and discussions

The majority of the participants involved in the study were females, constituting 53.3% of the data sample that represent of 56 females of 105 respondents. Among them, 56 respondents were Malay, 41 were Chinese, 7 Indian and 1 for other. 75 among respondents were reported pass in the SPM examination while another 30 respondents were failed or do not sit the examination (those absent from school).

The first and the second relevant survey questions were "What is SPM leavers' perception towards community college and courses offered?" and "What is the SPM leavers' information level towards community college and courses offered?" Respondents have to response on 8 items pertinent to their perception and information level. Findings showed that moderate level of SPM leavers' perception towards community colleges with mean 3.66 and the perception towards courses offered likely at the same extent with 3.63 in mean. While the information level of SPM leavers' towards community colleges and courses offered at moderate level with 3.59 and 3.45 respectively. The findings tabulated as in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 here

Respondents agreed within a set of items where the community colleges provide them opportunities to built and develop their future carrier. The findings firmed by Barabasch (2006) that in his qualitative research has found that participant perceive that the skills training in community colleges could help them to grasp the quality jobs for their future. This study finding showed likewise and more it provided the opportunity to further study to the high levels. The other researchers also agreed with the research findings such as Bailey, et al., 2003; Liu and Gentle, 2005; Bailey, et al., 2007.

Within these research findings, respondents' perception towards Technical and Vocational Education were found positive (Daniel and Mukhari, 2001). In some research findings however, community perceived bad image on vocational education as demonstrated in Mustapha, Mohd. Basin and Mohd. Ali. (2003). Indeed, Velde and Cooper (2000) have also firmed that the teachers were concerned that vocational education had a low status in the school and at the same time supporting the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2006) views on some of African society.

The third relevant survey question was "What are the promotion methods that assist student to get informed pertaining to community college and courses offered?" The finding showed that the main source as information references were schools and friends with respectively 71.4% and 70.5%. Interestingly, the speech session programs in the camp represent other sources in the questionnaire information sources list exhibit 9.5% of the overall respondents. While for the other sources were shown as in Table 3.

As remarked in Liu and Gentle (2005) research findings, teachers were the main source of information reference for student to make decision to join in Technical and Vocational Education. As such, school acts as the main source of

information references to get know regarding community colleges and other opportunity for furthering study. In relation, friends demonstrated as a second information source for them that commonly the only place to share their stories, sharing ideas, information, and have a chit chats and so on in youth's social life (Mesir, et al., 2006). However, this research finding was against with Liu and Gentle (2005) where friends were not become the main source of information instead.

Insert Table 3 here

According to the forth relevant question, "Are the lists of courses offered fulfilled SPM leavers' interest?" Two of the listed courses which frequently chosen by respondent which were Hotel Management and Catering and Tourism and Exploration. Mean score according to the interest for the rest are shown as in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 here

The result seems against for the several previous researches finding where students at Diploma level in Technical and Vocational Education more interested in Business Administration (Stanwick, 2006). Nevertheless, the most popular courses here have found insipid respond from them (Stanwick, 2006). This ambivalence might clarify within the contact of the diversity of social status and the different in thinking maturity of both groups of respondents.

Within these, we have found that the ICT based courses (Such as Computer system and support) became favourite course to respondents which all mean exhibited above 3.0. Most probably the respondent could see the global trend of developing ICT industry which they seeing as an opportunity for future employment. However, the cooling system and air-conditioning courses appeared as the lowest unfavourable course.

The fifth relevant survey question was "What are the attributes considered which influence their decision to join community colleges?" These report findings showed that SPM leavers' considering skills and the chosen courses with score mean 3.74. The value apparently at high level depicting that student concern on the skills offered before making decision to join community colleges. In relation, they also were considering their confident level on the courses that might help them to seek for a job in the future time with score means 3.70. In contrary, the lowest score mean exhibited by the statement "There are no other activities that I could do and it's only to fill in my leisure time". Whilst the other factors listed in the questionnaires were at moderate level.

Insert Table 5 here

For the sixth question, genders, SPM results and races were taken as comparison point on SPM leavers' perception. The independent t-test result showed that there were significant difference in perception between males and females towards community colleges (p=0.008). However in contrast, there were no significant difference in perception towards the courses offered (p=.989). For SPM result, there were no significant difference between those who pass the examination between who failures or do not have SPM (those absent from school) in perception towards courses offered (p=.993), while there were difference perception towards community colleges (p=0.03). At other times, there were no significant difference between Malay and Non-Malay in perception towards courses offered (p=0.051) and however, there were significant difference in perception between Malay and Non-Malay towards community colleges (p=.000) in contrast. The data were simplified as in Table 6.

Perceptions were not influenced by gender within this context (Barry and James, 2000; Daniel and Mukhari, 2001). Nevertheless, in the report of community colleges enrollment for the year 2006 showed the different between the number of males and females (Malaysia Ministry of Higher Education, 2007). The discrepancies evidently showed the contradict perception among these genders. It seems identical findings that strongly supported this study report as in Lobodzinska (2000).

Difference in perception illustrated between those who pass and failed or do not sit the examination (those absent from school) towards courses offered. The simple interpretation from this information is for those who were failed or do not sit the examination (those absent from school) have also probably interested in skills courses compared to academic stream instead. The opportunity should also open to them to enroll in any of certificate courses according to their interest. Particularly, the minimum entry requirements to community colleges should exclude pass in Bahasa Melayu (JPPKK, 2006). If not, this consequently will hinder them to build up themselves as in skilled workers or the valuable human capital cohort for the country's development.

Insert Table 6 here

As a result, we exhibit significance different in perceptions for the students who were failed or do not sit the examination (those absent from school) towards community colleges. They probably felt that institutions close doors for them. Eventually, they choose to join factory or start own business without skills. However, they still have another choices to get skilled with joining short courses in community colleges to allow them start any business activities with some certain experiences and skills. The basic entry requirement will allow them to do so and it is open to Malaysian citizen.

Western has evident completely different scenario wherein, most of the high school students would directly entering the jobs market especially for those who have the high credit in occupations (Levesque et al., 2008). Only a few of them choose to join post secondary education (Levesque et al., 2008) even there were certain policies that allow them to participate in dual enrolment school system (Karp, et al. (2007).

From the race point of views, the study finding showed that race was not one of the influencing factors in perception in Technical and Vocational Education courses. As remarked by Barry and James (2000), it was found the similarity within this context but however, perception towards community colleges were found contradict. If we look into the current scenario, we evidently saw that most of the community colleges' students are Malay and only a few of them Non-Malay, particularly Chinese and Indian. This statement supported by Karp, et al. (2007) where they have found enrollment difference among different races into technical courses.

8. Conclusions and suggestions

SPM leavers' within this context area of research showed positive perception towards 21 courses offered in community colleges where, their information level at moderate. However, only two of the listed courses were being frequently chosen which were Hotel management & Catering and Tourism & Exploration. At the same times, the SPM leavers' have also inclined to show positive perception towards community colleges likewise the information level at moderate too. For both these characteristics, we understood that the information pertaining to community colleges might not be delivered precisely. They were not provided with direct sufficient information on the unique of community colleges from officers in promotion programs. Schools illustrated the main references however, teachers and councilors sometimes might not really sure about it. The stacking information of delivery system seems dearth to deliver precise information by the community colleges' officers groups in the road tour promotion programs.

SPM leavers' considered on several aspects before the decision to join community colleges were made. They concerned about the skills and the courses offered to ensures them could breach into the job markets while completes. They thought the courses should embed with appropriate skills to enable them perform duties and tasks. In addition, the courses offered should also able to convince them and related to the current market demands.

Within these research findings, males indicated inclination to positive perception towards community colleges compared to their counterparts, however, perceptions towards courses offered seems equal. In relations, enrollment data demonstrated exceeding number of males than females in community colleges. Probably, the reasons behind it where the technical courses offered have been long time offered in the others institutions compared to the new born community colleges. At the same times, Malay and Non-Malay have gotten different perception towards community colleges and against for the courses offered. Whilst for SPM result point of views, those who pass or failed or do not sit the examination (those absent from school) have evidently identical in perception towards courses offered. However, they indicated different perception towards community colleges

Further research needs to be undertaken as outlined in this report. In which is as continuing research practices, it will more precise and valuable findings if the respondent aimed for those students who did apply to enroll in but failure to do so. Valuable outcomes could yield in terms of their perception and their pathway for continuing educations. The findings will answer several questions pertaining to acceptance towards community colleges and courses offered.

It is recommended that the case study to be conducted for community colleges which the enrollment rate indicates low. Taking the local vicinity respondents, it will clarify in details on the perception towards community colleges and courses offered. Many interesting findings could reveal important key points including the suitability of the courses offered, the community awareness on Technical and Vocational Education, gender discrimination, races and any other demographics diversity and acceptance towards the availability of community colleges in their vicinity.

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Table 1. Mean Score level

Mean	Level
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.66	Moderate
3.67 – 5.00	High

Table 2. Perception and Information level for SPM leavers

Mean Score	Mean	Level
SPM leavers' perception towards community college	3.66	Moderate
SPM leavers' perception towards courses offered	3.63	Moderate
SPM leaver's information level towards community college	3.59	Moderate
SPM leaver's information level towards courses offered	3.45	Moderate

Table 3. Information sources

Sources	Frequency	Percent
School (Counseling and Carrier Unit /teacher)	75	71.4
Parents	39	37.1
Friends	74	70.5
News Paper	55	52.4
Television / radio	32	30.5
Seminar / expo /Talks	44	41.9
Officer in school road shows	35	33.3
Pamphlets/articles/brochures	34	32.4
Internet	36	34.3
Other sources :	10	9.5

Table 4. Mean score for courses listed

Courses	Mean	Level
Multimedia creative (animation)	3.31	Moderate
Integrative manufacturing Technology	2.71	Moderate
Automotive	3.00	Moderate
Drawing architecture	2.81	Moderate
Building maintenance	2.61	Moderate
Electric technology	2.97	Moderate
Computer system and support	3.59	Moderate
Hotel Management and catering	3.69	High
Fashion and Apparel	3.38	Moderate
Food Processing and quality control	2.93	Moderate
Construction Technology	2.79	Moderate
Information Technology	3.16	Moderate
Accounting	3.25	Moderate
Multimedia creative (Advertisement)	3.25	Moderate
Cooling system and air-conditioning	2.65	Moderate
Tourism and Exploration	3.67	High
Interior design	3.17	Moderate
Landscape and nursery management	3.03	Moderate
Beauty and hair grooming	3.15	Moderate
Bakery and confectionary	3.06	Moderate
Ceramic Industry	2.81	Moderate
Min Score Average	3.09	Moderate

Table 5. Attributes Concern on Decision Making

Mean Score Average	Mean	Level
Confidence in the courses to get job while after complete	3.70	High
The skills offered in within the courses could entice my interest	3.74	High

Table 6. Demographic Factors in Comparing Perception

Perception and Gender		N	Mean	T	Df	P Value Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differs
Perception towards courses	Female	56	3.6987	2.702	103	.989	-.0022
	Male	49	3.6964				-.0022
Perception towards community college	Female	56	3.5290	-.014	103	.008	.2771
	Male	49	3.8061				.2771
Perception and SPM result		**N**	**Mean**	**T**	**Df**	**P Value Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Differs**
Perception towards courses	Pass Exam	75	3.6983	.009	103	.993	.0025
	Failure/No SPM Cert	30	3.6958				.0025
Perception towards community college	Pass Exam	75	3.7567	3.068	103	.003	.3442
	Failure/No SPM Cert	30	3.4125				.3442
Perception and Race		**N**	**Mean**	**T**	**Df**	**P Value Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Differs**
Perception towards courses	Malay	56	3.8460	1.972	103	.051	.3179
	Non-Malay	49	3.5281				.3179
Perception towards community college	Malay	56	3.8884	5.102	103	.000	.4930
	Non-Malay	49	3.3954				.4930

Conversation Strategies in Institutional Dialogue

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Abstract

We live and work in different institutional contexts and manage our institutional goals, tasks and activities through our use of language. We should realize that a given linguistic practice is specifically and specially characteristic of talk in a given setting, and that we can actively employ certain conversation strategies to orient to our institutional identities and activities. This paper investigates different levels of language use and particular strategies, aiming to help people achieve smooth and efficient communication.

Keywords: Institutional dialogue, Conversation strategy, Identity

1. Introduction

When people visit the doctor, hold meetings at their workplaces, negotiate business deals, call railway stations for information, they are talking, communicating and interacting in institutional "contexts". Language employed in these situations, in the form of talk-in-interaction, is the means by which the participants perform and pursue their respective institutional tasks and goals. In order to achieve effective and efficient communication in these contexts, people concerned should be aware of some conversation strategies of which they often unaware in common daily conversation.

2. Institutional Dialogue and Conversation

2.1 The institutionality of Conversation

The study of institutional dialogue has emerged as a distinctive field of research during the past 30 years from developments in a number of cognate disciplines, notably in socio-linguistics, discourse analysis, ethnography of speaking and conversation analysis. The study of institutional dialogue is the study of how people use language to manage practical tasks, and to perform the particular activities associated with their participation in institutional context. There is no clear definition which would precisely delimit the scope of the field of institutional dialogue (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992), and the boundaries between institutional talk and conversation are not fixed. But still we can distinguish by saying that the institutionality of dialogue is constituted by participants through their orientation to relevant institutional rules and identities, and through their production and management of institutionally relevant tasks and activities. The study focuses on the ways in which conduct is shaped or constrained by the participants' orientation to social institutions, either as their representatives or in various senses as their clients.

2.2 Conversation Strategies

Communication is a social activity requiring the coordinated efforts of two or more individuals. Mere talk to produce sentence, no matter how well-formed or elegant the outcome, does not by itself constitute communication. Only when a move has elicited a response can we say communication is taking place. In order to create and sustain conversational involvement, we require knowledge and ability that go considerably beyond the grammatical competence we need to decode short isolated message.

A basic assumption is that this channeling of interpretation is affected by conversation implicatures based on conventionalized co-occurrence expectations between content and surface style. That is, constellations of surface features of message form are the means 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. These features are referred to as contextualization cues (Gumperz, 1982), which was called conversation strategy by other linguists later (Wanjin Zhu, 1992).

3. Conversation Strategies in Orientation to Participants' Institutional Identities

Participants' institutional identities can be viewed, not as exogenous and determining variables, but as accomplished in interaction. Hence a key focus of research into institutional dialogue is to show how participants' orientation to their institutional identities is manifested in the details of the verbal conduct through which they manage their institutional tasks. Here we review some of the conversation strategies which participants use in orienting to their institutional identities, namely person reference, lexical choice, grammatical construction, turn-taking, and institutionally specific inferences.

3.1 Person Reference

In their selection of the particular way of referring to each other and to third parties, participants may display their orientation to their acting as incumbents of an institutional role, or as somehow representing an institution. They do so by using a personal pronoun which indexes their institutional rather than their personal identity. Here is an example taken form a call to the emergency services in the U.S:

Desk: Mid-city Emergency

Desk: Hello? What's the problem?

Caller: <u>We</u> have an unconscious, uh: diabetic

Desk: Are <u>they</u> inside of a building?

Caller: Yes they are:

Desk: What building is it?

Caller: it's the adult bookstore?

Desk: <u>We</u>'ll get somebody there right away…

In this fragment, the caller refers to himself through the first person plural pronoun *we*, thereby that he is speaking not in a personal capacity (for example, as a relative of the victim) but on behalf of the shop in which the victim happened to fall ill. Similarly, the desk uses a third person plural pronoun *they* as well as first person pronoun *we* in inquiring about the victim, announcing he is acting on behalf of the emergency service.

This example does not only illustrate aspects of how participants exhibit and orient to their institutional identities through person reference forms, but also shows the inseparable constitutive relationship between the linguistic devices of person reference and managing institutional activities.

3.2 Lexical Choice

The issue raised above concerning the selection of person reference forms shade into a more general issue of lexical choice—that is, the selection of descriptive terms and other lexical items treated by participants as appropriate to, and hence indicative of, their understanding of the situation they are in. Plainly, this connects with linguistic notions of setting specific, situationally appropriate registers, codes or styles. The point to be made here is that speaker orient to the institutionality of the context, in part through their selection of terms from the variety of alternative ways for describing people, objects or events. This can involve the "descriptive adequacy" of lexical choice with respect to the type of institutional context concerned.

The following is an extract from a call by the attendance clerk in a high school. (AC = attendance clerk; M = mother. F =father)

AC: Hello this is Miss Medeiros from Fedondo High School calling.

M: Uh Hu:h

AC: Was Charlie home form school ill today?

M: .hhhhh

M: (off phone) Charlie wasn't home ill today, was he?

F: (off phone) Not at all.

M: No he wasn't.

AC: Well he was <u>reported</u> <u>absent</u> from his third and his fifth period class today.

M: Ah, ha:h

AC: We need him to come in the office in the morning to clear this up.

<div align="center">(Drew & Sorjonen, 1997)</div>

Having first inquired whether their child was ill at home that day, the attendance clerk then informs the mother that the

child has been *reported absent* that day. Here the attendance clerk says that the child was *reported absent*, not simply that he *was absent*. Her use of the verb *reported* here in collocation with *absent* is cautious or equivocal—at least it avoids direct accusing the child of truancy. The word "reported" is a part of proper management of the attendance clerk's task. Furthermore, the selection of the complement "absent" to describe the child's non-presence at school activates a specifically institutional form of non-presence (For instance, one is "absent" from school or workplace, but not from a party).

The institutional relevance of lexical choice is more obvious in cases where participants use a terminology more clearly restricted to their situation-specific distribution. Many studies have documented the way in which the use of technical vocabularies can embody definite claims to specialized technical knowledge. The asymmetry of knowledge between professional and lay participants may result in the professional's control of the information available to the clients, thereby possibly influencing what emerges as the outcome of the interaction.

Finally, we should emphasize that issues of lexical choice go beyond technical vocabularies. Potentially, any lexical selection in institutional dialogue is investigable for its constitutive and situated relevance for the kind of discourse in which participants are engaged, and for the task which they are performing through their lexical choices. In this sense, any lexical selection is informative about participants' orientation to institutional contexts and their role within them.

3.3 Grammatical Forms

Various grammatical forms are the resources available to participants in managing their institutional tasks. In so far those tasks are part of the interaction routine for a given settings. Particular grammatical forms are likely to have distinctive distribution in given settings, that is to say, certain grammatical forms may be prevalent in certain settings, or they may show characteristic pattern of use which are associated with the characteristic activities in which participants engage in a setting, for example, the use of directives and suggestions in medical settings.

There have been many studies about characteristic use of particular grammatical forms in settings such as courts, classroom, new interview, medical consultations, service encounters and formal meeting. These studies revealed the interactional functions or dimensions and interactional consequences associated with the use of certain forms. For example, a number of studies have documented the way in which different forms used by attorney for asking questions in courtroom examinations, such as between *wh*-question and *yes/no* question, can have variable constraining power over witness' answer.

Another example is Kim's (1992) finding that wh-claft contraction in English is much more common in formal settings (such as university lecture) than it is in ordinary conversation. Also, there are differences in their usage in the two types of setting. In formal lectures, the contraction is often used to resume formality and thereby to shift the default register of the interaction after an informal and often humorous stretch of talk. While in daily conversation, this contraction is used to depart from the default register of conversation in order to formulate one's utterance as authoritative when asserting a point in response to a co-participant's prompt or challenge in "problematic" context. In summery, the examination of grammatical form is the interface between linguistic work on syntax and the analysis of the pragmatic and interactional function of utterance.

3.4 Turn-taking

One of the most significant themes to have emerged in this field is that, in various ways, participants' conduct is shaped by reference to constraints on their contributions in institutional dialogues. Perhaps the most evident constraint lies in turn-taking systems which depart substantially form the way in which turn-taking managed in conversation (Sacks et al, 1974). Interactions in courtrooms, classrooms, and news interviews exhibit systematically distinct forms which constrains turn-taking system. These turn-taking systems involve the differential allocation of turn types among the participants; notably, the interactions are organized in terms of question-answer sequences, in which questions are allocated to the professional and answers to the client. Even if the turn-taking system is predetermined by an external prescriptive organization, the participants nevertheless need to manage the dialogue in order to achieve his institutional role or to accomplish his task. For example, it is quite familiar that news interviews exhibit a question-answer structure. However, the following example begins to show that this structure is achieved through the practices for managing the talk as asking and answering questions.

(IE: interviewee; IR: interviewer)

IE: The difference is that it's the press that constantly call me a Marxist when I do not, and never have er er given that description of myself. .hhh I—

IR: But I've heard you- I've heard you'd be very happy to : to: er, describe yourself as a Marxist. Could it be that with an election in the offing you're anxious to play down that you're a Marxist.

IE: Not at all Mister Day…and I'm sorry to say I must disagree with you, you have never heard me describe myself …er …as a Marxist.

In this extract, the interviewer construct his turn so that, whatever else he does, he produces a question as the last element in his turn, through an interrogative—thereby constituting his local task as one of "asking questions". Second, although it is clear that the interviewee disagrees with the interviewer's standing, he withhold his answer (disagreement) until a question has explicitly been asked. Thus the ways in which interviewer constructs his turn, and interviewee only speaks after a question has been asked, thereby producing an answer, display both participants' orientations to their respective tasks in their interview. It is in this sense that we mean that the turn-taking organization is an emergent product of participants' locally managed interactional practices.

3.5 Institutionally Specific Inferences

Participants orient to institutional setting through their recognition of and responses to the particular meanings that they attribute to each other's turns at talk. Hence some studies in this area focus on analyzing the inferences participants make about what the other is saying or doing, and the specific institutional salience of those inferences. "Inference" refers to participants' understanding of the activities that each is performing and the situationally relevant meanings of their utterance; those understandings are based on normative expectations concerning the nature of the occasion and each other's roles within it.

In some respects what participants take one another to mean, that is, the inferences they make from what is said, is rooted in their orientations to the constrains about what will count as allowable contributions to given institutional activities (Levinson, 1992). For example, the kind of answer that one might give at the beginning of a medical consultation to the doctor's question "how are you" might be very different from one's answer to the same question asked by a friend at the beginning of a telephone call. These differences reveal speakers' inferences concerning what the doctor wants to find out in asking that question, and hence what would be an "allowable contribution" as an answer to the inquiry.

The above strategies are commonly found in smooth talks without any conflict between people, which greatly facilitate the development of conversation and help to manifest participants' institutional identities. Still in some cases, because of the unequal status of the speakers, the choice of strategies is asymmetric.

4. Conversation strategies and Institutional Superiority

One of the most pervasive of all socio-cultural universals is social stratification—the unequal social distribution of prestige, power, wealth, and privilege. It is patent that in all societies there are persons who are more powerful than others. The social scientist is interested in how such social inequalities come into being, are maintained, changed, and how they affect and be affected by other social variables.

"The ideal of linguistic democracy, in which the speech of every citizen is regarded with equal respect by all others, is perhaps the most unrealistic of all social ideals" (Christian, 1972). Speech is one of the most effective instruments in existence for maintaining a given social order involving social relationships. It is also true that certain strategies are reserved to the superior part in a institutional talk, such as topic-dominance. In conversation, subordinates more pursue topics raised by those with superior status than the other way around.

4.1 Interruption

In conversation, superiors interrupt and touch more frequently. Superiors have the privilege to interrupt the subordinate, not for information or identification, but to stop what he doesn't want to listen. This phenomenon is part in concordance with the topic-dominance of the superiors. For example:

(Li: Li Shiqing ; Pan : Pan Yueting)

Li: (in a low voice) I've got some information from a very secret source. It's quite profitable for us to buy the public debt this time.

Pan: yeah .. yeah…yeah..(but interrupts suddenly) aha, Fushen said your wife…

Li: I know, I know—I tell you, perhaps we can make a profit of 30,000…

Pan: Yes, yes, didn't your wife want you to go home?

Ii: Don't care about her. I propose…

Pan: Shiqing, do you know your son is ill?

Li: It doesn't matter, it doesn't matter, tomorrow, we'd better still buy in…

Pan: Shiqing! You'd better go home now! Do you know your son is badly ill?

<div align="center">(The Sunrise by Cao Yu)</div>

In this conversation, Pan, the manager, interrupted Li four times to stop him from talking about buying the public debt. Although Li, the assistant, ignored the interruption for three times, he was eventually stopped and gave up his

persistence. This kind of interruption is usually use by a superior to the subordinate, for it's very forceful and has a sense of "command".

4.2 Directives

Anthropologists and socio-linguists have observed that variations of directive forms are systematically related to social features. They have shown that variation does major work in interaction, conveying concurrent information about social features of the speaker and the situation, communicative intent and effect.

[head of office to subordinate]

I want you to check the requirement for stairs.

[Doctor to nurse in a hospital]

I need a 19 gauge needle.

[nurse to orderlies]

Cindy, ran to CSR for a box of ABDs.

[Drill sergeant to new recruits]

Get your eyes off me!

From these examples, we can see that in certain institutional contexts where there are clear rank differences, the superior can employ "need statement" and "direct imperatives" in their talking, which is seldom used vice versa. When the inferior wants to express the same idea, they are likely to use some less direct forms:

[young housecleaner to older employer]

I could use some furniture polish.

5. Conclusion

Researchers working in institutional talk have a common objective—to explore the ways in which participants in institutional interactions manage their institutional goals , tasks and activities through their use of language. Here, the investigation of language use in lexical selection, grammatical forms, sequence (including turn-taking), pragmatic inference, and the unequal employment of some strategies can reveal aspects of how participants themselves orient to their institutional identities and activities. In our daily life and work, we should realize that a given linguistic practice is specifically and specially characteristic of talk in a given setting, and that a certain linguistic feature or practice has a characteristic use when deployed in a given setting, thus more smooth communication is expected to be achieved.

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Online Consumer Dispute Resolution and the ODR Practice

in Taiwan – A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

Online dispute resolution can be roughly categorised in into online negotiation, online mediation, and online arbitration. Online negotiation means direct communication between the parties via electronic means. Online mediation involves a neutral third party communicating with and between the parties by online means to facilitate negotiation and encourage the parties to reach a settlement. Online arbitration involves a neutral third party, the arbitrator, with the competence to hear the arguments of the parties and make a decision on the merits of the dispute. In online arbitration process, submission of documents, text-based hearings, and live hearings may be carried out via electronic communication over the internet. In ODR processes, certain principles have to be followed. The neutrals must be impartial and independent. The ODR services must be affordable for the parties. The dispute resolution process must be transparent. The proceedings must be fair. As far as effectiveness is concerned, the dispute resolution process should not be protracted beyond a reasonable period of time, and the result must be implemented effectively. In Taiwan, ODR can serve as an alternative to civil proceedings to avoid complicated legal issues and enhance consumer confidence. The Taiwanese laws do not prohibit the conducting of ADR processes over the internet. The legal status of electronic signature and electronic document in ODR proceedings is also recognised. There is no legal obstacle for ODR in Taiwan.

Keywords: E-commerce, Alternative dispute resolution, Online dispute resolution, ICANN, Electronic signature, Electronic document

1. Introduction

For many people today the use of internet has become as usual as an ordinary daily activity. According to a latest statistics in 2009, internet users' population has exceeded 1.5 billion, well over 23% of the entire population of the world. (Note 1) The nature of the internet, with the application of the world-wide web, has made it an ideal platform for commercial activities, including consumer transactions, between parties at distant locations. The convenience brought by B2C e-commerce has its positive impact. A consumer in Taiwan can purchase foreign goods from Amazon.com without travelling abroad. But B2C e-commerce also has its negative side. Disputes might arise under online transactions as well as under conventional offline transactions. Online disputes, especially online consumer disputes, might involve parties with different nationality, which might cause complicated issues of jurisdiction and applicable law should such disputes be submitted to the court of law of a specific country. (Note 2) As a result, the resolution of consumer disputes involving online transactions has become an important issue for e-commerce.

Major economies in e-commerce activities, such as the European Union (EU) and the united states (US), has long ago recognised that online consumer dispute resolution mechanisms help building up consumer confidence in e-commerce. As early as in 2000, the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Department of Commerce (DOC) emphasised in a joint workshop that:

"This online marketplace also has created challenges; among them, how best to resolve disputes involving cross-border consumer transactions. Consumers must be confident that they will have access to redress for problems arising in the online marketplace." (Note 3)

The European Commission of the EU also stated in 2001 that:

"The continuing development of new forms of commercial practices involving consumers such as electronic commerce, and the expected increased in cross-border transactions, require that particular attention be paid to generating the

confidence of consumers, in particular by ensuring easy access to practical, effective and inexpensive means of redress, including access by electronic means … for e-commerce to reach its full potential consumer confidence must be enhanced … by promoting access to alternative dispute resolution systems." (Note 4)

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) also recognised in its '*E-Commerce and Development Report 2003*' that "[o]ne of the main challenge facing e-commerce is how to resolve cross-border disputes in the electronic business environment." (Note 5) It further stated:

"traditional dispute settlement mechanisms may not provide effective redress in e-commerce transactions, there is a need to consider alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms that would provide speedy, low-cost redress for claims arising from online interactions … [w]hen ADR takes place using computer mediated communications in the online environment, it is often referred to as online dispute resolution (ODR)." (Note 6)

Consumer International, an international consumer organisation, also made similar comment:

"The lack of effective consumer redress when the parties are in different countries is a major barrier to consumer confidence … in order to facilitate the continued growth of electronic commerce, consumer confidence … must be improved, and that in order to improve consumer confidence, the problem of consumer redress in the event of cross-border disputes must be resolved." (Note 7)

It also pointed out that "[a]s the global consumer electronic commerce market grows, online versions of ADR specially designed for B2C disputes where the parties are geographically dispersed, are increasingly becoming available." (Note 8)

In Taiwan, with a total population of 23 millions, the population of online users has already exceeded 10 millions by September 2008. (Note 9) The scale of online sales also reached the scale of approximately 8 billion US dollars, with an annual growth rate of 32%, and it was estimated to exceed 10 billion US dollars with a growth rate of 31% in 2009. (Note 10) Recognising that consumer e-commerce transactions would play an important part in Taiwan economy, the Consumer Protection Commission (CPC) of the Taiwanese government promulgated in late 2001 a '*Guideline for Consumer Protection in E-Commerce*' (Note 11) with the goals of "ensuring fair transactions, protecting consumer's interests, establishing consumer confidence in e-commerce, and promoting the development of e-commerce." (Note 12) Dispute resolution mechanisms that can provide fair, effective, swift, affordable, and accessible redress are mentioned as one major elements of consumer protection in e-commerce. (Note 13)

It is under the above background that this article is inspired to explore the issues regarding the application of ODR in consumer e-commerce dispute, with an introduction of ODR practice in Taiwan. The second part of this article will commence with discussion of basic modes of ODR mechanisms, such as online negotiation, online mediation, and online arbitration, followed by introduction of specific programmes in practice. The third part will discuss the important principles regarding establishing fair and effective ODR mechanisms. The fourth part then will apply the developed standards to examine the effectiveness of current ODR programmes in Taiwan.

2. An Overview of Online Dispute Resolution

A number of ADR models have been established since the outset of the development of out-of-court dispute resolution movement, (Note 14) the most fundamental techniques remain the same: negotiation, mediation and arbitration. (Note 15) Therefore, it is fairly understandable that ODR systems, which are generally ADR mechanisms adapted to the online environment and conducted by electronic means, could equally be sorted by the same categorisation, in combination with various online communication technologies.

2.1 Online negotiation

Negotiation is the most primitive method of dispute resolution. (Note 16) It normally involves parties engaging in the direct exchange of arguments and bargaining over the differences between them. It is generally informal, without reference to specific law or legal proceedings, and there is no third party serving as a neutral entity to facilitate the process or adjudicate the merits. As the parties themselves are in total control of their negotiation process, there would be no external rule or outside interference. The parties can choose when, where, and how to negotiate. (Note 17) Due to these characteristics, the term 'online negotiation' could be seen as a reflection of the fact that the parties opt to communicate with each other via electronic means, such as email, instant messaging, or audio or video conferencing, instead of the conventional methods such as meeting in person or telephone communication. (Note 18)

An example of ODR process employing an online negotiation technique is the SquareTrade programme, which is regarded as a major player in the ODR business because of its partnership with eBay, the online auction website, and Sony, the electronics giant. (Note 19) SquareTrade's aim is to provide a forum for consumers to settle or resolve disputes arising out of e-commerce or traditional transactions. (Note 20) SquareTrade does not charge consumer fees for the use of its online negotiation process, which can be initiated when a complaint is filed online by a disputant filling a form on its webpage. (Note 21) Once a complaint is filed, the opposite party will be informed by SquareTrade through

email. Both parties will receive a password for logging in to a secure webpage specifically created for their case. (Note 22) The parties then can participate in direct negotiation with an attempt to reach an agreement settling their difference via online communication. (Note 23) According to SquareTrade's estimation, approximately eighty percent of disputes filed are resolved by its online negotiation process. (Note 24) For the residual cases which are not settled by direct negotiation, SquareTrade offers online mediation as a back up procedure. (Note 25) Unfortunately, from 2008, SquareTrade has ceased its ODR service. (Note 26)

2.2 Online mediation

Mediation can be described as 'assisted negotiation' in which a neutral third party is involved to facilitate the dispute resolving process. (Note 27) The third party, the mediator, undertakes the task of shuttling between the disputants, in an attempt to induce them to move towards settlement. (Note 28) By moderating and rationalising the exchanged arguments, a mediator works like a communication buffer between the disputants. However, a mediator can only propose or recommend possible solutions, rather than making decisions for the disputants. (Note 29) In other words, a resolution could only be reached by the consent of the disputants, rather than the compulsory imposition by the mediator. (Note 30)

By the use of online communication programmes, mediation can be conducted over the Internet, despite the physical absence of the parties. Whether online mediation is carried out through exchange of email, discussion group, instant messaging, audio or video conferencing, or a combination of some or all of them will depend on the design of the ODR systems and the choice of the parties.

As mentioned above, before 2008, SquareTrade also provided customers with an online mediation programme to resolve disputes not settled during the prior online negotiation process. If the disputants fail to agree on a settlement through negotiating directly online, they could request the participation of a mediator as the neutral third party, a go-between, to facilitate positive, solution-oriented discussion. (Note 31) This online mediation service was not necessarily free, however. Whether it was free depends on the various 'marketplaces' where the transactions are carried out. For example, for disputes arising out of transactions via eBay, the disputants were required to pay 29.95 USD to involve a mediator from SquareTrade, whilst if Sony was involved, online mediation service was free to consumers, with Sony being charged separately. (Note 32) During the online mediation process, the mediator's task was to assist the disputants to resolve their dispute effectively. The mediator would help each party see the other's prospective, and guide them toward a solution. The mediator would ask the parties questions and provide information that helps them look at each other's needs and interests, generate their own options for settlement, and attempt to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. (Note 33) Usually such an agreement requires both parties to compromise their original claims, but it is important that the result satisfies both sides. (Note 34) Under the guidance from the mediator, the parties should be able to find a solution by themselves. If not, the mediator could recommend some solution based on the information provided by the parties and principles of fairness. (Note 35)

If a dispute was not resolved through the mediation process, the parties retain their rights to seek redress through traditional legal methods. (Note 36) However, if a settlement agreement was concluded, a binding contract would be made by the disputants. (Note 37) If either party failed to implement the agreement, enforcement could be sought through a proper national court of law. (Note 38)

SquareTrade promulgated its own standards of practice, in which it asserted the adherence to important principles concerning impartiality, competence and qualification of the neutrals, confidentiality, privacy and security, fair and transparent process, and accessibility. (Note 39) It also published ethical standards for its neutrals. (Note 40) According to its own statistics, SquareTrade had handled over 1 million disputes across 120 countries. (Note 41)

2.3 Online arbitration

Arbitration is the most formal process in the ADR family. Like mediation it also involves the participation of a neutral third party, which is the arbitrator. However, unlike a mediator, an arbitrator is, under most circumstances, empowered to adjudicate the merits and make binding decisions upon the parties with the existence of an agreement to arbitrate as a condition precedent. (Note 42) Moreover, arbitration is considered, to some extent, as a quasi-judicial process. The conducting of arbitration normally involves certain procedural rules, as the parties may exchange written documents and present evidence. Substantive laws may be referred to as the arbitrator considers the merits before rendering the award. Nevertheless, 'party autonomy' remains the underlying principle as issues like the selection of applicable laws (both procedural and substantive) and the appointment of an arbitrator are generally decided by the parties. (Note 43) In short, arbitration could be described as 'privatised' litigation as the parties involved tailor the proceedings to their will.

Although arbitration is generally more formal than other ADR models, it could still be migrated to the online environment with some proper adjustments of communication techniques. Submitting and exchanging of relevant documents between the parties and the arbitrator can be done through email (or attached files in an email programme). It can also be conducted in a discussion group environment where one party posts an argument on the webpage then the

other party posts responding messages subsequently. When more synchronous interaction is needed, instant messaging or chat room programmes can be employed to simulate a hearing. To reach the maximum degree of real time communication supported by current technology, video conferencing can provide a face-to-face hearing without the physical presence of the parties and the arbitrator.

The Uniform Domain Name Resolution Policy (UDRP) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is an example of online arbitration programme. ICANN is a private, not-for-profit corporation currently in charge of the management of the Internet's domain name system (DNS), (Note 44) under the authority of a series of understandings with the US Department of Commerce. (Note 45) One of ICANN's missions was to create a dispute settlement mechanism to provide expeditious and cost-effective resolution of conflicts regarding rights to domain names. (Note 46) In order to achieve this ICANN approved the UDRP and its procedural Rules in 1999. (Note 47) Although ICANN is a private entity with no inherent legal authority, the implementation of UDRP is ensured through agreements between the relevant participants. ICANN imposes the UDRP on domain name registrars through its accreditation agreements. The UDRP is then incorporated into the registration agreement between a registrar and a domain name holder. (Note 48)

As a result of UDRP being implanted into domain name registration agreement, a domain name holder 'represents and warrants' that, the domain name he possesses does not infringe on 'the rights of any third party' and the domain name is not registered for 'an unlawful purpose.' (Note 49) Furthermore, the domain name holder agrees to submit to a mandatory 'administrative' proceeding in the event that a third party files a complaint regarding trademark infringement against him under UDRP. (Note 50)

The UDRP in a sense serves as substantive laws deciding whether the use of a domain name causes trademark infringement as certain requirements and criteria concerning fact-intensive issues are stipulated. Firstly, in terms of the applicability of a domain name dispute, a complainant must assert and prove that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the complainant has rights, (Note 51) and that the domain name holder has no rights or legitimate interest with regard to the domain name, (Note 52) and that the domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith. (Note 53)

Secondly, the UDRP provides an illustrative list of circumstances that are evidence of 'bad faith.' These instances include that the disputed domain name was acquired primarily for the purpose of selling, renting, or otherwise transferring the domain name to a trademark holder for consideration in excess of out-of-pocket cost directly related to the domain name, (Note 54) or that the domain name was registered to prevent the trademark holder from reflecting its mark in a domain name and the domain name holder has engaged in a patter of such conduct, (Note 55) or that the domain name was registered primarily for the purpose to disrupt a competitor's business, (Note 56) or that the domain name is used with an intentional attempt to attract, for commercial gain, online users who confuse the name with a complainant's trademark. (Note 57)

A further set of criteria under the UDRP deals with an illustrative list of possible defences for the domain name holder to prove his right to and legitimate interest in the disputed domain name against the complainant if the respondent could demonstrate that, before the dispute, the domain name holder used, or made demonstrable preparation to use, the domain name in connection with a bona fide offer of goods or services, (Note 58) or that the domain name holder has been commonly known by the domain name, (Note 59) or that the domain name holder is making a legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the domain name without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark at issue. (Note 60)

As far as procedure is concerned, ICANN itself does not participate in the dispute resolution proceedings. A complainant must select an approved domain name dispute resolution service provider to file his case. Currently there are four approved providers, including Asian Domain Name Dispute Resolution Centre (ADNDRC), CPR Institute for Dispute Resolution (CPR), The National Arbitration Forum (NAF), and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). (Note 61) ICANN's Rules for UDRP and the subordinate supplemental rules of the approved providers govern the proceedings. (Note 62) According to the Rules for UDRP the initial complaint and response must be submitted in both hardcopy and electronic form. (Note 63) Subsequent communications between the disputants are to be carried out via the method chosen by the disputants, which may be fax, email, postal or courier service. (Note 64) The respondent must be notified by the provider within three calendar days after the provider receives the filing fees. (Note 65) The respondent is required to submit a response to the provider within twenty days from the commencement of the proceedings. (Note 66)

The disputants can choose between a sole arbitrator and a panel of three to hear their case, and the provider will appoint the arbitrator or panellists accordingly. (Note 67) The fees are to be paid entirely by the complainant, regardless of the number of arbitrators he chooses. (Note 68) However, if the complainant chooses to have a sole arbitrator but the respondent insists on having a three-member panel, the fees are split between the disputants. (Note 69) The fees are set by the providers and vary depending on the number of arbitrators appointed and domain name disputed. For example,

the fees charged by CPR range from 2000 USD for disputes involving one to two domain names and a sole arbitrator, to 6000 USD for disputes involving three to five domain names and a three-member panel, (Note 70) whilst WIPO charges 1500 USD for cases involving one to five domain names heard by one arbitrator, and 5000 USD for cases involving six to ten domain names heard by three-member panel. (Note 71)

During the proceedings there are no in-person hearings unless the arbitrator considers, 'as an exceptional matter,' that it is necessary to determine the complaint. (Note 72) Under most circumstances a decision shall be rendered within fourteen days of the appointment of the arbitrator or panel, (Note 73) and the decision will be published on a publicly accessible website. (Note 74) The remedies available under the UDRP are cancellation of the disputed domain name or transfer of the domain name to the complainant. (Note 75) Nevertheless, the process is not genuinely mandatory as it does not preclude the filing of a lawsuit in any competent court of law either before, during, or after the proceedings. (Note 76) The decision is not final, either, as the respondent, a domain name holder, retains the right to bring an action against an unfavourable decision in court. (Note 77)

As of 10 May 2004, there have been more than nine thousand cases filed under ICANN's UDRP. Amongst them 7790 cases involving 13,311 domain names had been disposed by decision. (Note 78)

3. Fundamental principles concerning consumer ODR

Since there are various application tools and models, when ODR mechanisms are adopted to deal with B2C e-commerce disputes, how could the participants, consumers in particular, be assured that they will benefit from the advantages of ODR, and be spared with the disadvantages of it? In other words, is there any guidance toward an ideal ODR model for B2C e-commerce dispute? What are the most fundamental principles underlying an effective and fair ODR system?

Fortunately, some studies have been conducted by various governments, international organisations and consumer advocate institutions to provide answers that address the above issues. In 2000, a joint workshop on alternative dispute resolution for online consumer transactions was held by the US Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Commerce. One of the focuses of discussion was on how to ensure fairness and effectiveness of the dispute resolution process. (Note 79) In 2001, the European Commission of the EU published a recommendation pointing out several important principles for out-of-court bodies involved in the consensual resolution of consumer disputes. (Note 80) In 2000, Consumer International, an international consumer advocate organisation, published a report in which ODR practice in cross-border consumer disputes was assessed by a set of key criteria concerning fairness and effectiveness. (Note 81) An update was subsequently published in 2001. (Note 82) From these works, at least several most common and fundamental principles could be distilled and discussed in the following sections.

3.1 Impartiality and independence

Impartiality of the neutrals is an essential element of fairness in the dispute resolution process. (Note 83) Participants, in particular the consumers, will lose confidence in a dispute resolution mechanism if they consider the neutral is biased. Independence of the neutrals from the parties and the independence of the ODR service provider from the businesses are also crucial. If an ODR system is separated and independent from the businesses, and the professionals involved (such as mediators or arbitrators) have no direct interest in the disputes, or financial or personal relationship with the disputants, the consumers are more likely to consider the ODR process to be fair. If an ODR system is financially dependent on the businesses, or the neutrals have connection with the business-disputant, it is difficult to persuade consumers to view the ODR process as impartial. Consumers may consider the process as biased and not participate at all. As a result, an ODR system failing to ensure the independence and impartiality of its neutrals would be unable to attract consumers to use its service.

In short, to ensure independence and impartiality of an ODR process for consumer disputes, it is better that the ODR service provider is independently operated. There should be a balanced governing structure, which equally presents business and consumer interests, and a neutral funding source. (Note 84) More importantly, it is essential to uphold the neutrality of the mediators and arbitrators, as they are the personnel who are actually facing the consumers and dealing with the disputes. Receiving adequate training in the form of the dispute resolution they practice and abiding by a code of conduct including rules such as conflict of interests would be the minimum requirement to achieve this goal. (Note 85) Moreover, by no means should the rewards to the neutrals be related to the outcome of the disputes. Dismissal of the neutrals should be based on justifiable causes. The appointment of neutrals to specific cases should be made by a third party (the service provider, for example), rather than the disputants. The appointment should be made randomly to avoid neutral-shopping. (Note 86) These efforts would be crucial to increase consumer confidence in ODR and encourage them to participate in ODR process.

An example of upholding independence and impartiality of the neutrals can be seen in the practice of National Arbitration Forum (NAF), (Note 87) which provides arbitration service conducted via the internet. (Note 88) In any given case, an appointed arbitrator can be disqualified if certain circumstances exist that "create a conflict of interest or

cause the [a]rbitrator to be unfair or biased." (Note 89) Also, as a general assurance, NAF established a 'code of ethics' for its neutrals to follow. (Note 90)

3.2 Affordability

From the consumers' standpoint, ODR services should optimally be free. Costs charged to consumers, whether it is pre-paid or paid-if-you-lose, may discourage consumers from participating in the ODR process. (Note 91) In reality, due to funding or profitability considerations, ODR services is not necessarily free to its users, as it has been demonstrated in previous introduction to certain ODR systems. Nevertheless, if consumers are to be charged to use ODR, it is suggested that at least the costs should be relatively low compared to the value of disputes. (Note 92) An ODR process would be literally ineffective if it costs more than the value of the dispute, as one of ODR's key advantages is that it is supposed to be less expensive than conventional litigation in national court of law. According to statistics, in the US there are around 100 million Americans denied access to the justice system due to the high cost of litigation. (Note 93) It is clear that cost affects affordability, which in turn controls access to redress. If ODR incurs unreasonable and unbearable costs to consumers, it will become unaffordable, thus unapproachable for consumers. As a result it will be impractical to adopt ODR in consumer disputes if such service is wrongfully priced.

3.3 Transparency

Availability and accessibility of information about all aspects of a dispute resolution service is also critical for consumers who intend to participate in ODR, the online version of ADR, as it is addressed that 'ADR systems should function according to published rules of procedure that describe unambiguously all relevant elements necessary to enable customers seeking redress to take fully informed decisions on whether they wish to use the ADR offered or address themselves in a court of law.'(Note 94) With such transparency, potential customers, consumers in particular, could have the opportunity to evaluate the independence and effectiveness of an ODR process. To achieve this, an ODR service provider should at least disclose, on a regular basis, general statistics on ODR activities including its procedural and substantive rules, costs, the manner of settlement or decision-making, the numbers of submitted, settled or decided disputes, and the percentage of results in favour of the consumer or business, by the nature of the disputes and the ODR model employed. When online arbitration is adopted, information pertinent to the decisions should also be published. (Note 95)

Publication of arbitration decisions is a key factor for the need of transparency in the online arbitration process. With arbitration rulings being published and examined by the general public, online arbitration's accountability could be gradually aggregated. Moreover, consumers would be able to assess previous arbitration decisions, not just to judge whether to participate in ODR, but also to decide whether to transact with specific online vendors. As far as confidentiality is concerned, publication of arbitration decision containing merely the business's name, the type of dispute, and the nature of resolution, excluding communications between the parties during the proceedings and the consumer's name, seems justifiable for the general public's good. (Note 96)

A good example of ODR provider adhering to the principle of transparency can be seen in the domain name dispute resolution process administered by the Science and Technology Law Center (STLC), a Taiwanese non-for-profit incorporation authorised by the Taiwan Network Information Center (TWNIC) to adjudicate the '.tw' domain name disputes. (Note 97) The STLC discloses its domain name dispute resolution rules, both procedural and substantive, on its website. (Note 98) In addition, a flowchart of the process is also provided so the disputants might have a clear understanding about the entire procedure. (Note 99) Moreover, a list of neutrals that may be appointed in specific cases is also published on its website. (Note 100) Finally, the STLC regularly publishes domain name dispute decisions on its website, (Note 101) so its credibility can be scrutinised by the general public.

3.4 Procedural fairness

The ODR process could be conducted in different forms, through either amicable models such as online negotiation or online mediation, where the parties try to reach mutual agreement as to how their difference could be resolved, or through adversarial models like online arbitration, where the merits are to be adjudicated by a third party. In an adjudicatory ODR process, such as online arbitration, a dispute is resolved by the decision-maker's ruling rather than the mutual compromise of the disputants. Therefore it is crucial that such an adjudicatory ODR process is designed to provide the parties with sufficient opportunity to present their case, to respond to opponent's arguments, and to receive decisions with full reasoning attached. (Note 102) Although costs and timeliness are also major concerns of the ODR process, endeavours should be made to reach the optimal balance between procedural efficiency and due process. Issues like the time limits on submissions and defences or permissible means of online communication method during the proceedings should be carefully weighted against costs and time consumption to the extent that the parties, in particular the consumer, could ultimately endure.

Procedural fairness is more important in online arbitration than in online negotiation or mediation. Disputes submitted to arbitration may involve higher values than the average B2C e-commerce transactions. They may also involve claims

based on the consumers' statutory rights. If a consumer does not know how to present his case in a legal fashion or how to make understandable and sustainable argument against the other party, he may lose his substantive rights due to procedural incompetence. In other words, consumers having very little or no experience in any form of dispute resolution process, including arbitration, are very likely to lose their substantive claims due to procedural inexperience, if no processional assistance, such as attorney, is available. The arbitrators have to remain neutral to both of the parties under the requirement of impartiality, thus they are not allowed to grant any procedural favour to the consumer even if the consumer is indeed in need of legal assistance. Unless the value of the dispute in question reaches a certain amount that thereby necessitating the hiring of a lawyer, the consumer will have to prepare the case on his own. The merchants, on the other hand, may have already engaged in a business operation for a certain period of time, and aggregated considerable experience in arbitral proceedings. Therefore, be it with or without legal representation, the merchant will almost certainly stand on a more advantageous position in the arbitral proceedings than the consumer. Such 'repeat-player' advantage may be inherent in the business-consumer relationship, but it is not justifiable. The repeat-player advantage of the business side has to be mitigated. Otherwise it would be unfair for consumers participating in arbitration to lose their substantive claims simply because of procedural inexperience.

3.5 Effectiveness

Two issues should be taken into account as the requirement of an effective ODR process. Firstly, as far as time consumption is concerned, the parties generally welcome a swift resolution of the dispute. Under most circumstances, it is fairly reasonable to suppose that disputants would like to settle their differences in a timely manner. A speedy ODR process is especially essential to consumers as they would not opt to engage in a prolonged ODR process just to settle disputes of relatively small monetary value. Other issues include whether there should be binding effects on the decision made by the neutral, and if so how such a binding decision could be enforced if the losing party fails to implement it voluntarily. Take online arbitration for example, there were divergent opinions as to whether there should be binding arbitration decisions for consumer disputes. Binding arbitration could produce a final decision which cannot be challenged unless under very limited conditions. Some suggested that therefore binding arbitration provides consumers with certainty, finality and efficiency. (Note 103) Others opposed the idea of binding arbitration because it deprives consumers the right to sue in a national court of law. (Note 104)

As far as the binding effect of arbitration is concerned, it is suggested that an arbitration decision be binding only on the business but not the consumer, who is entitled to pursue civil proceedings in national court of law if they are not pleased with the arbitrator's ruling. (Note 105) It is argued that such an imbalance is justifiable as it could increase consumer trust and confidence in e-commerce. (Note 106) In reality, under most circumstances, a consumer would only file a lawsuit again a business if the consumer lost his claim in the preceding arbitration. In this case even if the consumer is still allowed to sue in a court of law, the financial burden and time consumption remains a challenge for the consumer. Considering the asymmetry in terms of resources between businesses and consumers, such a proposal is not necessarily an overstatement. The enforcement of an arbitral award in the case of non-compliance with the result of the arbitration is also a difficult task in the context of international consumer disputes.

4. ODR in Taiwan

From the above paragraphs, examples of ODR programmes in operation have been introduced, and principles concerning effective ODR mechanisms have been discussed. The next phase is to examine the effectiveness of ODR programmes in Taiwan. However, before the discussion begins, it would be useful to introduce the laws regarding ADR under the Taiwanese legal system.

4.1 The laws regulating ADR

With regard to arbitration, the first issue would be the arbitrability of consumer disputes. According to the Taiwanese Arbitration Act, a given dispute can only be submitted to arbitration if it can be settled by the disputants in accordance with the law. (Note 107) This generally means that a dispute is arbitrable if the rights or obligations involved are disposable by the parties, given that such disposition is not against the mandatory rules of the law nor public policy. (Note 108) Accordingly, issues of commercial and civil nature, excluding matters of family law and inheritance, are allowed to be arbitrated.

The second issue is about the legitimacy of conducting of arbitral proceedings via online communication. In this regard, the Taiwanese arbitration act reads that "the rules regarding arbitral proceedings of this act are applicable where the parties have no agreement on procedural issues." (Note 109) If the parties submit their dispute to an arbitration institution, which provides arbitration rules using online communication mechanisms, such institutional rules will take priority to the provisions of the Taiwanese Arbitration Act.

A final issue is with regard to the recognition of the legal effective of arbitral proceedings conducted via electronic means. According to the Taiwanese Electronic Signature Act, any data that is processed and recorded in electronic form can be regarded as "document in writing" as long as its content can be demonstrated via electronic agent. (Note 110) So

an electronic document is equally valid as a document in writing. Moreover, as long as the parties agree, the exchange of electronic documents between the parties is recognised as with full legal force. (Note 111) In short, there is no legal obstacle for arbitration to be conducted via the internet.

With regard to mediation, the relevant legislations regulating ADR for consumer dispute are the Taiwanese Local Government Mediation Ordinance, and the Taiwanese Consumer Protection Act. The former establishes 'Mediation Committee' under the organisation of various local governments, providing mediation service for all types of civil and commercial disputes, (Note 112) while the later authorises consumer advocate organisations the competence to mediate specifically consumer disputes. (Note 113) There is no specific procedural rule regarding the conducting of mediation proceedings under both laws. However, it is worth noting that a settlement agreement made under the mediation process is with the same legal force as a final civil judgement rendered by the state court, (Note 114) which means that such settlement agreement can be enforced as a final civil judgement should one party fail to perform his obligation under it. According to article 46, second paragraph, of the Consumer Protection Act, the binding force of the settlement agreement provided under the Local Government Mediation Ordinance is also applicable to mediation conducted by private consumer advocate organisation in accordance with the Consumer Protection Act. As a result, both mediation processes could produce binding result.

4.2 ODR programmes in operation

With regard to ODR practice, there are currently two ODR programmes in operation. The SOSA, considering one of its missions as to 'facilitate the resolution of disputes between consumers and online merchants,' (Note 115) provides an online mediation process, which allows consumers to file complaints electronically on SOSA's ODR webpage. (Note 116) Another ODR service provider is the Net Consumers Association, (Note 117) which in 2006 implemented a 'Shoppers Compensation Scheme' providing online complaint filing for mediation process. Member merchants of the Net Consumers Association have to deposit a fixed sum of money into the Association's designated bank account as the compensation fund. If the result of mediation recommends compensation for the consumer, the association will pay directly from the compensation fund. (Note 118)

Both SOSA and the Net Consumers Association are non-for-profit corporations recognised by the Consumer Protection Act and are competent in handling consumer disputes. (Note 119) The only problem with them is that they may not be able to handle disputes involving foreign merchants as currently their member merchants are domestic businesses only. (Note 120)

5. Conclusion

This article has examined various types of ODR processes. Online negotiation means direct communication between the parties via electronic means. The online negotiation process provided by SquareTrade is an example. Online mediation involves a neutral third party communicating with and between the parties by online means to facilitate negotiation and encourage the parties to reach a settlement. SquareTrade also provides online mediation for disputes not resolved by its online negotiation process. Online arbitration also involves a neutral third party, the arbitrator. The duty of the arbitrator is to hear the arguments of the parties and make a decision on the merits of the dispute. Submission of documents may be carried out via email attachment or file transfer programmes. Text-based hearings could be conducted in a purpose-built chat room or instant messaging programme. Live hearings, if necessary, could be held with the use of Internet conferencing, where face-to-face communication may be reconstructed.

Amongst the various ODR mechanisms, there are certain principles that have to be followed. The neutrals involved must be impartial and independent. The ODR services must be affordable for the parties. The dispute resolution process must be transparent. The proceedings must be fair. As far as effectiveness is concerned, the dispute resolution process should not be protracted beyond a reasonable period of time, and the result must be implemented.

In Taiwan, a significant percentage of online users participate in B2C e-commerce transactions. ODR programmes can serve as an alternative to civil proceedings should disputes arise. Thus complicated legal issues can be avoided and consumer confidence can be enhanced. Under the Taiwanese legal framework, the law does not prohibit the conducting of ADR processes over the internet. The legal status of electronic data transmitted during the ODR proceedings is also recognised as having the same legal force as writing documents. There is no legal obstacle for ODR in Taiwan. However, currently there are only two private ODR service providers in operation. There is still room for ODR development in Taiwan.

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Note 2. For more discussion regarding problems of bringing online disputes before a court of law, see Ponte, L. & Cavenagh, T. (2005). *Cyberjustice: Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) for E-Commerce*, pp.12-13.

Note 3. US FTC and DOC, (2000), Joint Workshop on Alternative Dispute Resolution for Online Consumer Transactions, introduction. [Online] Available: http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/altdisresolution/ (March 30, 2009).

Note 4. European Commission, (2001), Commission Recommendation 2001/310/EC of 4 April 2001 on the Principles for Out-of-Court Bodies Involved in the Consensual Resolution of Consumer Disputes [2001] OJ L109/56, preamble (2).

Note 5. UNCTAD, (2003), E-Commerce and Development Report 2003, p.177.

Note 6. ibid.

Note 7. Consumer International, (2000), Disputes in Cyberspace: Online Dispute Resolution for Consumers in Cross-Border Disputes - An International Survey, p.6.

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Note 12. ibid, II. Purpose.

Note 13. ibid, VIII. Consumer Dispute Resolution.

Note 14. 'Expert determination,' eg, is a process where an expert in a specific profession serves to make a binding decision. See the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb), About ADR. [Online] Available: http://www.drs-ciarb.com/aboutadr.asp (March 30, 2009). Mini-trial, another form of ADR, normally involves corporate executives from business disputants confronting each other with the revelation of the strengths and weaknesses of both sides' respective arguments. See Redfern, A. & Hunter, M. (2004). *Law and Practice of International Commercial Arbitration*, p.47.

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Note 16. Redfern, A. & Hunter, M., (note 14), p.31.

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Note 28. Redfern, A. & Hunter, M., (note 14), p.33.

Note 29. Consumer International, (note 7), p.9.

Note 30. Rule, Colin, (note 15), p.41.

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Note 33. SquareTrade, Frequently Asked Question, Mediation, What does a Mediator do. [Online] Available: http://www.squaretrade.com/cnt/jsp/hlp/odr.jsp?vhostid=chipotle&stmp=squaretrade&cate=4&ques=5 (December 30, 2007).

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Note 43. Rule, Colin, (note 15), pp.42-43.

Note 44. The DNS serves to help online users surf the Internet. Every computer connected to the Internet has a unique address called Internet Protocol (IP) address. IP addresses are a string of numbers (the IP address of the computer hosting ICANN's website is 190.0.34.65), which are not easy to memorise. The DNS transforms a string of numbers into a corresponding string of letters (www.icann.org), called domain names, so that it would be easier to memorise and locate a website. See ICANN, What is the Domain Name System. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/general/ (March 30, 2009).

Note 45. ICANN, Fact Sheet. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/general/fact-sheet.html (March 30, 2009).

Note 46. ICANN, ICANN's Accomplishments. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/general/ (March 30, 2009).

Note 47. ICANN, UDRP. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/dndr/udrp/policy.htm (March 30, 2009); ICANN, Rules for UDRP. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/dndr/udrp/uniform-rules.htm (March 30, 2009).

Note 48. Domain name registrars are companies authorised by ICANN to assign new domain names to registrants. Registrars must be accredited by ICANN, and they must agree to abide by ICANN's rules. One of the rules requires the registrars to incorporate the UDRP into the registration agreement between the registrar and the domain name holder. See ICANN, Registrar Accreditation: Process, para 4. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/registrars/accreditation-process.htm (March 30, 2009). See also ICANN, Registrar Accreditation Agreement, s 3.8: <u>Domain Name Dispute Resolution</u>. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/registrars/ra-agreement-17may01.htm#3 (March 30, 2009). Paragraph 1 of the UDRP informs domain name holders that the dispute resolution policy is 'incorporated by reference into your registration agreement.' ICANN, UDRP, para 1: <u>Purpose</u>.

Note 49. ICANN, UDRP, para 2.

Note 50. ibid para 4.a.

Note 51. ibid para 4.a.(i).

Note 52. ibid para 4.a.(ii).

Note 53. ibid para 4.a.(iii).

Note 54. ibid para 4.b.(i).

Note 55. ibid para 4.b.(ii).

Note 56. ibid para 4.b.(iii).

Note 57. ibid para 4.b.(iv).

Note 58. ibid para 4.c.(i).

Note 59. ibid para 4.c.(ii).

Note 60. ibid para 4.c.(iii).

Note 61. ICANN, Approved Providers for UDRP. [Online] Available: http://www.icann.org/dndr/udrp/approved-providers.htm (March 30, 2009).

Note 62. ICANN, Rules for UDRP, preface and s 1.

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Note 65. ibid s 4.(a).

Note 66. ibid s 5.(a).

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Note 69. ibid s 6.(c).

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Note 73. ibid s.15.(b).

Note 74. ibid s.16.(b). The published decisions can be found on ICANN's website. See ICANN, Proceedings. [Online]

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Note 75. ICANN, UDRP, para 4.(i).

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Teaching Vocabulary in Chinese Universities: What and How?

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Abstract

One of the major tasks of tertiary English teachers is to enlarge the students' vocabulary size; therefore, it is necessary for the teachers to explore the answers to two major questions concerning vocabulary instruction. What vocabulary should we focus on? And how can we teach vocabulary in the classroom? In order to answer these two questions, this essay reviews the previous western research in the area. By so doing it divides English vocabulary into four groups - high frequency words, academic vocabulary, technical vocabulary and low frequency words - and points out the favorable learning sequence and different focuses. It also provides the teachers with a series of vocabulary learning methodologies as well as the underlined theories.

Keywords: Vocabulary instruction, Vocabulary size, Teaching methodologies

1. Introduction

With the globalization of the trade and culture in China, English as a global language (Nunan, 2003) plays a more and more important role in Chinese daily life and grasping the language has become one of the essential abilities of most Chinese graduates. As fundamental components of the language, English vocabulary as well as its grammar is of critical importance to language learners (Lewis, 1997; Zimmerman, 1997). Since Chinese students have systematically learnt English grammar but not vocabulary in their high schools, lexical development becomes the major task in their tertiary English study. Therefore, it is necessary for tertiary English teachers to explore the answers to two major questions concerning vocabulary instruction. What vocabulary should we focus on? And how can we teach vocabulary in the classroom?

2. What vocabulary should we focus on?

How many words are there in English? If we use the notion of word family, which consists of "a basic word, inflected forms, and transparent deviations" (Nation & Waring, 1997, p.7), *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, as the largest non-historical English dictionary, contains "around 114,000 word families excluding proper names" (Nation, 2001, p.6). However, people cannot realistically know all the words in a dictionary. The vocabulary size of an educated native speaker is "around 20,000 word families" (Nation, 2001, p.9). However, most English learners cannot grasp and nor do they need this size of vocabulary to communicate effectively in a wide variety of contexts.

English teachers are advised to teach their learners a comparatively small amount of vocabulary according to the learners' specific needs (Nation, 2001). In other words, teachers need to guide their learners to spend time on the vocabulary that will bring the most benefits for learning. In order to help L2 teaching and learning, Coxhead and Nation (2001) have divided English vocabulary into four categories: high frequency words, academic vocabulary, technical vocabulary and low frequency words. English teachers need to know which group of vocabulary items they should focus on.

Many western researchers (e.g. Coxhead, 2000; Nation, 2001; Nation & Newton, 1997; Sökmen, 1997) agree that the

high frequency 2,000 words, accounting for more than 85% of the running words in any text, are the first choice for English learners and deserve considerable time and attention. Therefore, as it is suggested, tertiary English teachers should make sure that their students have grasped these words before moving to next level of vocabulary. They can base their teaching on Michael West's (1953) *General Service List of English Words* (GSL), which covers 90% tokens of fiction texts, 75% of nonfiction texts and 76% of academic ones (Coxhead, 2000). It is the basis of the high frequency word list contributed by Nation (1996). However, Williams (2004) argues for a "frequency paradox" - since the high frequency 2,000 words are common in any text, it is the rest less than 20% running words that convey the unique meaning of one specific text.

The academic vocabulary list is suitable for next stage of vocabulary instruction. As Nation and Newton (1997) suggest, academic vocabulary is for learners who "intend to do academic study or wish to read newspapers" (p.239). For example, the Academic Word List (AWL), developed by Coxhead (2000), only contains 570 word families but covers 12.0% running words of commerce, 9.3% of arts, 9.4% of law and 9.1% of science. Also, "67% of the word families in the AWL occur in 25 or more of the [all] 28 subject areas, and 94% occur in 20 or more" (Coxhead, 2000, p.222). Considering most college students in China are educated to be specialists in one subject area, the AWL is a valuable tool to provide them with access to academic English sources. Moreover, according to frequency, the AWL has been divided into 10 sub-lists so it is convenient for English teachers to set short-term learning goals for their students (Coxhead, 2000).

Technical vocabulary, which consists of approximately 1,000 words and covers 5% of the total texts, is useful within a specialized field but differs from one subject area to another (Coxhead & Nation, 2001). In China, many majors learn specific English (e.g. automobile English) and these technical words, together with the words in the AWL, satisfy the students' particular needs.

Low frequency vocabulary is for learners who "intend to use English for social purposes, for occupations that do not require the reading of academic text, or for reading novels and popular magazines" (Nation & Newton, 1997, p.239). For example, as a cleaner, one needs to know the words like *mop, broom, sink, hand base, and block*. However, because these words may occur only once or twice in readings during a long period of time (Coxhead & Nation, 2001) and usually learners can guess their meanings from the context (Nation & Newton, 1997), it is not worthwhile for English teachers as well as college students to spend too much time on them.

To summarize, Coxhead and Nation's (2001) division answers the question which vocabulary to focus on, and provides Chinese English teachers and English examination designers with a very useful guide. They may want to help the students learn the 2,000 high frequency words and the 570 academic words first, because these words cover nearly 90% tokens in most academic readings (Coxhead & Nation, 2001). When supplemented by proper nouns and technical vocabulary, the students can recognize 95% running words, which guarantee their reading comprehension (Coxhead & Nation, 2001).

3. How can we teach vocabulary in the classroom?

As L2 learners, Chinese students need not grasp as many English words as native speakers, but they still feel frustrated when memorizing or learning thousands of words. Therefore, it is helpful to teach students some vocabulary learning techniques and there are many western studies concerning vocabulary-teaching methodologies as well (e.g. Coady, 1997; Hulstijn, 1997; Nation & Newton, 1997; Sökmen, 1997).

3.1 Explicit teaching and vocabulary learning

Sökmen (1997) focuses on explicit teaching and employs three theories to illustrate vocabulary instruction. Firstly, according to lexico-semantic theory, "the human lexicon is, therefore, believed to be a network of associations, a web-like structure of interconnected links" (Sökmen, 1997, p.241). Based on similar or different word meanings, teachers can help their students to establish the links between the to-be-learned word and words already known. Strategies like semantic feature analysis, semantic mapping, ordering or classifying words and pictorial schemata can all be used to set up memory traces between each word. However, Nation and Newton (1997) argue that the way of word storage cannot determine the way of word acquisition and learning the related words together is likely to cause confusion. Therefore, teachers should be cautious of using these strategies. It is more suitable to use them when teaching individual word or when reviewing words.

Secondly, theories of human memory highlight the significance of recalling words, which can lead to better retention. Usually rehearsal at increasingly longer intervals has better results for long-term storage than rehearsal at regular intervals, which is better than "massive rehearsal at infrequent intervals" (Hulstijn, 1997, p.219; Sökmen, 1997). If students recall the word with its associated words, their learning will be more effective (Hulstijn, 1997). Moreover, grasping a word is more than remembering the form and meaning. In order to learn its different semantic features, collocations and other information, "a range of 5-16 encounters" is necessary (Sökmen, 1997, p.241). Therefore, on the one hand, teachers can relax their students by making them know that they need more encounters to remember a word;

on the other hand, teachers can intentionally create more opportunities for their students to recall words.

Thirdly, the dual coding theory of human memory suggests the need to create verbal and nonverbal memory links to enhance the effects of vocabulary learning. That is to say, teachers can use pictures, illustrations or diagrams to assist instruction. Also they can relate the words to current events, past experiences or anything else in real life.

3.2 Communicative activities and vocabulary learning

Nation and Newton (1997) regard communicative activities as efficient in learning vocabulary. Communicative activities provide a platform for students to carry out meaningful conversations. Through these activities, experts may scaffold novices to learn new words, new items may occur several times, and novices may have the chance to use the words productively. There are a number of different activities, for example, split information activities, ranking information activities and ask-and-answer activities. As Nation and Newton (1997) explain, psychologically most students can be brave enough to expose errors or express misunderstandings to their interlocutors or group members. Hulstijn (1997) adds that language production may facilitate students' comprehension.

Nation and Newton (1997) also provide teachers with three guidelines of how to choose and place vocabulary in communicative activities. Firstly there should be few new words in the instructions so as not to hinder the progress of the task. Secondly unfamiliar vocabulary should occur within meaningful contexts, which enables learners to guess the word meaning. Thirdly if the vocabulary is very difficult, pre-explanation or a gloss is necessary. In addition, Nation and Newton (1997) encourage teachers to incorporate split information activities and ranking information activities: the former elicits an evenly shared conversation and attracts students' attention on word forms; the latter prompts meaning negotiation and deep comprehension.

3.3 Extensive reading and vocabulary learning

Coady (1997) asserts that if students are familiar with the 3,000 most frequent words, extensive reading can be an effective way for them to acquire vocabulary. Eskey (2005) also argues that if readers encounter less than one unknown word in every twenty words, they will not feel frustrated and are likely to continue reading. Therefore, choosing reading materials with appropriate difficulty level is of vital importance to enlarge the student's vocabulary: the texts should be somewhat challenging but cannot exceed the reader's lexical competence too much.

It is also important to choose the right reading materials. Chinese English teachers are likely to encourage their students to read English novels after class. However, from Coxhead's (2000) research, we can see that only 1.4% running words in English novels are academic vocabulary. That is to say, reading novels is not a beneficial way to improve students' academic vocabulary.

Finally, interest is the best teacher. Teachers should allow students to choose their own readings in order to make sure that the students are enthusiastic with their reading.

4. Implications

One of the main objectives of tertiary English courses in China is to enlarge students' vocabulary. Therefore, it is of vital importance for tertiary English teachers to make clear their vocabulary teaching focus and to grasp a series of vocabulary teaching methodologies. Based on the above review, we would like to provide the following suggestions:

First and most important, teachers need to consider their teaching focus and sequence. The high frequency 2,000 words (e.g. Nation, 1996), which are the starting point of any English learning, should be adopted as the first choice and given enough attention. The academic vocabulary list (e.g. the AWL devised by Coxhead, 2000), which is the basis of academic English, can be used to facilitate students' academic study. Together with the high frequency vocabulary and technical vocabulary, it provides enough knowledge for students to study in any specific area. However, the low frequency words, usually in novels and popular magazines, are not worthwhile to teach.

Moreover, teachers need to flexibly employ different methods in class to facilitate vocabulary learning. They can use semantic strategies to help students build up links between individual words in their memory. They can intentionally elicit students to recall words during class. They can also use visual aids or relate words to social events to enhance students' memory. Communicative activities (e.g. split information activities, ranking information activities and ask-and-answer activities) are another effective vocabulary teaching strategy, but teachers need to choose appropriate words and contexts. Extensive reading can help vocabulary learning as well, but teachers need to control the difficulty level of materials, provide the right readings and involve students' active participation. Of course, there are many other ways of teaching vocabulary and teachers can also develop their own methods according to the features of their classes.

5. Conclusion

Vocabulary instruction, as well as grammar, is of critical importance, especially in Chinese universities. Therefore, as college English teachers, we need to answer two major questions concerning vocabulary teaching: what vocabulary should we focus on? And how can we teach vocabulary in the classroom? By reviewing recent western research, we

suggest teachers teach vocabulary in a sequence according to learners' needs. Also we have listed a range of vocabulary learning techniques, and discussed the theories behind them and their learning contexts. Hopefully by so doing we can prompt more thinking and more effective teaching strategies on vocabulary instruction.

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Community Perceptions toward Economic and

Environmental Impacts of Tourism on Local Communities

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Abstract

This paper investigates the community perceptions toward economic and environmental impacts of tourism in Shiraz, Iran. Special focus is on the differences in perceptions between the Old and New Districts of Shiraz. The study demonstrates that there are broadly similar views among the community leaders and community residents from both districts of Shiraz. In fact, a high percentage of the answers obtained highlighted positive aspects environmental and economic impacts of tourism toward local communities. According to the survey, the strongest and favourable perceptions toward tourism impacts are found to be linked with environmental aspects and while economic matters are found to be the least favourable in terms of the perceived impacts on tourism. T-test analysis of the study indicates that there is no significant difference between community leaders' perceptions in both districts of Shiraz City. Results drew from discussion with the target group show that the community residents have positive perceptions toward economic and environmental impacts of tourism with only minor differences with each other.

Keywords: Community perception, Economic impacts, Environmental impacts, Local communities

1. Introduction

A number of studies in recent years have examined host residents' perceptions of the impact of tourism towards their community. Many local communities recognize that tourism can stimulate change in social, cultural, environmental and economic dimensions, where tourism activities have had a close connection with the local communities (Beeton, 2006; Richards & Hall, 2000). Understanding and assessing tourism impacts in local communities is important in order to maintain sustainability and long-term success of the tourism industry (Diedrich & Garcı´a-Buades, 2008). A major reason for rising interest in the area has been the evidences that tourism leads not only to be positive, but also has the potential for negative, outcomes at the local level (Lankford & Howard, 1994). It is generally felt that community perceptions toward tourism impacts are likely to be an important planning and policy consideration for successful

tourism development (Ap, 1992). Numerous studies on community residents' perceptions of tourism impacts have been conducted (Andereck et al., 2005; Ap, 1990, 1992; Ap & Crompton, 1993; Brown & Giles, 1994; Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Johnson et al., 1994; Liu et al., 1987; Liu & Var1986; Pizam, 1978; Ritchie, 1993; Robson & Robson, 1996; Ryan & Montgomery, 1994; Seid, 1994; Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001; Sheldon & Var, 1984; Sirakaya et al., 2001; Teye et al., 2002; Upchurch & Teivane, 2000). All these studies are performed by Western researchers. Thus, the relevance of the findings in the Iranian context may not be fitting. To date, very little research has examined residents' perceived impacts of tourism toward the local communities in Iran (Zamani-Farahani & Musa, 2008). In point of case, local communities in Shiraz, Iran have never been studied of such. Thus, there is limited understanding of residents' perceptions of tourism impacts toward local communities and also very few research has been done here on the process of tourism in Iran. Hence the purpose of this study is to examine community perceptions toward economic and environmental impacts of tourism

2. Study area

The study was conducted on local communities in city of Shiraz, Iran. Shiraz is located in Fars province; a central area for Persian civilization. Shiraz has a moderate climate and has been a regional trade centre for more than a thousand years. Shiraz is known as the city of poets, wine and flowers. It is also considered by many Iranians to be the city of gardens, because of the many gardens and fruit trees that can be seen in the city. The crafts of Shiraz consist of inlaid mosaic work of triangular design; silver-ware; pile carpet-weaving and weaving of Kilim, called Gilim and Jajim in the villages and among the tribes (Wikipedia, 2009). Shiraz has a population of more than 1,000,000 people; it is situated in south-western region of Iran, in the inlands of about 200 km from the Persian Gulf, at an elevation of 1,800 meters above sea level (Cultural Heritage News Agency, 2004). As one of the oldest Iranian cities (approximately 2,500 years old), Shiraz is listed as a world heritage site and accommodates many of Iran's most outstanding tourist attractions. Shiraz's archaeology, cultural heritage, traditions, and natural characteristics are among the main factors which attract inbound tourists to Shiraz. According to department of tourism in Shiraz, the majority of the tourists who came to Shiraz were mainly from the neighboring countries. Additionally, the majority of tourist visas granted in 2008 were obtained by Asian Muslims, who presumably intended to visit important pilgrimage places in Shiraz. Shiraz has a lot of opportunities in building various forms of tourism activities. However, it is believed that Shiraz does not exploit to the maximum its potentials of tourist attractions in developing its tourism sector. Meanwhile, Shiraz Tourism Department has been formulating a policy on tourism development under the community development programs. In this policy, tourism is one of the priorities of community development programs. Shiraz's economy also relies on tourism industry. According to available statistics, a total of 843,700 visitors were recorded in 2007 in Shiraz whom 70,400 were foreigners (Shiraz Tourism Department, 2008). Table 1 shows statistics of tourists that were noted in Shiraz city. These statistics show those who stay in hotels, guest houses and inns in Shiraz. Also noted were tourists who stayed in at their relatives'.

3. Literature review

Tourism if often referred to as the world's largest industry and regarded as a means of achieving community development (Sharpley, 2002). According to the World Tourism Organization (2009), tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industry and one of the global engines of development. One of the most popular topics of tourism is tourism impact studies toward the community. The understanding of community's perceptions on tourism impacts is important (Ap, 1992). A main reason for the rising interest has been the increasing evidence that tourism can both have positive and negative impacts on local communities involved (Lankford & Howard, 1994). Different perceptions from different residents can provide insight into the nature and degree of tourism impacts towards the respective tourist destination. The community perceptions on tourism impacts are likely to be an important planning for successful community development (Ko & Stewart, 2002).

Tourism was encouraged first because of its economic impacts. Tourism is an engine for generating a range of new private and public income opportunities. The most immediate and direct benefit of tourism development is the creation of jobs and the opportunity for people to increase their income and standard of living in local communities. Hence local communities turn to tourism as a means of raising income, increase employment and living standards (Akis et al., 1996). These impacts are observable as tourists interact with the local environment, economy, and community. Hence, it is apt to consider the impacts of tourism under the headings of economic and environmental impacts. The impacts of tourism can either be positive and beneficial, or negative and detrimental to the local community. The economic impacts of tourism are the most widely researched impacts of tourism on community (Mason, 2003). Economic impacts are easier to research in a local community because it is small and generally easier to assess. Tourism can have positive economic effects on local economies, and a visible impact on national GDP growth. It can be also an essential component for both community development and poverty reduction (Ashe, 2005). The economic impacts of tourism are therefore, generally perceived positively by the residents (Tatoglu et al., 2000).

The environment is being increasingly recognized as a key element in tourism (Liu et al., 1987). Many community attractions and tourism offerings have a reliance on the natural and man-made resources (Starr, 2002). The environmental impacts of tourism on community can take the form of both the quality of the physical environment and access to these resources in which positive environmental impacts of tourism on a community (Liu et al., 1987; Mason, 2003). Tourism provides a reason to preserve the natural scenery and man-made historic sites, traditional towns and neighbourhoods, villages, lighthouses, harbours and fishing piers (Cohen, 1978). Conversely, negative environmental impacts which are frequently highlighted include littering, overcrowding, traffic congestion as well as pollution of, water and soil along with the deterioration of natural resources as a result of the constructions of tourism services, such as erections of hotels (Liu et al., 1987; Mason, 2003).

4. Research methodology

The local communities selected for this study is based on the researchers' familiarity with Shiraz. This study examined community perceptions toward economic and environmental impacts of tourism in Shiraz during the summer of 2008. For the purposes of the study, Shiraz is divided to two major areas: the Old Shiraz (Historical area) and the New Shiraz (Modern area). Eighty six communities are located in Old Shiraz, whereas 92 communities are located in New Shiraz. The most interesting buildings in Shiraz are located in the old district of the town. In the Old Shiraz, one can find many historical artifacts including monuments, gates, and old buildings, whereas new and modern edifices including shopping complexes and hotels are located in New Shiraz (Aref et al., 2009).

This study is based on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate the community perceptions toward tourism impacts. The research study use survey questionnaires, focus groups discussion (FGD). Surveys are particularly useful to study economic and environmental impacts of tourism. Qualitative research methods nowadays are widely used in tourism research e.g. Esterby-Smith et al. (2002), Miles & Huberman (1994), and Walle (1997) in tourism research, anthropologists and sociologists have used qualitative research (Decrop, 1999; Riley & Love, 2000). When it comes to economy, geography, psychology or marketing, researchers tend to use quantitative approaches (Decrop, 1999). Furthermore, according to Riley (1996) The majority of tourism research has relied on structured surveys. The qualitative methods are used explicitly in the exploratory stage to initiate and provide information for further quantitative investigation or to subordinate and enhance the empirical findings. Walle (1997, p. 528) explained that as tourism is becoming a multidisciplinary field, tourism researchers should explore the variety of tools and techniques available to them. Consequently, the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods in tourism is both useful and appropriate. Triangulation of research methods is commonly used in tourism research. For example, Corey (1996) used FGD techniques and questionnaires. To achieve the objectives of this study the concurrent triangulation strategy was adopted. According to Creswell (2003) this approach uses quantitative and qualitative methods separately to balance the weaknesses of one with the strengths of the other. Moreover, the results of the two methods are integrated during the interpretation stage, which allows ratifying and cross validating the findings of the study. Furthermore, the process of gathering the data is quicker than any other strategy mentioned above. Findings that are based on several different sources of information following this type of corroboratory mode are likely to be much more reliable (Yin, 1994).

The questionnaire was structured around a Likert scale. The items for community perceptions toward tourism impacts were taken from these studies (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Liu & Var, 1986; Milman & Pizam, 1988; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1987; Pizam, 1978). The respondents answered to each statement based on five scales. The value of each response for these items on the questionnaire is as follows: 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = not sure 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree. Ko & Stewart (2002) and Maddox (1985), recommended the use of a Likert type scale in tourism research due to its high validity. Then, the questionnaire was piloted tested to have its content validated by several reviewers of Persian background. Statements for tourism impacts were tested for their validity using Cronbach's alpha. The participants in the pilot test had relatively diverse demographic characteristics, especially with regards to community. To test the proposed objective, this study employed statistical techniques such as descriptive statistic and t-test. The t-test was employed to test to determine whether there were significant differences among group mean totals and item mean scores. Means and standard deviations are the descriptive statistics used in discussing the distribution of responses gathered during the quantitative component of this study. To assess the normality of the distribution of the data, the skewness and kurtosis of each variable were also examined. According to George & Mallery (2002) if the coefficient of the skewness and kurtosis falls between -0.5 and +0.5 inclusive, then the distribution appears to be relatively symmetric which in this study skewness was .254 and Kurtosis -.211.

The data for this study was collected from two independent sampling frames. These two samples were drawn from populations that include local residents, and community leaders. Community leaders in Shiraz where chosen as the sample population for this survey because they represent "the voice of the people of concern (Eng & Parker, 1994). Community leaders are able to speak for the community because they have special knowledge of the community being studied because of their roles in that community (Eyler et al., 1999; Thompson, Lichtenstein, Corbett, Nettekoven, & Feng, 2000; Von Kroff et al., 1992; Warheit, Bulh, & Bell, 1978). For this study community leader was defined as one

who can influence policy, opinion, or community action because of their role, title, or position in the community. Community leaders were identified in each community accepting funding by the Shiraz municipality.

The data collection process in this research involved a variety of methods which included collecting data in the field through questionnaires, FGD, and using secondary data and information. The primary data collection is based on survey questionnaires. The major method used in this research to collect data is the use of questionnaires. A questionnaire interview is a data instrument that each respondent fills out as part of participating in a research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). The questionnaire is structured around a type of scale like the Likert scale. The Likert scale is most common because it is easy for the researcher to construct and administer and it is suitable for the respondent to understand. Likert scale also commonly used in marketing research (Grover & Vriens, 2006). Part of the data and information needed to gather through reviewing the documents and reports published by governmental organizations related to tourism in Iran. It must be emphasized. However, that most of these documents and reports are prepared by the government and tried to justify the new tourism activities, although they provided valuable information about the tourism development. For achieve the objectives also ten FGD were held at local mosque, and local school. FGD participants were selected from local community in the old and new areas of Shiraz. Five FGD were scheduled in the new district and also five FGD in old district. By examining these variables, I hoped to answer some additional questions for support qualitative data.

5. Results

As noted earlier, the unit of analyses is divided by two Districts; Old and New. The Old district includes 84 communities, which are located on the central part of Shiraz whereas the New district consists of 91 communities, which are modern and smaller in population. Overall response rate was 48% from the Old community and 52% from the New part of Shiraz. Out of 175 leaders who responded, 5.14% were female and 94.86% were male participants, with an average age of 53.12 years. Of all the respondents, 26.36% said their highest level of education earned was a diploma and 42.86% had a bachelor's degree. More than 60% of the respondents had engaged in tourism activities. Median income range of the respondents was 500$. However, there were 12% who earned less than 350$, and 8% who make more than 750$ per month. Participants' gender composition, age, education level and income did not differ significantly. Moreover, two question were used to collect information regarding respondents' attitude towards the most important types of tourism activates. For most important types of tourism activities they illustrated Handicrafts with (34.9%), Nature 10.3%, and Culture (e.g. visiting archaeological sites, festivals) 41.7%, Business 10.9% and Medical Services 2.3 %.

Community perceptions toward economic and environmental impacts of tourism were measured using a 10-item, five point Likert type scale. Descriptive statistics revealed that respondents from both parts of Shiraz rated higher on positive statements and lower on negative statements, indicating consistency in the direction of their perceptions.

Table 2 shows community leaders' perceptions toward the perceived economic and environmental impacts of tourism. Based on the mean measures of impact items, the impact items associated with economic impacts have the lowest scores. Some of the economic impacts, which are most favored by residents, are as follows: "benefits to local people and small business" (4.59), "creates employment opportunities" (4.53), and "increase standard of living" (3.62). Following the economic impact of tourism, the findings environment impacts show traffic congestion, noise and air pollution, as well as natural environment detriment is the negative aspects of environmental impacts of tourism which do not appear to be unexpected. Some of the environmental impacts, which are most favored by leaders, are as follows: 'Provides more parks and other recreational areas' (4.36) and 'Provides convenient transport" (4.06).

As shown in Table 2, all these suggest that the respondents have rather positive perception toward economic and environmental impacts of tourism in their community. Meanwhile differences among respondents were also observed. Most of the 10 attitudinal items had the max range from the minimum (1 point) to maximum (5 points), indicating a variation of individual respondents' perceptions toward tourism impacts. The size of the standard deviations of the 10 statements also indicated a moderate spread around the theoretical mean. We have attempted to prove whether the differences between the Old and New districts of Shiraz are significant. We use t-test statistical analysis to establish whether there is a difference. The result of the test shows that there are no significant differences of economic and environmental impacts of tourism between the Old and New districts. According to the table of equality of variance, tourism impacts are not accepted because the significant difference level at (-.012) does not show any significant differences between the Old and New districts of Shiraz (t = -2.531, p = -012).

In response to this objective, the open discussion at the focus group discussion (FGD) was performed. According to FGD a number of themes emerged as to what local people saw as tourism impacts on their communities. According to FGD most of the participation in both districts of Shiraz had positive perceptions toward economic of impacts tourism. However, all of the respondents said they had no doubts about the benefits of tourism, especially economic benefits including employment and income. The respondents were said they felt that the long-term effect of tourism on the economy had been positive. Additionally, all deem tourism to be a positive enhancer towards the community's future

developments. In regards to environmental impacts of tourism, several respondents from the New district of Shiraz agreed that tourism has negatives impacts towards the community's environment, for example, tourist overflowing would lead to parking space problems near their homes. Residents of local communities in the Old district of Shiraz were accustomed to traffic and crowds because many people commute to work in the area (Old Shiraz). It is important to note that some of the findings in this study are better understood in light of research about resident perceptions toward tourism. Consistent with the findings, data in this study indicated high concern for the tourism process among the residents of the communities. Through FGD, in whole, the respondents felt that tourism has had a long term positive economic impact on their communities. As equally important, all participants of the study from both districts of Shiraz agreed that tourism development not only had a positive impact on the locals' economy, but it also creates a positive impact on the infrastructure and economic development of the community. Those issues were some of the strongest and most favorable characteristics about tourism impacts reported in this study. Lastly, FGD supported community leaders' perceptions toward positive economic and environmental impacts of tourism on the local community.

6. Conclusion

This study has made an attempt to identify community leaders' perceptions of the economic and environmental impacts of tourism on local communities in Shiraz. Special focus has been put on the differences of perceptions between the Old and New districts of Shiraz, but the study demonstrates that there are broadly similar views among the community leaders from both districts. However, a distinct minority highlights several cultural problems arising from tourism development. Results showed that respondents strongly agree that tourism provides many economic benefits, but are ambivalent about some economic aspects of tourism. The study has also found that the community leaders perceived environmental impacts of tourism most favorably (3.49) and economic impacts (3.44). This result is rather unexpected because most of the researches indicated economic impacts of tourism as favorable for residents (Tatoglu et al., 2000). Residents evaluated environmental impacts of tourism positively. These findings provide support for previous studies. However, increased crime rate, traffic congestion, noise and air pollution, destroy of natural environment and increase in value of real estate were found to be the negative aspects of tourism impact. The study also recognized no meaningful difference between the two discussed districts of Shiraz and community leaders' perceptions toward tourism impacts. In conclusion, we can see some similarities between residents' perception and community leaders' perception toward tourism impacts. However, there are some differences evident between people in both districts of Shiraz, but they are not significantly important. The t-test showed the mean of score between community leaders' perceptions in both districts of Shiraz has no significant difference. Furthermore, FGD results illustrated harmony a pattern of results among all respondents.

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Table 1. The Number Tourists Coming to Shiraz

Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Domestic	163164	112811	154759	508696	523492	631992	794295	773300
International	57088	42598	37904	26998	43861	57634	64305	70400
Total	220252	155409	192663	535694	567353	689626	858600	843700

Source: (Shiraz Tourism Department, 2008)

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Community Perceptions toward Tourism Impacts

Types of impacts	Mean	Std. D
Environmental impacts	*17.45*	*2.93*
Provides more parks and recreational areas	4.36	0.60
Provides convenient transportation	4.06	0.83
Destroy of natural environment.	2.93	1.24
Traffic congestion, noise and air pollution.	2.89	1.22
Crowded public places	3.21	1.08
Economic impacts	*17.24*	*2.34*
Economic benefits to local people and small business	4.59	0.49
Creates employment opportunities	4.53	0.58
Increased standard of living	3.62	1.19
Increased prices of goods and services	2.03	0.80
Increases the value of real estate	2.46	1.10

Exploring the Negative Transfer on English Learning

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Abstract

According to the language transfer theory, it is assumed that the learner's mother tongue (MT) will positively or negatively affect his learning a foreign language in second language acquisition (SLA). When there are differences between his (MT) and target language (TL), the learner's mother tongue and target language are similar, the native language will actively aid foreign language in learning that is in case of similarities between the native language and target language, the transfer functions positively, while in case of differences, it functions negatively.

The mother negative language transfer in acquiring a foreign language is seemingly inevitable. Since the differences between the learners' MT and TL will interfere with the target language learning. On the basis of the theories of contrastive analysis, transfer analysis and translation theories, this paper is an attempt to find out the phenomena of mother language's negative transfer in English learning by means of Chinese-English translation, with the purpose of showing how the Chinese learners of English are negatively influenced by their mother tongue knowledge in learning English. The author will collect the data of Chinese-English translation from the fresh men and analyze the reasons. At last, the author will make suggestions for teachers and learners according to the mistakes the subjects made.

Keywords: Mother tongue, Language transfer, Negative transfer

1. Introduction

Language transfer has been a central issue in applied linguistics, second language acquisition and language learning (Odlin 11). Since its appearance in the 1960s, with the change of the major theory in second language acquisition, the theory of language transfer has also experienced ups and downs. In 1950s, transfer was considered the most important factor that contributed to errors. In the 1960s, the study of transfer waned as linguistic revolution led by Chomsky severely shook the psychological base for behaviorist learning theory, and learners' errors were not seen as evidence of language transfer but rather of the creative construction process. In 1980s, however, the study of transfer renewed its development and more balanced perspective of transfer researches have emerged when the study of L2 (second language) acquisition and intercultural communication reached a new stage.

Transfer, derived from the Latin word transferee, means to carry, to bear or to print, impress or otherwise copy (as a drawing or engraved design) from one surface to another. So to speak, when we say technology transfer, we mean the transfer or carry-over of technology from one owner to another. Transfer can also mean the carry-over or generalization of learned responses from one type of situation to another, especially the application in one field of study or effort of knowledge, skill, power, or ability acquired in another. By linguistic transfer, we mean what the learners carry over or generalize in their knowledge about their native language (NL) to help them learn to use a target language (TL).

The transfer occurs at the level of lexis, sentential and discourse. This paper only refers to the sentential level.

2. Study

These materials of study come from subjects' Chinese-English translations from Chinese and Math Department, Xian Yang Normal University. Since all of them have acquired the basic knowledge about English as required by the National Syllabus in their school years, they are proficient and accurate in translating the text. The study consists of two steps. The first one is pilot study and the formal study comes the second. In the pilot study, the translation materials are given to 10 students in Math Department and 13 in Chinese Department. Their translations are observed from five aspects including subject omission, the choice of pronoun-subject or non- pronoun-subject, redundancy, time expression and the location of negative object. In the formal study, the sentences required to translate from the aspect of subject omission have been changed into run-on sentences for few errors made by the students in translating them.

The samples are 52 finished pieces of translations from 81 students. We will use them as the language materials of this study. The author has numbered all of them.

Insert Table 2.1 Here

The subjects have mastered the subject-omission (1-3 in Pilot Study) very well and done well in translation. The Choice of Pronoun-subject or Nonporous-subject (4-6 in both Pilot and Formal Study) is very obvious mistaken by the subjects both in pilot and formal study. When it refers to Redundancy (7-9 in both Pilot and Formal Study), more than half of them have made such improper expressions. They must have mastered the Run-on Sentences (1-3 in Formal Study) well and did little wrong. From the table 2.1, it comes to the conclusion that they lack knowledge about Time Expression (10-12 in both Pilot and Formal Study). Generally speaking they are negatively transferred by mother tongue language.

3. The Data Analysis

"Chinese belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language which has the system of ideogram. Sino-Tibetan is one of the world's largest language families in terms of numbers of speakers and includes the language most widely spoken as a native language, namely Mandarin Chinese" (Aronoff and Jaine 26).

Chinese is a topic-prominent language, and the thought and the order of words naturally mingle together. In a sentence, first come the topic and then the comments. English belongs to the Indo-European language which has the system of speech and written. The Indo-European Family of languages of Europe are considered to have a common source, a hypothetical language spoken several thousand years ago. To find an ancestor common to both French and German or both French and Prussian, one has to go much further back in time" (Stuart 145). English is a subject-prominent language. The English sentence obeys the syntax structure strictly, so the order of the words is restrained by many rules, and most of the meaning is implied in the sentence. So there are great differences between the two languages in sound, syntax, semantics, and so on. According to the Chinese learners, the rules of the mother tongue are ineradicable which they usually unconsciously apply in English learning. Because of the great distinction between Chinese and English, some negative transfers are inevitable in translation.

3.1 Subject Omission

The subject in English sentence cannot be missed. And the predicate is taken as the centre; the subject is mutually restrained by the predicate. However, the subject in Chinese sentence can be missed. So we can miss the subject when conveying something and there exist a lot of zero subjects in Chinese sentence. Therefore, when learners try to translate Chinese into English, the negative transfer from mother tongue will influence the interpretation of subject. In the pilot study, three sentences were used.

The author thought there would be many mistakes made by the subjects; in contrast, the data has showed the other side. NO.1 is 0%, NO.2 is 7% and NO.3 is 0%. So the students have already got abundant knowledge about the distinction between the subjects of Chinese and English.

3.2 The Choice of Pronoun-subject or Non-pronoun-subject

Chinese people always hold the idea that human being and nature are mingled together, so Chinese people intend to make themselves as the start to narrate object things and are used to taking the pronoun as the subject. However, in the western philosophy, object is emphasized and it is believed that human being and nature are separated. So western people intend to express things from an object view and are used to taking non-pronoun such as things or abstract concept as the subject. The choice of pronoun-subject or non-pronoun-subject between Chinese and English will lead to negative transfer of mother tongue, which will make the translation of subject an improper one.

1). A. I suddenly think of this thing is not so easy.

2). A. You only study it carefully; you will find where the problem is.

3). A. He does not obey the traffic rule; the car has run into trouble.

In the pilot study, most subjects have taken the pronoun as the subject. NO.4 is 100%, NO.5 is 100% and NO.6 is 71%. Moreover, in the formal study, all the subjects have taken the pronoun as the subject. NO.4 is 100%, NO.5 is 100% and NO.6 is 100%. It proves that the Chinese students are easily influenced by the pronoun-subject sentence. They translate 'wo' into the English sentence mechanically according to the Chinese type sentence. Although there is no grammar mistake, it is somewhat Chinglish rather than idiomatic expression in English. So the sentences should be like this:

1). B. It occurs to me that this affair is much more difficult.

2). B. Careful study of them will show you where the problem is.

3). B. His failure to observe the traffic regulations bring an accident to the car.

3.3 Redundancy

From the view of informative theory, redundancy is the necessary part in language communication. During the process

of delivering information, there is always some interruption of noises. So in order to keep the accuracy it is important for the message sender to add some proper redundancy. But both too much and too little of it will definitely lessen the efficiency or make the sentence look dull. Chinese and English belong to two different symbol systems, so there are many differences in the ways of expression. The redundancy coming from mother tongue will affect the Chinese-English translation with many clingfish. There are many habitual collocations in Chinese. If they are literally interpreted into English, the excessive redundancy would appear, and it would not be in accordance with simple and convenient style of English. Take noun for example, there are a lot of category words used to indicate category and property. Although they do not have practical meaning, they are necessary in Chinese expression. When they are translated into English, most of them must be missed.

4). A. The state leaders pay special attention to the development in the sphere of the culture.

5). A. All the universities and colleges must solve the problem of controlling the inflation in the restaurant.

6). A. The improvement of the teaching quality remains the important foundation for the developments of Xian Yang normal university.

The interpretations should be:

4). B. The state leaders pay special attention to the developments in the culture.

5). B. All the universities and colleges must control the inflation in the restaurant.

6). B. The improvement in teaching remains the foundation for the developments of Xian yang Normal University.

3.4 Run-on Sentences

There is distinction between the sentences of Chinese and English. In English there exist many conjunctions, preposition, relative pronoun, three non-predicate forms and sixteen tenses, which makes the English sentence very complex. However, there is no participle in Chinese. Words like conjunction, preposition and relative pronoun are not rich, and verbs are exceptional.

If you put two independent clauses together without proper punctuation, you have made an error called a run-on sentence, which can also be called a fused sentence. Run-on sentences are generally created when you attempt to coordinate sentences but do not use the correct punctuation.

Incorrect use of run-on sentences is the common problem among subjects due to the influence of the Chinese language. Run-on sentences are sentences that two main clauses are con-nected without a connecting word or punctuation. The data shows that run-on sentences are affected by Chinese sentences structure. However, such a sentence structure is allowed in Chinese while forbidden in English.

For example, some students translate these sentences like this or similar ones:

7). Unfortunately, it is power failure in the school, we cannot surf the internet.

8). It is not rainy today; we can go out to play.

9). The story is end here, nobody want to go.

In Chinese, although there is no conjunction 'because', we can still understand the former part of the sentence is the cause of the later. While in English, without a conjunction in the sentence is prohibited. The second and third sentences should be the similar. 30.8% of the subjects have made this kind of mistake like the first one, 51.9% and 11.5% for the second and third. The correct version should be:

7). Unfortunately, it is power failure in the school, so we cannot surf the internet.

8). It is not rainy today, so we can go out to play.

9). The story is end here, but nobody wants to go.

3.5 The Location of Negative Object

In Chinese, the negative words like '*bu', 'fei', 'mei (you)*' are all directly put before the object words. However, in English, although 'not' is put together with the predicate verb to deny some other parts of the sentence. So it is not directly put before the negative object words. Therefore, it comes the problem of locating negative object. The meaning of the whole sentence will be misled or mistaken by making an incorrect location of the negative object. There are also some negative meanings in the complex sentence. The negative word in Chinese sentence is naturally put before the object word, while the negative word in corresponding English sentence can only be put before the verb. Chinese students cannot get into the habit, which do not obey the normal order of Chinese words and they frequently make mistakes.

Many subjects have made such mistakes with the influences of the mother tongue, and they translate above sentence like this:

10). A. I think all he has done is not for money.

11). A. Mother believes that father has not told the truth.

12). A. Tom thought some employees have not done their best.

They just locate the negative meaning in the clause. So the right version should be:

10). B. I do not think all he has done is for money.

11). B. Mother does not believe that father has told the truth.

12). B. Tom did not think any employees have done their best.

3.6 Time Expression

In Chinese, the time is always put at the beginning of the sentence, and the order of the date should be year/ month/ day. In English, the time is always put at the end of the sentence, and the order of the date should be day/ month/ year or month/ day/ year. Although there are big differences between them, the testers have mastered them well. There are some sentences:

They are not seriously affected by mother tongue, so only 13.5% for NO.10 and 23.1% for NO.11 have translated them like the following:

13). A. This afternoon at 5:30 the club will hold a party to welcome the new member in 1428.

14). A. My nephew was born on 1995, September 12th morning at half past two.

Also there is another difference between the time of Chinese and English, which is the expression of the lasting time. For instance: I have already received her letter for three weeks. In English 'receive' is an instant verb, so it cannot be used together with a period of time. 59.6% of the subjects have mistaken it with the negative influences of mother tongue. The right version should be: it has been three weeks since I received her letter.

4. Ways to Prevent Negative Transfer

4.1 Suggestions for Teachers

For China will hold 2008 Olympic Games, English learning now enjoys widespread appeal. The stress on translation highlights English teaching in universities. It has become the goal of English teaching, and good English teachers have to do the followings.

(1) Intrinsic motivation and the interest of the students

"The teacher must do everything which may let the students desire to invest effort in the learning for its own sake" (Penny, 280). If the students want to learn English well, and then all he has to do is to teach the students carefully and accurately.

(2) Understanding cross-linguistic differences between English and Chinese

The transfer errors appearing in the translation suggest that the learners are confused with the essential differences between those forms or structures that they conceive to be similar with the two languages. Moreover, results from investigation of learners' knowledge about cross-linguistic differences between English and Chinese have indicated that the subjects have difficulties between the two languages.

(3) Paying equal attention to cross-linguistic similarities and differences

Since it is very clear to us that cross-linguistic similarities can facilitate the study of TL, enough emphasis should be placed on the balanced explanation of the cross-linguistic similarities and differences. This method is not only feasible, but also practical. It is feasible because no matter how wide the gap between the two typologies of the native language and the target language is, cross-linguistic similarities are designed to appear and frequently used in the language study. If the language teachers analyze the cross-linguistic similarities of the two languages, they can strengthen the self-confidence and motivation of the language learners.

(4) Avoiding negative transfer

If the language teachers want the learners to avoid negative transfer, they should make the learners know the followings: A. Two different expressing system. B. Two different language families. C. Strategies of avoiding negative transfer. D. Avoid negative transfer in vocabulary. E. Avoid negative transfer in grammar. F. Avoid negative transfer in usage. G. Avoid negative transfer in teaching text.

4.2 Suggestions for Learners

A learner want to improve your translation, he must train himself more, and try to know more about English. He should realize the importance of translation in your study and life, even in your future work. Do as the follows, and he will gain more.

(1) Thinking in English

To think in English, learners should avoid relating everything to their native language by making the TL as a separate system. Learners should learn to express themselves first in English and then translate it into Chinese.

(2) Reading in English extensively

The more a student reads, the better he gains English knowledge about culture, religion, etc. Reading widely is one of the best ways to acquire native-like English. So after-class reading with various kinds of materials should be done.

5. Conclusion

It is assumed that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features quite easy and others quite difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult. The teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with native language of the students will know better about what the real learning problems are and can better provide for teaching them. The learner should get rid of Chinese ways of thinking and try to combine the form with the meaning and the mode of expression in English. One task of teaching is to prevent such kind of interference caused by mother tongue.

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Table 2.1 Ratio Made by Subjects in Pilot and Formal Study

Pilot study (%)			Formal study (%)		
Subject omission	1	0	Run-on sentences	1	30.8
	2	7		2	51.9
	3	0		3	11.5
The choice of pronoun-subject and nonporous subject	4	100	The choice of pronoun-subject and nonporous subject	4	100
	5	100		5	100
	6	71		6	100
Redundancy	7	35.7	Redundancy	7	51.9
	8	71		8	82.7
	9	71		9	65.4
Time expression	10	21.4	Time expression	10	13.5
	11	21.4		11	23.1
	12	7		12	59.6
The location of negative object	13	71	The location of negative object	13	82.7
	14	57.1		14	71.2
	15	78.6		15	96.2

Sociocultural Restrictions and Difficulties

of Social Science Research in Iran

(Case Study, Hamadan Province)

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Abstract

The rapid progress of the sciences can be observed in all the aspects of man's life in the last few decades. The sovereignty of science appears in most social systems' decision making. Today the efficiencies of scientific attitudes are the focal point of attention in developed societies. Over a period of time progress and development of sciences have been a desire for Iranian researchers. In fact, scientific pathology and identification of restrictions and difficulties of research is considered as a duty for all researchers in different disciplines. In this research, an attempt has been made to study science in its historical context and cultural complex based on an anthropological approach that is the relation between science and culture. This study follows to get the aim, factors like belief in research, institutionalization of research, cultural dynamism of society, cognition of social sciences, capability of social sciences in solving society's problems as variables whose role upon social sciences research are considered. The Hamadan province in western part of Iran is selected as a field for the case study.

Keywords: Belief in research, Institutionalization, Cultural dynamism, Social sciences capability, Cognition of social sciences

1. Introduction

One **of** the agencies and qualitative objectives of development and progress in today's world is to pave way for scientific structural research and institutional foundations.

It is obvious nowadays that without considering research, any attempt at sociocultural and economic development would be futile. Thus, the socioeconomic status in each society is an index of the scientific level of that society.

Moreover, scientific and cultural development, along with changes in circumstances depends on the rate of scientific research carried out in that society (Shahidi, 1989). Therefore, any attention devoted to scientific research results in multilateral progress of the society.

Moreover development of scientific research leads to the improvement of, well-being and better services in man's life (Mohseni, 1993). Research is also a mechanism which primarily needs equipment like identification (cognition), thought design for production, and its final outcome is regular progress (Qanbari and Tonkaboni, 1994).

Nowadays, sovereignty of societies upon each other in the world pledges their sagacity and ability.

In this situation, only those societies who value research and sciences gain the opportunity to access prosperity in the research field that needs facilities like capital, social and human investment, planning, policy making equipment, research priority, and paying attention to researcher's status which are needful. Ignorance of these factors causes damage to scientific and cultural progress (Mansouri, 2003).

Research in general and social sciences in particular have not gained prominence in Iran yet. There are many restrictions and difficulties, overt and covert, which cause such obstacles, whose identification is an important task for researchers. These attempts enable researchers to operate within their disciplines. Although, in Iran the attention toward the research in recent years, due to increase of social problems has increased slightly (Lehsaizadeh, 1995); but the amount of budget

allocated to research annually is 0.7% of the country's Gross National Product (GNP). The share of social sciences research is a small part of this allocated budget. The status of research in Iranian society is apparent from this fact. Limitations of research facilities, cultural and structural difficulties result in irregular research, that is, parallel works and repeated research. This situation has led to mortality and a weakness in rationalism (Rafipour, 2002).

The present research attempts to investigate the sociocultural restrictions and difficulties faced by social sciences research in Iran. Consequently, the role of factors such as belief in research, institutionalization of research, cultural dynamism of the society, capability of social sciences to solve the social problems are elaborated. This study is conducted in the Hamadan province, located in the west of Iran. This country is located in the Middle East and it is one of the ancient civilizations of Asia. Iran is a multiethnic society. The estimated population of Iran is 70 million, with an estimated area of 1 648 000 square kms. The purpose and justification for the selection of Hamadan province as a field of study is that it is recognized by the researcher as a model province and it shares similarities with other Iranian provinces.

2. Literature review

Developments in today's global system are dependent on the foundations of research structures and scientific institutions. Without research, access to development is not possible. Restrictions on research and development in Iran have been a source of disturbance to Iranian researchers for many years.

Although some attempts for a decrease in these restrictions have taken place, there are still cultural and structural hindrances to research in Iran. Some of these attempts are as follows:

1). In a research paper entitled "Cultural restrictions to the development of research in Iran" (2001) by Ali Taeifi, the author views science as a problematic phenomenon. Research materials are viewed from the genealogical and historical point of view, so that science and research are seen as phenomenon with a time limit in the historical process. The author claims that without historical cognition, the identity, nature, problem factors and hindrances to research and development remain resulting in neglect and ambiguity.

The author arrives at appropriate definitions of related sociological theories of science, with the aim of cognition of the law governing these values, norms, their quality of evolution and the development of science and research in the world. The author looks at culture and research in Iran from a pathological angle. Taeifi believes that a cult urological study of Iranian society is needed to arrive at the idea of a common culture. According to him the need for a scientific culture will be discovered through coordinate signs of common culture pathology; then cognition of scientific culture pathology will be discovered.

2). in a paper published by A. Lahsaeizadeh entitled "Social science research restrictions in Iran" (1996), in a Persian language journal, the author has tried to point out the weaknesses and deficits of research in Iran. Lahsaeizadeh claims that it is the task of the researchers to study the research restrictions in their disciplines. The author is optimistic that the social sciences will ultimately be accorded their rightful status in Iran, because phenomena like development justify this need. In this paper, the author describes the nature and characteristics of social sciences research in Iran. He has not ignored the restrictions and hindrances to such research in contemporary Iran. The author has tried to explain the need for research in the social sciences in Iran with the objective of arriving at a more fruitful social science research directory in Iran.

3). Another research paper entitled "Determinants of scientific development in Iran" (2002), by Faramarz Rafipour, searches for an appropriate methodology to explore and study the different variables at the micro level in society. Moreover, the author introduces an analysis model to find the interrelationships between the variables. Actually his model rests on the intersystem theory methodology model, with which the author attempts to study the interrelationships that exist between different factors at the cultural, social, political, and the organizational levels of Iranian society.

In this study, the author found the role of traits such as despotic behavioral, normative behavioral, emotional behavioral contradictions, individualism, and self-display that is important to scientific development in Iran. The author points out that at the social level, the incorrect external developmental polices of the Iranian administrators lays emphasis on credentials, not on specialization at the organizational level. The author concludes that due to the multiplicity of decision making authorities at the macro policy making level, society is faced with multiplicity.

4). in a paper (1991) published in a Persian journal, by Reza Mansouri, the author insists on the need to establish the mechanisms for science, technical and scientific planning in Iran. He then compares the research situation in Iran with the situation in the developed countries. Based on qualitative and qualitative characteristics, he concludes that in Iran, research is in a state of underdevelopment. The author explains the role of factors like the problems of the system of higher education, financial and official problems that restrict research in Iran, and the factors that have lead to a deficit in research.

3. Methodology

This study is based on an essential objective: the study of sociocultural restrictions and difficulties to social sciences research in Iran. A list of researchers in organizations and institutions in Hamadan city, the capital of Hamadan province,

were approached by the researcher. This study employed the interview technique for data collection purposes. The statistics for this research pertain to respondents who are engaged in academic and research work. Two prerequisites were identified for the selection of respondents: a) minimum qualification was a bachelor degree and b) five years of research experience. It covered all the researchers in Hamadan city, who possessed the two qualifications mentioned above. About 400 researchers were identified, but only 150 participated in the interviews. Of this number, 64 individuals had a social sciences and humanities background, 23 had a degree in the natural sciences and 14 had an engineering background. The educational breakup of the respondents in percentage terms was as follows: 37% held bachelor's degrees, 30% held postgraduate degrees and 33% held PhD degrees. The population distribution in this study, based on their sex, was 14% female and 86% male, in the age range of 31 to 60 years. The respondent's details are shown in the table 1.

4. Findings

In this section we consider the role of variables such as belief in research, institutionalization of research, cognition of social sciences, cultural dynamism, and capability of social sciences on the research growth in Iran.

Research is not anarchism, but it is a doubt about the reality of a problem. A researcher looks for order within disorder, and his/her aim is to solve the problem by recommending appropriate actions to address it. Therefore, research first of all requires a belief in it; that is, by performing sociocultural research, man can overcome narrow passes.

The experiences of developed nations demonstrate that belief in research and its utilization is an essential factor in their development and progress.

Each discipline's task is cognition of a related phenomenon to it. And real cognition can be achieved through multilateral attitudes.

The discipline of social sciences is the bedrock guidance of other sciences, and social science research can help and find solutions for the society's problems.

But in Iran and other third-world countries it has not gained as much importance as other sciences. Among these nations the material problems take precedence over sociocultural problems, so attention toward social sciences is also proportionally less than that toward technical and natural sciences.

The research system of Iran was developed long ago, but in various periods it was subjected to many changes. At present, the main research system is concentrated in Iran's ***scientific consultation of research Institution.*** The task of this institution is research planning and control of the budget allocation. Actually this institution does not have the sufficient authority to perform its task well as it is just a coordinate mechanism.

Just as industrial product is dependent on the equipment, human investment, and capital, and its progress is gradual and endogenous, in the same manner cultural products also need these facilities. In producing cultural goods, macro capital investment version is necessary. A remarkable point is that the cultural product in a similar manner like the material goods should have a tendency toward global market. Cultural production will be abundant in societies where the production is directed to the needs of all human beings (Mohammadi, 1998). So cultural dynamism needs a researcher's motivation, financial support, and utilization of research results.

The social sciences are pioneers of consciousness, change, and movements. One observes that technical and scientific progress in Europe is synchronized with the progress of social sciences. It is not desirable to expect only material efficiency from social sciences or to pay attention to its applied aspect and one should also not have precocious expectations from its results. In today's advanced societies, the role of social sciences is clearly defined, and this discipline has found its right status.

Science and culture have strong links with each other. Science is a part of cultural traditions' perfection in different civilizations, and makes strong integration with value systems (parsons, 1951). The respondent's opinion about research variables is shown in Table 2.

5. Data analysis and conclusions

Research is not chaos or disorder; it is governed by rules, and begins with a doubt about the reality of a problem (Barber, 1952).The task of research is to solve problems and provide suggestions for solving them. Data of this study show that in the society that has been studied, there is an absence of the belief that social sciences research can overcome various problems. Despite significant progress and development in research, administrators in Iran consider research a lengthy procedure and a waste of money. Research performance needs faith, that is, society should believe in the need for research and pay attention to its findings. As data from this research show, the administrative body of the country does not depend much on research results for its decision making, because they do not believe that research can lead to correct decision making. Once there is lack of belief in research among the administrators, one cannot expect facilities and opportunities for research. Ultimately, research results are not always performable; even if these results are performed they will not be effective. Since belief in social science research in Iranian society has not evolved, non-specialists have occupied the place of social scientists. In fact, social scientists have the potential of performing their function effectively, but because

of the lack of attention from the administrators; these disciplines have not garnered sufficient data and equipment to perform their tasks.   The amount of budget allocated to social sciences research and failure of the sociocultural decisions which were adopted without taking into consideration the research contexts, which ultimately in the processes of performance faced difficulties, leading us to believe that there is no belief in research.

Spending on research is not a waste of money but is actually a form of savings, and the final outcome is overcoming the defects of developmental, technical, economic, and cultural projects. The allocation of   a modest budget, that is, less than one percent of the country's GNP to research tasks annually (the share of social science research is a small part of this one percent) [Mansouri,2003] shows a clear picture that there is no belief in research in general, and particularly in social sciences.

This observation on research is not confined only to Iran. A similar attitude toward research can be observed in most of the developing countries, for example, in 1979, 97% of the allocated research budget in the world belonged to industrial nations, while only 3% was provided by non-industrial nations (Shahidi, 1989).

In Iran, the credence of research in social sciences in comparison with natural and technical sciences is not worth noting, in spite of the fact that social comprehension is necessary to construct the base and guide lines for other disciplines, like technical and natural sciences. No separation exists as such between social sciences and natural sciences. These sciences appear in relation to each other in history and have also developed a relationship with each other. The main point is that we should not expect the results of social science research to be similar to that of a natural science like physics, for example, which involves the construction of models that may then be converted to projects. Disciplines like sociology and anthropology cannot reach the grade of causation of physics. But we should remember that each of these sciences is a member of the same family. As Descartes said, if knowledge can be compared to a tree, then the humanities are its branches, and the mechanical disciplines are its fruits.

European development synchronized with the emergence of social sciences as a discipline, in eighteen century Europe, influenced by the thoughts of Montesquieu, and also of Newton in physics, as well as in the other sciences. Therefore, we can conclude the social sciences are not secondary sciences, but have helped pioneer social movement and social change. Therefore, social sciences are important because of their social aim and general strategies in society and should be considered important sciences. But this carelessness about social sciences in Iran has resulted in ignorance of basic human needs.

Dispersed research based on personal desires does not lead to change and dynamism in society, but results in repeated and parallel works, the consequences are the destruction of research facilities. To pay attention to research facilities and equipment restrictions, Iran requires a nodal research organization of some sort, until the desired usage of facilities matches that of society's difficulties and needs, because Iranian society first of all needs an integrated research system to organize research activities. Secondly, this system needs an appropriate research policy to direct research facilities toward society's needs which should be accorded priority.

Thought design and the production of cultural goods in Iran is mainly based on excessive generosity, rather than normal processes and institutionalized plans. Research institutions in Iran belong to ministries which are not covered by specialists and professionals. This is one of the reasons that one does not witness qualified research and many spontaneous researchers. Due to maladministration, research organizations and the present staff members do not perform their task well, because, in Iran, there is no punishment for non-performance or encouragement for performance in the system.

Cultural goods production in Iran, with a few exceptions, culture is directed towards an internal market. For this reason, distribution of its end products faces difficulties in the global market.

The structure of the Iranian society hinders the progress of specialized scientific associations. Scientific associations in Iran do not have admitted understanding of their jobs and professions in sociocultural products area. These associations even deny each other's ideas. Everybody considers themselves as being true and perfect, so he/she does not feel the need to discourse. The result of this non-discourse is that people's ideas are not clear to one other and are not subjected to test. In this situation, a peoples' entire social, cultural, and economic forms of capital, are not present in the field. Ultimately social consensus is not accessible, and common principles that facilitate national advantages are not gained, as a result, diversity and moderateness is not accepted as a principle. Its outcome is no progress of scientific associations in Iran. These scientific associations in comparison with economic and political institutions are very weak, and they cannot establish exchange programs with other institutions of the society. Ultimately, they face a shortage of budget and research restrictions.

Due to lack of unique research organizations in Iran, we are now witnessing dispersed and parallel research. As a result, many researchers do not have enough information about their own society's software and hardware facilities. Although research is an individual matter and does not need strong regulation and administration, and it depends on the researcher's interests, today we know that research is considered as a social activity, and it needs characteristics as regulation, planning, management, information, and education in order to be institutionalized. It is evident that no researcher without affiliation

to earlier research does this enterprise, as R. Merton says; scientific findings are products of social cooperation and belong to society (1968).

This research findings show that a kind of data concealment between organizations and researchers can be observed and its outcome are partial results of growth and progress of research. In fact, moral scientific work requires the exchange and publishing of research results. The roots of the phenomenon of data concealment in Iranian culture goes back to factors like emotionalism, individualism, skepticism, and particularism (Taefi, 2001). Characteristics like individualism in the Iranian culture are a kind of reaction against foreign threat. This tendency arises from the Iranian attitude toward the world. Based on their beliefs, others look for their interests only, and each person continuously faces characteristics like panic, interpersonal mistrust, and skepticism in his confrontation with other individuals. For the individual, the mentioned characteristics are survival conditions. The result of these factors is deinstitutionalization of research in society, which restricts and hinders scientific institutions. Iranian society has been shaped by different racial and ethnic groups, each with its own cultural traits, elements, rituals, and traditions, without a singular cultural fit. Basically, these groups adopt an ethnocentric view in their relations with each other, in such a manner that a pluralistic social system cannot develop. These ethnic groups have preserved their historical and cultural identity while living side by side. Although, nowadays, ethnic prejudices have broken down, sometimes we still do witness residual ethnocentric prejudices among these ethnic groups in relation to each other. This trend has caused cultural contrasts among the ethnic groups, so that sociocultural macro policy making has become difficult. In this situation, cultural patterns have been rendered dysfunctional within the structural system. Such a structure causes rigidity in cultural attitudes, within which small, narrow passes are invented; it hinders social and economical growth for the remaining common groups. The results of this situation are that opportunities are available for particular persons and groups.   In such a situation, any attempt at behavioral change is not only unstable, but also some people try to adopt deinstitutionalization (Taefi 2001).

These negative approaches arise from a group's typology and kinship relations, who gain a lot of advantages from research. Therefore, they do not have tendencies for diverting research to a general field. Research findings show that in this society, experts in one field are not very much welcome. For instance, social scientists' academic positions usually are occupied by non-experts.

The gathered data show that this society's problems are more culture-based than material. The belief exists that cultural research is not applicable to society's problems. The origin of this idea stems from the expectation that exists from social sciences as a savior of tangles and the numerous social sufferings in today's society. This misunderstanding actually originates from the concrete outcome of natural sciences in daily life, which leads to the well-being and provides more comfort for mankind. In fact, the comparison between natural and social sciences creates confusion because the latter is a science in a particular sense, but is not identical to the natural sciences. This shows that Iranian society does not sufficiently recognize the social sciences.

The delusion that arises out of this comparison stands as a restriction for research growth in this field. Moreover, natural sciences are explained quantitatively and their methods are objective that is, cause and effect relations, therefore they can be diverted to law and formula, which can be in control of everybody.

This kind of a view to social sciences research leads to a low status for social scientists in the society. Research is a dynamic complex, it involves: budgeting, the creation of facilities, manpower, planning, and subject and research priorities. Usually these parts are considered as necessary elements of research and development. Manpower is trained in the universities. Due to budgetary constraints and the lack of facilities for research students and teaching staff, in Iran, few have a tendency to opt for research activities. Educational centers and universities in Iran are tutorial based, not research-centered, so very little attention is paid to research projects. Even university staff are not obliged to perform compulsory research tasks. Whereas, in developed nations, academics at universities, beside tutorial task, are also busy with research projects. Therefore, to reduce its sociocultural problems, Iranian society needs to reinforce the orientation towards research in academic institutions.

Another important point that may act as a restriction for social science research is the lack of motivation among researchers in these fields. Hence, factors like lack of motivation, insufficient equipment and budget, difficult financial and official bureaucracy for funding of research projects cause great difficulties and restriction for researchers in the social sciences. Lack of meritocracy in scientific and research administrations and the lack of assessment of merit is a trait that it is ingrained in the scientific and cultural establishment of the country. So, the chief of a cultural institution may be a physicist. In such a situation, meritocracy and specialization are not valued; instead kinship and economic links come into play in the appointment of a research administrator (Taeifi 2001). Some scholars believe that in the Iranian cultural structure, the emphasis is on relationships, so the function of a research institution is dependent on the opinion of the individual heading it and is not dependent on the laws of governance. In such a situation, instead of paying attention to fostering the research activities of the organization, attention is directed towards whatever appeals to the research administrator, approved laws and principles are not taken into account (Lahsaeizadeh 1995).

In general, social sciences in Iran have encountered a phase of vulgarization, so in this situation anyone becomes eligible to tackle social problems without possessing specialization.

Not utilizing the results derived from research is another reason for the poor status of research in this field. The gathered data show that there is no tendency and optimism to use the social sciences research findings in society and at present there is no capacity to link the research results of social sciences with the problems in the society. In fact, this culture is unable in production of new cultural levels. This situation is a residue of feudalism and the cultural non-discourse capacity of society.

Therefore, its output comes out as repeated in art and culture, production crises, copying, cultural mediator/parallel works etc.

Another outcome of this autocratic tradition (feudalism) is the ethnocentric belief within the Iranian culture, and this has long roots in Iran's ancient civilization. As a result, Iranian culture does not have the tendency to borrow other civilization's experiences, and social structure of the society is nonflexible in accepting other cultural experiences.

This research shows that since cultural dynamism is not at work; characteristics like meritocracy, cleverness, and opportunism are not valued. The lack of attention to social science research, to some extent, is the consequence of technological crises in the world. For instance, crises like slum settlement and racial discrimination are the heritage of a new civilization. Finding solutions to these kinds of problems may be the task of social scientists and enterprises, but society's cooperation of an adequate time is also needed to effectively solve it. The inability of social sciences in Iran to solve sociocultural problems goes back to society's expectations for this discipline to act as the natural sciences, when they are by no means comparable

6. Conclusions and Suggestions

The findings of this study show that research in the social sciences in Iran encounters basic challenges and involves several issues. There are many overt and covert hindrances in the path of social sciences research. This study points out factors such as lack of faith in social sciences research, disorganization of research, the non -dynamic nature of Iranian culture and society's non recognition of the nature and importance of the social sciences, which act as restrictive factors that affect the development of social sciences research in Iran. Based on the results of this research, the following suggestions have been made to overcome issues and challenges identified based on the data collected by this study.

1). Creating public consciousness and recognizing the advantages of social sciences research. This task is to be undertaken by social sciences scholars who should attempt to change the existing culture in society.

2). Administrators involved in the development of research in general, and social sciences in particular, should establish a strong, unique nodal research organization. This organization should supervise other research bodies and guide them with the aim of producing reliable data. Establishment of a rapport between research organizations, directing them to cooperate with each other for purposes of data exchange instead of data concealment, this should be the task of this unique research organization.

3). Government should establish information banks and create networks for the benefit of researchers.

4). To reduce particularism in research scientific, associations involving different disciplines should be developed with the aim of creating competition that is healthy and dynamic.

5). To reduce imitation, copying and parallel research, a punishment and reward system for research should be introduced, placing emphasis on evaluation based on creativity to reduce work that is imitative. This task requires the cooperation of research administrators and researchers.

6). Meritocracy in research should be encouraged and assigning research projects to family members should be avoided. This requires the appointment of strong researchers as research administrators.

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Table 1. Characteristics of respondents

Population	Age (years)	Sex %	Qualification %	Educational background %
150	31–60	14 female 86 male	37 graduate 30 postgraduate 33 PhD	64 humanities and social sciences 23 sciences 14 engineering

Table 2. Distribution of respondent's opinion about research variables

Items	No	No Idea	Yes	Total
Do you agree that society's administrators favor social sciences research in theory, but in practice they do not?	6%	8%	86%	100%
Do you think administrators consider expenses on social sciences research as money wasting?	16%	11%	73%	100%
Do you believe that multilateral developments in society need the growth of social sciences?	86%	6%	12%	100%
Do you believe that attention toward social science research in society is absent?	18%	6%	76%	100%
Do you think the growth of basic research is the prerequisite of applied research growth?	30%	8%	62%	100%
Do you believe that lack of unique research organization in society is responsible for deinstitutionalization of social science research?	30%	14%	56%	100%
Do you agree that the lack of data exchange between researchers and official organizations leads to deinstitutionalization of social science research?	17%	12%	71%	100%
Do you believe that characteristics like skepticism, emotionalism, particularism, and individualism of Iranian culture has a role in the deinstitutionalization of science research	20%	4%	76%	100%
Do you agree that people of this society do not have enough cognition of social sciences?	4%	6%	90%	100%
Do you believe that society's problems are more cultural than material, while social scientists can do nothing?	14%	9%	77%	100%
Do you believe that the lower status of social scientists in comparison to other scientists is the result of non-cognition of this field?	40%	17%	43%	100%
Do you agree society's formal education system direction (which merely focuses on teaching) leads to poverty of social sciences research?	17%	13%	70%	100%
Do you believe that the lack of motivation among social scientists results in restriction of research growth in this field?	14%	4%	82%	100%
Do you agree that the lack of reliable data is a cause of the low level of	20%	9%	71%	100%

social sciences research?				
Do you accept that financial and official bureaucracy is a factor for low rate of social sciences research?	13%	7%	80%	100%
Do you agree that non-utilization of social sciences research in society diminishes social sciences research?	23%	18%	59%	100%
Do you accept that impotence of society's culture in new cultural producing levels is a factor of low rate of growth of social science research?	47%	7%	46%	100%
Do you agree that lack of attention toward meritocracy in social sciences field is the cause of research poverty?	3%	%1	96%	100%
Do you agree that the expectation from precocious results of social sciences research has any role in efficiency of this field of research?	12%	3%	85%	100%
Do you accept that the lack of interest of social scientist to society's current problems is a cause of poor status of research in this discipline?	43%	17%	40%	100%
Do you believe that critical nature of social sciences restricts its research growth?	27%	10%	63%	100%

An Analysis of College English Classroom Discourse

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Abstract

English classroom teaching and learning is an important aspect of English teaching and learning. The analysis of classroom discourse is a very important form which classroom process research has taken. The present study focuses on college English classroom discourse. Through a detailed description and analysis of the collected data by referring to Sinclair and Coulthard's classroom discourse analysis model, the problem of patterns of the classroom discourse is made clear and on the basis of which a few strategies for college English teachers are put forward by the author in order to improve college English teaching and learning.

Keywords: College English, Classroom discourse, Pattern

1. Introduction

Discourse is defined as "the language in use" (Cook, 1989:6) and discourse analysis is concerned with the "the analysis of language in use" (Brown and Yule, 1983:1). Discourse analysis refers to the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used. It involves looking at both language form and language function and includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. It identifies linguistic features that characterize different genres as well as social and cultural factors that aid in our interpretation and understanding of different texts and types of talk.

Discourse analysis helps us in understanding how real people use real language, as opposed to studying artificially created sentences. It is therefore of immediate interest to language teachers because we need to consider how people use language when we design teaching materials, or when we engage learners in exercises and activities aimed at making them proficient users of their target language, or when we evaluate a piece of commercially published material before deciding to use it (Michael McCarthy, 2002)

Since spoken language is "the medium by which much teaching takes place and in which students demonstrate to teachers much of what they have learned"(Cazden,1987, cited from Wittrock,1988),the application of discourse analysis to second language teaching and learning can reveal much about how teachers can improve their teaching practices by investigating actual language use in the classroom, and how students can learn language through exposure to different types of discourse .Classroom discourse analysis is an aspect of classroom process research, which is one way for teachers to monitor both the quantity and quality of students' output. Nunan has pointed that "If we want to enrich our understanding of language learning and teaching, we need to spend time looking in classroom" (Nunan, 1989:76). According to researchers of communicative teaching, "failed communication is a joint responsibility and not the fault of speaker or listeners. Similarly, successful communication is an accomplishment jointly achieved and acknowledged" (Jack C. Richards and Theodore S.Rodgers, 2000: 77); "It is the teachers' responsibility to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities" (Jack C. Richards and Theodore S.Rodgers, 2000:78). In recent years, a much greater role has been attributed to interactive features of classroom behaviors, such as "turn-taking, questioning and answering, negotiation of meaning, and feedback" (Chaudron, 1988:10). The background of this lies in the fact that "second language learning is a highly interactive process" (Richard and Lockhart, 1996:138) and "the quality of this interaction is thought to have a considerable influence on learning" (Ellis, 1985, cited from Richard and Lockhart, 1996:138). In second language classrooms, "learners often do not have a great number of tools…, teachers' questions provide necessary stepping stones to communication" (Brown, 1994a: 165). Questioning is reported as one of the commonly used strategies, as the success of a class largely depends on questioning and feedback. One reason, as Mercer (Candlin & Mercer, 2001:245) states, is that they form the most frequent model of teacher-student talk in the classroom, in terms of the model described by Sinclair and Coulthard as Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) exchanges.

More fundamentally, however, it is because they are a teacher's best instruments to regulate the quantity and quality of language used in the classroom.

The problem which is going to be mainly investigated here is patterns of classroom discourse. Because "two of the most common ways in which L2 teachers engage in interaction with learners is by way of asking questions and providing feedback, and these deserve some consideration" (Holland and Shortall, 1997:104), focusing on them can be expected to show useful findings which will contribute to deeper insights about the ways to improve L2 teaching and learning.

The context specified here is a college English classroom of non-English major. College English refers to English learned by Chinese college students whose major is other than English. In China, with the development of society and international communication, more and more importance has been attached to college English teaching and learning. College graduates with good command of English language knowledge and competence are urgently needed in our society. As the fundamental aim of college English education is to foster communication skills and international understanding, it is of great interest to analyze their college English classroom discourse in order to improve teaching and to make learners proficient users of English.

The data are collected from three college English classrooms of non-English major at Qingdao University of Science and Technology. As many classroom-oriented researchers have pointed out, it is only through a better understanding of classroom interaction processes that teachers can render their teaching more profitable for learners (Jamila Boulima, 1999:15). This study is significant in that it reveals the characteristics of classroom interaction that is most favorable for promoting learners' English and has insightful implications for English teaching and learning. The aim of the present study is to develop teacher's reflective thinking about what goes on in their own classrooms and to provide information for improving teaching and learning in college English classrooms.

2. Literature Review

The discourse analysis tradition in language classroom research grew out of the contributions of various disciplines. It provided a foundation for research in applied linguistics and language pedagogy.

The first language classroom research of Bellack et al (1966) is traditionally considered as a pioneering study within this tradition. The study offered a simple description of classroom discourse involving a four-part framework: 1) structure, 2) solicit, 3) respond, 4) react (Dick Allwright & Kathleen M.Bailey, 1991: 98).

Historically, the British work has principally followed structural-linguistic criteria, on the basis of the isolation of units, and sets of rules defining well-formed sequences of discourse (Michael McCarthy,2002:6).One important study was carried out at the University of Birmingham by Sinclair and Coulthard(1975),who developed a model for the description of teacher-pupil talk based on a hierarchically structured system of ranks by analogy with Halliday's (Chaudron, 1988) ranked scale approach. They published their work "Towards an Analysis of Discourse: The English Used by Teachers and Pupils" in 1975, in which their study results were made public. Coulthard published "An introduction to Discourse Analysis" in 1977, summarizing their theory. They suggested that pedagogical discourse at the analytical level be considered in terms of the linguistic level of sentential analysis and the social/pedagogical level of programs and courses. The discourse level involves five ranks: lesson, transaction, exchanges, move, act, each of which builds up the elements of the higher rank, in accordance with the hierarchical structure. They found in the language of traditional native-speaker school classrooms a pattern of three-part exchanges: 1) teacher elicitation, 2) student response, 3) teacher feedback. One aspect of the present study is to find out discourse patterns in college English classrooms for the purpose of which Sinclair and Coulthard's model will be consulted and discussed in Chapter three.

Mehan (1979) offered the three structural components of a pedagogic discourse: 1) an opening phase where the participants inform each other that they are in fact going to conduct a lesson as opposed to some other activities; 2) an instructional phase where information is exchanged between teacher and students; 3) a closing phase where participants are reminded of what went on in the core of a lesson (Ellis, 1990). However, Mehan notes that not all language lessons follow the same structure in that language classes may consist entirely of an instructional phase.

McTear (Ellis, 1994:577) observed four types of language use in EFL classroom discourse: 1) mechanical (i.e. no exchange of meaning is involved); 2) meaningful (i.e. meaning is contextualized but there is still no new information to be conveyed); 3)pseudo-communication(i.e. new information is conveyed but in a manner that would be unlikely to occur outside the classroom); 4)real communication (i.e. spontaneous speech resulting from the exchange of opinions, jokes, classroom management etc). Pedagogic discourse is believed to result from real communication type of language use, pseudo-communication is between these two aspects (Ellis, 1990).

The concept of language classroom discourse has undergone various interpretations. Nunan (Nunan, 1993) views classroom discourse as the distinctive type of discourse that occurs in classrooms. In his eyes, special features of classroom discourse include unequal power relationships which are marked by unequal power opportunities for teachers and pupils to nominate topics, take turns at speaking etc.

Ellis (Ellis, 1990) views classroom discourse in terms of two dimensions: 1) the interactive goal, 2) address. The interactive goal is divided into three types as follows: a) core goals are revealed in the explicit pedagogical intentions of the teacher. These goals can be medium-centered, message-centered or activity-centered. b) Framework goals are defined as the interactive goals related with the organization of classroom activity. c) social goals occur when the participants interact on daily social matters. The second dimension of classroom discourse identified by Ellis is the "address" and its related types: address types are associated with one of four identities which a classroom participant can have: teacher, pupil, class member, or group member and with the interactive role he possesses: speaker, addressee and hearer.

Van Lier (1988) describes classroom discourse in terms of two dimensions. He classifies the discourse of classroom interaction according to whether the teacher controls the topic (i.e. what is being talked about) and activity (i.e. the way the topic is talked about).Based on this classification, four basic types of classroom interaction are identified: the first type of classroom interaction takes place when neither the topic nor the activity is controlled by the teacher. The second type of interaction occurs when the teacher controls the topic but not the activity. This type of interaction requires teacher transmitting some information or explaining an issue. Type three interactions involve teacher control of both the topic and the activity. Type four occurs when the teacher controls activity but not the topic. This type of interaction involves teacher setting up small group work prescribing the rules but giving freedom of choice of topic (Ellis, 1990).

In China, the research is comparatively few. The materials I can get are very limited. Except "English Conversation" by Amy B.M.Tsui, others are only articles on this subject. For example, Yang min (2001) wrote an article "Foreign Language Classroom Research" in which she introduced history and method of classroom research; Xu Erqing and Ying huilan (2002) wrote "New College English Classroom Discourse Research", analyzing the discourse pattern and communicative features. They concluded that classroom discourse they observed was quite near to natural discourse, which is opposite to my assumption. Other works include "features and function of teacher talk" by Hu Xuewen (2003), "Investigation and Analysis of Teacher Talk in College English Classroom" by Zhouxing & Zhouyun (2002), "Classroom dialogue and Questioning Strategies" by Mu Fengliang (2000) and so on.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

3.1 Data Collection

The data were collected in three college English intensive reading classes of non-English majors in Qingdao University of Science and Technology where the college English teaching and learning has always been the center of attention because of college English test Band 4. Here "college English" as mentioned above refers to the English learned by non-English majors in the university. On account of the low passing rate of CET-4 in this university in recent years and the reform of CET-4, much emphasis and attention has been attached to college English teaching and learning. As a teacher of college English, the study of college English classroom discourse is of great interest to me in that I want to know what really goes on in our own classrooms and what I can do to improve college English teaching and learning.

The three classes which were observed and recorded from September to November were band 1 college English classes from different departments with about sixty students in each one. The students were about 18 years old and were attending the first year of their college. As freshmen they were conscious that without a good level of English their possibilities on the job market are greatly reduced. The majority of the students have studied English for 6 years although there is considerable difference in level because they came from different places with different level of English teaching. The three teachers in these classes had 5-6 years of teaching experience. The text book used was "New Horizon College English (I)" which is designed to train students' listening, speaking, reading, writing, translating ability with the reading ability as a priority. So the classes chosen here are all intensive reading classes.

Nunan (Nunan, 1989:76) said " there is no substitute for direct observation as a way of finding out about language classrooms", therefore in this study ,the author came into the classroom personally to observe. The observation was conducted in six classes; about 5 hours (50 minutes for each class) were observed and recorded, 3 of which were transcribed and used for analysis, then allowing as many patterns of behavior and inconsistencies as possible to emerge. After class, the author had an interview with the students, knowing more about their ideas and feeling about their teacher and class. Consequently, in order to collect quantitative and qualitative data needed for the analysis, the method employed was that of ethnographic research, and audio recording and field notes were applied as well.

3.2 Data Analysis and Discussion

3.2.1 Introduction of Sinclair and Coulthard's "IRF" model

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) developed a model for the description of teacher-pupil talk based on a hierarchy of discourse units. The language of the classroom differs from many forms of spoken discourse in that it is formally structured and controlled by one dominant party, i.e. the teacher.

Halliday (Allwright and Bailey, 1991) developed a description of grammar based on a rank scale. This theory has been

used by Sinclair and Coulthard (Andrew Atkins, 2001) to create a model for spoken discourse analysis which is commented on by Malouf (Andrew Atkins,2001) who says "the strongest effort to actually implement Halliday's ideas in a well- grounded, descriptively adequate theory of discourse has been made by Sinclair and Coulthard (1992)…developed as a tool for systematic study of classroom discourse, concentrating mainly on interactions between the teacher and individual students".

This is echoed by McCarthy (Michael McCarthy, 2002) who says "it is very useful for analyzing patterns of interaction where talk is relatively tightly structured". So it should be suitable for analyzing the college English classroom discourse patterns.

The Sinclair and Coulthard's model was devised in 1975 and slightly revised in 1992.It, like Halliday's model, is also a rank scale model and consists of five ranks: lesson, transaction, exchange, move and act, and they are related to one another in a" 'consists of' relationship"(Willis, 1992,cited from Andrew Atkins,2001). The ranks are hierarchical in nature with lesson being the largest unit and act being the smallest. Sinclair and Coulthard identify twenty-two different classes of act (Appendix A), which combine to make the five classes of move. These are framing and focusing moves, which combine to make boundary exchanges and opening, responding and follow-up moves, which combine to make teaching exchanges. A number of these exchanges combine to make transactions, which combine to make the lesson (Figure 1).

There are eleven subcategories of teaching exchanges, one of which is eliciting exchange. To put it in detail, that is, the teacher raises a question, then the students answer it, and the teacher gives an evaluative follow-up before raising another question. The three moves that constitute an eliciting exchange are referred to as "Initiation", "Response" and "Follow-up". The three-move structure of an exchange (IRF) is commonly cited, and will also be the basis of my data analysis. When a student replies the teacher's question, the other students may not hear clearly sometimes. So the teacher needs to repeat the students' words so as to make it clear to all the students. What's more important is that the teacher should give "feedback" to the student's answer, to show whether the answer is right or whether it is the answer expected by the teacher. For example:

T: (elicit) What does the food give you?

P: (reply) strength.

T: (feedback) Not only strength, we have another word for it.

P: (reply) energy

T: (feedback) Good, energy, yes.

In this kind of three-move structure if the third move doesn't appear, that usually is a hint that the student's reply is not correct. For example:

T: (elicit) Can you think why I changed "mat" to "rug"?

P: (reply) Mat's got two vowels in it.

T: (feedback)

T: (elicit) Which are they? What are they?

P: (reply) "a" and "t"

T: (feedback)

T: (elicit) Is "t" a vowel?

P: (reply) No.

T: (feedback) No.

According to Coulthard, an exchange is a structure made up of five moves: I(R/I) R (F)(F). An exchange is formed by at least two moves (initiation and response), and at most by five moves. Look at the following example:

T: Can anyone tell me what this means?

P: Does it mean danger men at work?

T: Yes…

(The above three examples are quoted from (Wang Dexing, 1998: 202-209)

In this case, pupil's words are not only a response to teacher's question, but also an initiation. In college English classrooms where the students have low proficiency, discourse acts such as "loop", "nomination", "prompt", and "clue" are expected to appear, because when a teacher does not get a response or gets a wrong answer to an elicitation, he can start again by repeating or rephrasing the question, or move on to another student. A discourse element for these

teacher's acts is called "bound initiation" (Ib), and it may be bound in ways of "re-initiation", "listing", "reinforce", or "loop". An exchange which reactivates an element in another exchange instead of repeating it or rephrasing it is called "bound exchange", containing single or a few Ib slots (Coulthard, 1992).

In a word, Sinclair and Coulthard's "IRF" model provides us with a set of description category and analysis procedures, on the basis of which data collected can be analyzed.

3.2.2 Results

The results of discourse structure analysis using Sinclair and Coulthard's Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) model are shown in Table 1.

3.2.3 Discussion

The discourse analysis by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) is for classroom situations where the teacher exerts the maximum amount of control over the structure of the discourse (Michael McCarthy, 2002).The above table shows us that several discourse patterns appear simultaneously in one class, with IRF pattern accounting for 35.42% on average, IR pattern 21.88%,IIbRF 16.67% and I pattern 13.54%. These four patterns were observed at relatively high rates, which agree with Sinclair and Coulthard's findings on discourse structure. This is probably because (a) the classes examined in this study were all large classes of about 60 students where the students were in formal or restrictive circumstances. The teachers exerted the maximum amount of control over the classes and the patterns of the discourse. (b) Chinese students have been disciplined not to speak in classes without a teacher's direction, and most of them are unwilling to speak English in front of their classmates because they fear making mistakes and causing laugh from others. (c) The students simply can't speak freely because of their poor spoken English, so they only speak when they were asked to in most of cases.

It is noteworthy that patterns with a bound initiation accounted for about 29.17% of all exchanges on average. It is observed that the students sometimes just kept silence or gave a wrong answer to the teacher's elicitation so the teacher would start again by repeating or rephrasing the question, or move on to another student as in the following examples:

1) I   T: For example, "The patient should listen to the doctor's advice and act on it." Who can translate? Qianyang, could you please?

R   P1: Sorry, I can't.

Ib   T: Sorry, I can't. Liupei, what about you?

R   P1: "The patient should listen to the doctor's advice and act on it."

F   T: Very good. Sit down please.

2) I   T: And also there is the word "remark". What is its noun form?

Ib   It's noun form (in Chinese)……

R   PP: the original form (in Chinese).

F   T: Good,the same word, meaning speaking negatively(in Chinese)

R/I in Table 3 means that response and initiation elements exist in one Utterance, making up only 1.05% of the total exchanges, which also shows that teacher-initiated exchanges are dominant. The following is an example of R/I:

3) I   T: What does "brainwave" mean in the second line? Wangpeng?

R/I   P1: Pardon?

Ib   T: brainwave?

R   P1: nao dianbo (in Chinese)

F   T: Yes. That's right.

However, the discourse patterns observed also had some discrepancy from Sinclair and Coulthard's model, that is, patterns "I" and "IIbRIbRF". Just as mentioned above, according to Coulthard, an exchange is formed by at least two moves (initiation and response),and at most by five moves. But the pattern "I" is made up of only one move, while patterns "IIbRIbRF" with six moves as shown in the following examples:

4) I   T: Good. Could you give me example?

PP: (silence)

I   T: For example, "The patient should listen to the doctor's advice and act on it."   Who can repeat the sentence? (in Chinese) Qianyang, could you please?

5) I   T: Very good. For example, "He expressed himself,taking advantage of the opportunity" (in Chinese). How

to translate?   [pause] Who would like to try?

PP: (silence)

Ib   T: Zhao xiangning

R   P1: Sorry, I couldn't.

Ib   T: Cong xiaoyan

R   P2: He took advantage of the meeting to express his opinion.

F   T: Yes, very good. Sit down please. Well, so much for what I want to explain this class, next, try your best to remember as many new words as possible. You may start.

In example 4, after the teacher's initiation, students kept silent, so the teacher answered his own question several seconds later, and then started another exchange.

In example 5, when students kept silent, the teacher nominated a girl student. Failing to get correct answer from her, the teacher went on to another student, then the second bound initiation was formed, followed by Response and Feedback.

As a result, these two patterns are also as reasonable as others although they are inconsistent with Coulthard's research. Their existence also suggests students' low English proficiency and teachers' dominance over the class in college English classroom, which has been mentioned above.

4. Conclusion

In sum, Sinclair and Coulthard's model can be applied to college English classroom discourse analysis in that there were quite a lot patterns found agreeing with their model although there also existed some discrepancy. The patterns of discourse in college English classrooms were that: teacher-initiated exchanges dominated; "IRF" patterns did exist and accounted for the most proportion of all the discourse patterns with an average percentage of 35.42%.Several different patterns found in the data showed that teachers of college English were attempting to motivate students' participation in classroom discourse, and complicated discourse patterns did exist in these classrooms but most of the exchanges were still limited in the pattern of "IRF".

5. Inspiration from the present study

The present study showed that college English teaching and learning in the three classrooms observed aimed to apply new teaching methods and concepts and teachers made a great effort in motivating the students in participating in classroom activities and communication. Communication did exist. However, there is a long way to go before it can be said that the classes observed were student-centered and had communicative approach as the main teaching method to train students' communicative competence. The study result is significant in improving college English teaching and learning and promoting students' English proficiency in that it outlined the patterns of the classroom discourse. From this study we can know how teachers used their spoken language in conducting a college English lesson and how their way of speaking influences students' response and participation. We can also know the good points and weak points in terms of discourse usage in college English classrooms so as to overcome the shortcomings in college English teaching and learning.

Based on the study above, the following strategies are suggested for the college English teachers to refer to for the purpose of sustaining student engagement and communicative interaction in classrooms:

1) Involving more "negotiated interaction" in classroom discourse

From the discourse patterns found in this study, it is clear that "IRF" still dominate the classroom exchange pattern. This means that teacher and students lack skill in keeping the classroom discourse in a sustained and smooth flow. Negotiated interaction is a solution to this problem. Negotiated interaction involves skills in "helping one another to communicate, for example, by jointly expressing messages, filling in lapses in the conversation, indicating gaps in understanding, and repairing communication breakdown" (Boulima, 1999:4). In non-negotiated interaction, the moves "initiation", "response" and "feedback" usually succeed one another, and have a clear-cut function. "Initiation" opens the exchange, "response" constitutes a reply to the preceding "initiation", and "feedback" evaluates the preceding "response" and closes the exchange. In "negotiated interaction", however, these moves do not necessarily succeed one another, and their functions seem to overlap. Negotiated interaction can be initiated for two main purposes: to resolve interactive problems or to sustain the conversation. Obviously, negotiated interaction will be useful and helpful in sustaining classroom discourse and make it more tactful.

2) Maximize opportunities for students' participation

The above data analysis tells us it was the teacher who was dominating the classroom. The teacher did the most talk and controlled the topic. In this way the students were passive---they answered questions and got information passively from the teacher. The teacher should bear in mind that it is students who are learning language; therefore maximizing

opportunities for students' participation to let them dominate the classroom is very necessary and important. Such target can be reached by such activities as role-play, story telling, debating, holding seminars and making presentations etc. In a word, enlarging students' portion in classroom and letting the learners dominate their own classroom, with the teachers only playing the role of a guide and an organizer is a challenging but beneficial aim, which is also the direction to which teachers in college English classrooms are working.

As a college English teacher, you can refer to these strategies to activate more students into communicative teaching activities in classrooms for the purpose of improving college English teaching and learning.

We should also keep in mind that classroom discourse is a cooperative event in which the teacher and the students cooperate and negotiate with each other in achieving certain instructional goals in the classroom. Language classroom teachers can consider classroom discourses being composed of pedagogic and natural discourse at two poles of an instructional discourse continuum rather than as alternatives. However, we can encourage natural discourse in the language classroom by motivating more equal participation in the negotiation of meaning through various tasks and thus shifting the focus from on the interactive process itself to on promoting students' virtual language proficiency.

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Table 1. An analysis of the classroom discourse for IRF structure during instruction

Discourse element	class one		class two		class three		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	3	9.68%	5	20.83%	5	12.20%	13	13.54%
IR	10	32.26%	3	12.50%	8	19.51%	21	21.88%
IRF	10	32.26%	9	37.50%	15	36.59%	34	35.42%
IRIbRF	1	3.23%	1	4.17%	4	9.76%	6	6.25%
IIbRIbRF	1	3.23%	2	8.33%	1	2.44%	4	4.17%
IIbRF	6	19.35%	4	16.67%	6	14.63%	16	16.67%
IIbIbRF	0		0		1	2.44%	1	1.04%
IR/IIbRF	0		0		1	2.44%	1	1.04%
TOTAL	31	100%	24	100%	41	100%	96	100%

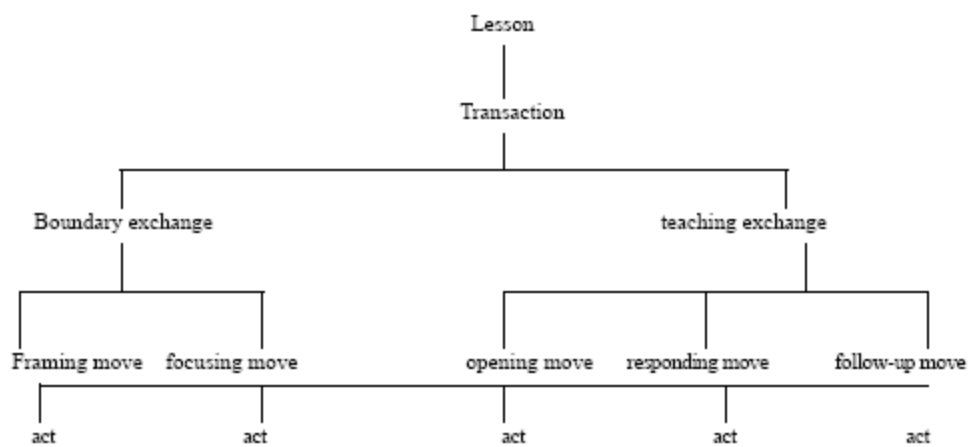(N=number of exchanges   %=percentage of the total)

Figure 1. Sinclair and Coulthard's model

English and Chinese Cultural Connotation
of Color Words in Comparison

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Abstract

There are various kinds of words and phrases about color both in Chinese and English languages. These color words play a very important role in the intercultural communication of the modern world. Because of different cultural backgrounds, the meaning English color words expresses has large differences. Because the connotation of the color in Chinese and Western cultures often has different characteristics, some connotations even make the color become a color taboo or a color worship. This paper tries to explore the color at different cultural backgrounds reflecting in the different cultural connotation.

Keywords: Color words, Cultural background, Cultural connotation, Intercultural communication

1. Introduction

In Chinese and English languages, the words and phrases of different colors are very abundant. . Colors may convey different messages to people of different cultures. Due to the respective cultural background and tradition, some phrases containing color words have far surpassed their original meanings, forming different connotations in cultures. The difference of the connotation of the color between different cultures is determined by each different national and historical background, the different traditions and habits, the different peoples' life experience, and aesthetic psychology of culture. It is a kind of permanent culture phenomenon. The various connotations of colors possess an important position in the intercultural communication in the modern world. The different languages of different nations and peoples in the whole world are extensive and profound. The connotation of the colors is not only an important tool for intercultural communication, but also an important cultural and prominent component of the relationship between the cultural content, cultural form, between the interdependence and interaction. If a nation's people do not understand other people's specific connotation of colors, it is impossible to carry out effective and correct communication.

The previous scholars have studied the connotation of color from different sides. Most of them concentrated on the symbolic meaning of the colors. This paper pays attention to the deeper connotation of different colors .From the Chinese and western cultural background to the traditions and habits, to the different peoples' life experience, all of these are related to the connotation of color.

2. The Connotation of Red in Chinese and Western Cultures

The red color is the strongest one of all kinds of colors for the person's eyes and brains. Red is the favorite color for the Chinese people, it stands for the joyous meaning and happiness. But in the western counties, it has the meaning of violence and anger.

The most important color for the Chinese is the red color. In China, the red color is our country's basic cultural color. It shows the Chinese material and spirit pursuit. It is the color of good luck and is used for decoration and wedding dressing, the brides always wear a red Qi Pao or a red wedding dress at wedding ceremony. Because in the Chinese traditions, the red color stands for the propitious sign. It is a lucky symbol which can bring happiness and make the brides and grooms' life better and better. Another example, at the APEC meeting of Shanghai, all the leaders wear the Chinese traditional clothes. All the clothes are of the same style, but the colors are different. Chinese leader chooses the red clothes, while most of the Western leaders wear clothes of other kinds of colors. From this example, we can see that the important connotation of red for the Chinese in various aspects of the intercultural communication. On the joyous day, the Chinese hang the red lanterns, stick the red "happinese" word on the walls when the young couple get married,

and stick the red "fu" word on the windows in the Chinese Spring Festival. The ribbon-cutting ceremony on the festival or holiday cannot be separated from the red color. The Chinese call the prosperous sign. The red also symbolizes the success. More examples are "popular singer", "honor roll" etc.

The commendatory connotation of the red in China is known popularly. It means the success, the progress, and the revolution. But the derogatory meaning of it is also very important, which is worthy of getting. In the terrorist times, red is the symbol of the death and the common people have the feeling of danger towards the red color. When a prisoner is sentenced to death, his name is circled in red .And his clothes are always in red to show his low position as a prisoner and his crime. This tradition has passed a long time from the ancient time until now.

In American history, red is not a very good word. It is the association of the "fire", "blood", it symbolizes cruelty, war, violence, revolution. Some Westerners take "red" as an evil omen or red for danger, stemming from the spirits of bullfighters. So the red rag (or red flag) that bullfighters use to provoke bulls is considered annoying. According to the Random House Dictionary, red further develops to be the synonym for political radical. Furthermore, red has some extended meanings, such as cruelty, disaster, etc. Such as: the red revenge, the red battle (a cruel battle in which a lot of lives have been lost); the red revolution (the radical, violent revolution); the red activities (the left-wing radical activity). It also symbolizes danger and alarm, such as: the red alert(alarming in emergency); the red adventurous story (a risky story); the red flag (the dangerous signal); have red hands(commit a murder);red ideas(revolutionary concepts);red ruin(fire, as a disaster); in the red(in debt) ; red ink(deficit); see red(be full of anger). It still symbolizes the dissipated action, such as the red waste of his youth (he wasted youth because of his dissipated action); the red light district (the place where the hookers induce the people), etc.

One American scholar Rudolf Arnheim once writes in his book *Chromatics* "the colors have the strong ability to express the different emotions. It is exciting that the red can make us think of the meaning of fire, blood and the revolution." .When Hawks translated " *Dream of the Red Chamber* " ,the book title is translated for the "*The Story of the Stone*"(its original name),because he is aware that the red color in modern English may make the readers associate "violence", "blood", so he adapted the title " *The Story of the Stone* " .From this ,we can see that red has totally different connotation in Western culture.

Red also has the commendatory connotation in Western culture besides the dangerous sign and meaning. For example, "red-blooded", it means a brave person who has the big courage; "a red letter day, firstly, it is just a habit in the church to use the red letter to circle the festivals. But now, it is used in any festival which is worthy of remembering and any joyous festival; "red ribbon Bath", it is the French glory bandage which is in red; "red-cross", it is the national bandage of Britain.

Red is often used to describe people's favorite people or things by Westerners. A famous poem"My Love Is Red, Red Rose"written by Robert Burns ___a famous English poet ,known as the English poetry of fine works.

3. The Connotation of White in Chinese and Western Cultures

In Chinese culture, white is contrary to red, It is a basic color taboo. It shows the Chinese's material and spirit disgust. In the traditional Chinese perspective, White makes people tend to think of solemn mourning, which originated from ancient times for color of superstition. White color in China is symbol of death, lifeless performance and bad omen. So when the people pass away, the relatives always wear the white clothes and hit the white long narrow flag to the funeral to mourn him or her. And the psychological function of white is influenced by its political function. It symbolizes reaction, failure, foolish and vain action. For example, the fool is called the "idiot". It also signifies the commoners who have little knowledge and have no fame, and such persons are called "common people".

The white in China also has the commendatory meaning. White is associated with light, goodness, innocence, purity, and virginity. It is considered to be the color of perfection. White means safety, purity, and cleanliness. As opposed to black, white usually has a positive connotation. It also stands for the bright future and hope, which has almost the same meaning in English at this point.

In the opinion of Westerners, white symbolizes purity, elegance and frank. When the young get married, the bride wears the snow-white wedding dress. This tradition begins from the Victoria Ages, at that time the white wedding dress was in the most popular era. Since Queen Victorian who wore a beautiful white wedding dress married her sweetheart, the white wedding dress swept the whole world. Even now, it remains the most popular for the brides, because it is a symbol of purity and fidelity. Before the Victorian Age, the brides' wedding dress did not attach much importance to the colors. At Roman time, the brides wore the white wedding dress, because the white is a symbol of celebration and it emphasizes the connotation of the sanctity and loyalty. And from 1850 to 1900, white is a symbol of wealth. At the beginning of this century, white represents the significance of purity and happiness .At this point, it is higher than any other kind of colors. Even the Westerners connect the white with virginity.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once says that "The gray past the white future". For the Westerners, the white is the color which is full of future and happiness. And there are many examples about the commendatory meaning of white, Such as:

"white knight", it means the winner of the politician or the business; "white lie", it is the lie of goodwill which is said not to make people embarrassed; "a white day" (a lucky day);"days marked with a white stone", it means the happy days of one's life. In one western tale, one beautiful princess is called the Snowwhite, she is the symbol of innocence, beauty and smart. So it is clear that the Westerners regard the white as their favorite color and use its connotation widely in various aspects of life.

In English, white often stands for the hope, peace, happiness and light, but it also has the derogatory connotation in Western culture. Such as: white feather, it means the fright and the timid, this meaning is traced back to the cockfight game in ancient times. Because the Westerners think that the cock with white feathers at its tail is not brave and timid ones, afterwards, this meaning is used widely and accepted widely. Such as: "white flag" is the symbol of failure or surrender; "white trash" is used to despise the poor white people. All of these examples are the derogatory connotation of white in Western countries.

4. The Connotation of Black in Chinese and Western Cultures

Black denotes strength and authority; it is considered to be a very formal, elegant, and prestigious color. And the black color is the Emperor's unique color of the clothes, the common people are not allowed to wear the black clothes. And it also stands for honesty and justice in China. In the traditional Beijing Opera, the honest and good men all have the black faces to show their justice. The poets like to use the black to describe the healthy and the strong young boys or girls.

Black stands for the evil omen in China's traditional culture. Besides, black implies gloom, disgrace, misfortune, extreme anger, etc. In the book *The Records of The Historian,* the black color is connected with the person of the lowest social status or the foolish people. In modern China, the derivatives of the black is always connected with the disaster, adversity, the black color has the reactionary connotation in China's mainland .It often refers to the evil gang or some offenders and criminals. If we do not know this connotation during intercultural communication, it will cause trouble and obstacle.

In Western culture, the black color is the sign of the darkness. In the Bible, the black stands for the devil, the evil, the pain and the misfortune. In the classic ballet SWAN LAKE, the black swan stands for the hatred or the enmity. In the figure of speech, the usage of black always gives people the feeling of terror, which can be seen in the following examples. "the black art" (enchantment); black and blue(;full of bruises); black day (unlucky day);black dog (unhappy);a black look(an angry look; glare at somebody); "in a black mood"(in low spirits); "black sheep"(evil member of the herd); "a black villain", (the hooligan); "black ingratitude" (a person who is ungrateful and leave one's benefactor in the lurch); "black words" is the unlucky words which can make others angry; " a black letter day" is the ominous day for a person; "black mail" usually means the kidnapper extorts money from victims; "black money" is the illegal money which does not make a statement of duty; "black-hearted" means a malicious person, etc. These expressions are all related to the bad, evil, indignant characteristics in Western culture.

Black not only symbolizes the death, evil and disaster, at the same time, it also has the connotation of sobriety and stateliness, black suit and the black dress are both the favorite traditional clothes for the Westerners. On serious occasions, the celebrities all like the black clothes; all the members of the symphony orchestra are all in black suit to show the respect to the audience; in the service industry, the black suit is the ones for the high-grade managers; "black-ball" is the serious ball which is different with the optional Disco. The most distinct example about the commendatory meaning of black is shown by the black people in America. In the past time, the black slaves which were cadged to America are called Negro. With the success of the battle of antiracism, the black people choose the word "black" to stand for themselves. "Black is beautiful" has become the modern slogan. And in the black's culture, all kinds of things which are related to the black people have get the "black" word. Such as: "Black- English"

5. Conclusion

In short, the cultural connotation in the color words between Chinese and English languages is very abundant. Here only two common colors are discussed. The color phrases have a very strong rhetoric function .They are the indispensable and important part in the intercultural communication. Because there are many differences between the Chinese and American's favorite colors. So the phrases of different colors in the two different nations show the different meanings. If we do not understand these words and the vocabulary with which constitute the social customs and cultural backgrounds, it is difficult to understand their cultural connotations, the communication will cause ambiguity. With the development of modern society, the intercultural communication about the colors develops quickly. In order to get more progress under the specific situation about the color communication, we should pay more attention to the deep and wide meaning of the colors in different nations and get the understanding of the special English language history, geographical backgrounds and social customs. We should get to find the similarities and the differences of the same colors between the different cultures from the history aspect: the religion and the taboos of the different cultures. The religion influences the people's life very largely. People's many habits and taboos can be traced

back to the religion. The colors' symbolic meanings and taboos are the same. Knowing this, we are easy to know the colors' history background and the wide meaning of the colors in the specific situation.

As language learners, whether simple or complex terms, we should unearth its cultural connotation from our points of view, to identify English- Chinese differences and similarities between two languages. Only in this way will we make less mistakes in the process of using them, and improve our accuracy ,flexibility in the use of language.

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Application of the Principle of Public Hearing

in Media in China

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Abstract

Fundamental significance of the principle of public hearing lies in the fact that it provides a platform for social supervision, which is more propitious to judicial fairness. As a supervision entity with authoritative social functions, modern media brings harmony and conflicts together in the process of application of jurisdiction in different fields of media, but they haven't got integrated so far. This paper aims at application of public hearing in media context and elaborates respectively different aspects of facilitation and limitation. And finally, several thoughts are discussed in terms of integration between jurisdiction and media.

Keywords: Public hearing, Judicial fairness, Media, Integration of horizons

Public hearing, an authoritative standard of supervising and ensuring judicial fairness, together with the modern media that pursues similarly social fairness as the goal of value, has, matter of course, constructed a harmonious standard of "recommendation of virtuous persons with no taboo of relatives" in the present "sociology era". However, there exists objectively a congenital difference between jurisdiction and field perspectives of media, so contradiction and conflicts will inevitably exist in understanding and practicing the principle of public hearing in China. Therefore, integration of this principle with field of media seems extremely important. From a certain perspective, this is an objective need of constructing and developing democracy and the rule of law in the society.

1. Summary of public hearing in China

1.1 Legislative backgrounds of the principle of public hearing

The principle of public hearing originated from "Of Crimes and Punishments", which was the masterpiece of Beccaria, the Father of Italian modern criminal laws in the 18th Century. In this masterpiece, there is such a rhesis, which warns people all the time, "Hearing should be public, and proof of a crime should be public, so that public opinions which might be the unique socially restriction means could restrict mightiness and desire." Since this famous inference came out, many countries have included and adopted it in their legislation and jurisdiction. For instance, the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, which was passed in 1791, was stipulated as follows, "Among all criminal actions, a defendant is entitled to a rapid public hearing by the jury in the state and region where a crime happens". Simultaneously, this was the earliest legislative form of expression in public hearing. In 1948, United Nations issued "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", and stipulated in the Tenth Article, "Every one is entitled equally to an equitable and public hearing by an independent and impartial court, so that his or her rights and obligations can be confirmed and any criminal charge can be decided upon him." By then, public hearing had become an internationally recognized principle.

"Constitution" in China was clearly stipulated in 1982, "All case hearing by the People's Court should be public except for special cases specified by the law". Furthermore, "Criminal Law", "Code of Civil Law", "Administrative Procedure Law" and "Organic Law of the Courts" all without exception have absorbed the principle of public hearing in their general provisions. Therefore, it is obvious that, public hearing is not only a significant standard in the lawsuit system in China, but has escalated to be a constitutional principle.

1.2 Fundamental content of the principle of public hearing in China

Briefly speaking, the so-called public hearing refers to the fact that, all activities that might affect the final decision of a

legal case should be public in the court. According to the existing law in China, there are mainly the following three aspects about the principle of public hearing. Firstly, the hearing process should be public. Activities of a case hearing should include submission of a proof, investigation and confirmation etc. All should be publicized in the court until it is particularly specified by the law. The public are allowed to sit on and the news media are allowed to interview and report. It is thereby known that, direct and open public auditing and indirect and open media supervision both are merged into the principle of public hearing. Secondly, the result of a hearing should be public, namely, public sentence, which means that a judgment and facts and reasons for such a judgment should be publicly declared. At the same time, journalists are allowed to make a report, and the court should also make a public announcement timely. Thirdly, the targets of a sentence should be public, which not only include litigants, but also the society.

2. Harmonious standard of public hearing and media supervision

2.1 Public hearing and media supervision have the identical value standard

According to standards of "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights", judicial fairness should include such factors as protection of the law, hearing by a qualified court, an independent and impartial court and a fair and public hearing. In short, public hearing is one of the requirements of judicial democracy per se, and also a powerful weapon for realizing judicial fairness, which exactly have the same role as media supervision (Note 1). In virtue of different carriers, media supervision demonstrates different expression forms. Free expression of public opinions has become the channel and sign for a citizen to realize expressing his or her right to freedom, and furthermore, he or she may share sufficiently the right to freedom of opinion and expression. Meanwhile, this is exactly the significant content of the fundamental rights of citizens in China, a significant guarantee and reflection to implement rule by law and constitutional governance. In a certain meaning, it is expression of right to freedom that the legitimacy of media supervision on jurisdiction gets explained. Therefore, value pursuit of media supervision and public hearing is reflected in the same standard, namely, to put interests of the public in the first place, to strengthen transparency of the jurisdiction, to realize fairness through public hearing, to extensively accept social supervision, and furthermore, to realize social justice and fairness.

2.2 Public hearing in media supervision has its historical inevitability

It is obvious from the historical track of public hearing that, accompaniment of public hearing and media supervision has not only been due, but more be necessary. Tracing back to 1980s when was the early period of public hearing in China, the 'public" form of hearing was more confined to the judges and both litigants. In order to realize the public hearing in its material meaning, the courts of law of all levels have always been exploring so as to enlarge public scope of a hearing and to enhance transparency of a court hearing and public credibility of judicial fairness. As it goes, "Ten years for sharpening a sword". Similarly, it was not until the end of 1990s that some local courts began to utilize the popular medium TV to broadcast a live court hearing. For example, the case of collapse of Hong Bridge in Qijiang County Chongqing Municipality concerned all round the whole nation not only aroused extensive attention of the public, but also acquired obvious social effects, because the live broadcast of its hearing was presented to the public without missing of any detail, which was an omnibearing embodiment of the principle of public hearing.

It is proved by practice that, public hearing of jurisdiction in hand with media not only enables such legal professionals as judges, procurators and lawyers to encounter supervision of the whole society, but can satisfy and realize right of information and supervision on the side of citizens to an utmost extent. Therefore, we may regard integration of public hearing with media supervision as a necessity of reform in judicature mechanism and social progress. Just as the great American judge Brandeis said, "Sunshine is the best preservative", we may also believe that, public hearing and media supervision can not only be considered "preservative", but can be distinguished as "a skilful doctor that can cure social diseases".

3. Conflicting constraints between public hearing and media supervision

Media supervision has an irreplaceable positive promotor action on growth of public hearing. However, just as a coin has two sides, there often happens contradiction between public hearing and media supervision.

3.1 Different field perspectives lead to different responses to a legal case

As two different social effective forces, jurisdiction and media hold different field perspectives. They not only respectively play different social roles, but follow distinctive survival rules. As for jurisdiction, it is often reflected whether the chain of proof is complete? However, media focus on whether the bottom line of morality has overstepped? Then, jurisdiction and media entangle with each other in the complicated sense and sensibility, and any yielding or concession is impossible on the two sides.

When a legal event happens, the "truth" from the perspective of law and "truth" pursued by media might not be totally identical. The "truth" of the former is usually defined as "a standard beyond reasonable doubt". In other words, it refers to the fact finally asserted by a court in the process of a judicial litigation, and it is a new fact adjusted and remodeled

by Law of Evidence, Procedural law and Substantive Law. Although it may not be the fact itself, it has an utmost and "reasonable acceptability". On the contrary, the "truth" pursued by media is more a "fact" from a comprehensive judgment by combination of one's perception and experiences. It is often assessed and disputed based on morality, which shapes a sharp contrast with a neutral position of jurisdiction to judge right and wrong.

3.2 The identity of "mouthpiece" of media may result in a politicalized trend of hearing

According to the economist Lindblom, authority, exchange and persuasion are the three fundamental factors of social domination. If we regard law as the corresponding entity of "authority", then public opinion is a corresponding entity of "persuasion". Broadly speaking, public opinion is also a control mechanism. However, in reality, public opinion which has the greatest influential scope and extent is more dependent on report and transmission of media. Therefore, Schramm, the Great Master of mass communication vividly compares media to a "social radar", and regards it as the "vane" and "barometer" of social development. Again, media have an inherent advantage of "mouthpiece".

All media behaviors of supervision on judicial activities haven't been totally brought into a legal system track, so some media do generate a politicalized trend due to their identity of "mouthpiece". That is, media resort to the political power to invade judicial space, the essence of which is to arouse attention of "the department concerned" by means of media disclosure and report. Then, issues will get resolved after involvement or written comments of immediate leaders. This is just as the American scholar Benjamin summarized the mode of Chinese media's influences upon jurisdiction after his inspection of Chinese jurisdiction: media affect top authorities, who affect the court and further affect the jurisdiction. Mr. He Weifang points out pointedly official newspapers are a modern republication of classical official news and media to a certain extent, which follows the will of the organ they are attached to but not a discipline of journalism. As a consequence, the judicial department is unable to handle a case independently, but may make unfair and even illegal judgment under stress of politics and the society. For instance, in the case of "Zhang Jinzhu", he, who shouldn't have been sentenced to death, was sentenced the death penalty just because of fierce attack of media and pressure of relevant authorities once and again. Such a negative effect of judgment by the media tends to result in a negative concept that the society needs ruling by people not by law, and in a belief that law performs practically no function at all. If media supervision is not timely brought into a track of rule by law, then intervention of the media without rule of law might lead to a politicalized judgment. As a result, consciousness of rules of law which have been implanted into people's mind disappear, so it's unlikely for a sound judicial system to exist because of its leak. Furthermore, it's difficult for the social fairness and justice to get implemented.

4. Several thoughts on integration of jurisdiction and media

How to coexist harmoniously and stably and how to attain an integration of fields for jurisdiction and media?

The authors believe that the key is to formulate a department law that can adjust relations between jurisdiction and media, and that should be formally brought into the track of rule by law. A legal means should be applied for a precise guarantee of functioning space between media and jurisdiction, and to avoid randomness and uncertainty in practical operation. Simultaneously, rights and obligations of jurisdiction and media should be made clear in presence of legal news. Even if a conflict appears between them, a legal means should be applied to resolve the dispute, and the truth should be to the law. For instance, the manner and time in which the media interferes with a case; scope and extent of disclosure of judicial documents that the media may come into contact with; under what circumstance the judge has the obligation to explain; when the media report legal news, they should distinguish clearly the truth and viewpoints of the media, separation of a report and their comments, and relevant legal obligations, etc. All in all, the department law should not only restrain activities of the media to confirm to the standard, but should also become a legal proof for ensuring supervision of the media on activities of jurisdiction. Meanwhile, this department law should also create a more optimized law-related environment for integration of jurisdiction with fields of the media.

Then, contradiction between media and jurisdiction can be alleviated from the perspective of judicial procedure. The court should make some adjustment in certain judicial procedures to eliminate inappropriate or unfavorable influences by the media per se, mainly including the following several means. Firstly, the court can avoid a case in a vehement condition of public opinions by postponing the hearing. According to the existing procedural law in China, a postponed or suspended hearing can both be applied into such a legal case, and by means of such a roundabout hearing, unfavorable influences from media public opinions on the case can be reduced to its minimum. Of course, the precondition is that the party involved can be guaranteed a rational and fair hearing within the legal term. Secondly, the hearing venue should be changed and furthermore the designated jurisdiction should be determined, because regional variation might result in different influences of media in different areas. If a case is transferred from "a harder-hit area" to an area with relatively less influence, then unfavorable impacts of media on jurisdiction can be evaded to a certain extent. Thirdly, it should be strictly restricted that judicial officials and litigants release any information about a pending case to the media. A judicial official should not only keep to the professional secrets, but should also defend judicial independence. To maintain an appropriate distance with the media is what is required in <<Professional Ethics of Judges>> and <<Professional Ethics of Prosecutors>>. Different litigants have different opportunities to approach to the

media. Therefore, if the media can't provide equal statement opportunities to the two parties, then it would be certain that interests of the other side will be affected, and simultaneously the trend of public opinions to lean to one side will be brought about.

Finally, considering professional quality and ethics of judicial and media practitioners, integration of jurisdiction and media is also an effective approach to relieving conflicts between them. In recent years, some measures and systems for realization of judicial independence and fairness have come on, and some practitioners who have knowledge of law work on the front line of media, which at least can avoid friction caused by a large part of professional differences. Self-discipline of media will also provide guarantee for standardized journalism and communications.

Meanwhile, it should be noted that, no matter how the media and jurisdiction get coordinated, their contradiction may still emerge or even intensify in a particular situation. Realization of their integration once and for all by placing hope on the legal system is unrealistic. It's only possible for us to try to search for an equilibrium point between them during a dynamic adjustment and mutual friction. However, the goal is no more than a guarantee of rational supervision of the media on jurisdiction and also a guarantee of complete implementation of judicial fairness.

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Note 1.

Media supervision refers to disclosure, report, comment or attack of such mass media as newspaper, publications, broadcast, TV and network on all sorts of violation of law, activities against discipline, and especially violation of law malpractice or malversation of the national civil servants.

Application of the Water and Oil Repellent Finishing Agent EX-910E in Polyester Nonwovens

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Abstract

By the experiment, the optimal technological conditions that the water and oil repellent finishing agent EX-910E is applied in polyester nonwovens were confirmed. The technological conditions include that EX-910E usage is 40g/l, the bridging agent F-2921E usage is 6g/l, the pre-curing condition is $100°C × 2/3$min, and the curing condition is $160°C × 2.5$ min. The results of the experiment indicated that the nonwovens finished by the optimal conditions possessed good water and oil repellent effects.

Keywords: Water and oil repellency, Finishing, Nonwovens

Nonwovens possess many characteristics such as soft handle, good drapability, good hydroscopic property, good ventilation property and slippery appearance. Nonwovens are mainly applied in (1) base fabric materials such as synthetic leather base fabric and auto interior trims, (2) medical fabrics such as gauze, operating gown and bandage, (3) home adornments such as sofa, portiere and curtain, (4) dining-room fabrics such as dishcloth and damp towel. Because the technology of nonwoven is simple and its cost is low, it has entered into various industries in the life, and the post-finishing of the nonwovens should be implemented, and the manufacturing method and the structure of nonwovens directly influence the technology of finishing, and the finishing effect. Therefore, before the nonwovens are finished, the manufacturing method and cloth cover should be cognized comprehensively, which can obtain satisfactory finishing performance.

Waters and oils in the life are easily to pollute the shell fabrics, but the water and oil repellent fabrics can prevent the pollution of water feculences and oil feculences, and the finished fabrics will not change their original styles and produce new damages and flecks. In recent years, with the enhancement of human living level and the quickness of living rhythm, people more and more require high functional fabrics which should be washed machine and tended easily, and the water and oil repellent finishing of fabrics has been a sort of product function finishing with high added-value pursued by people. More and more application of nonwovens in the accouterments and family products also urgently require anti-pollution finishing function.

The water and oil repellent agent EX-910E adopted in the article is the fluorite macromolecule polymer, and fabrics are finished by fluorite resin, the hydrophobic oil fluorite alkyl will be arranged on the surface of the fiber thick and fast directionally, and point to the air layer, so it possesses perfect water and oil repellence. Convenient for the research, the water and oil repellent effects all refer to national standards and are classified by classes. The water repellence is tested by the "GB/T 14577-93 Textiles-Determination of water repellency of fabrics by the Bundesmann rain-shower test", and the oil repellence is tested by the "GB/T 19977-2005 Textiles-Determination of oil repellency of fabrics by the Hydrocarbon resistance test". In the article, the EX-910E is used in the water and oil repellent finishing for the nonwovens, and the main technological parameters are discussed, the influences of the finishing agent and cross-linking agent to the finishing effect are analyzed, and the optimal technological conditions are obtained (Liu, 2002), which

could offer references for the water and oil repellent finishing of nonwovens and correlative technological parameters for the nonwoven finishing of the enterprise.

1. Experiment

1.1 Materials

1.1.1 Fabrics

The fabrics in the experiment are polyester stitch-bonded nonwoven cloths.

1.1.2 Reagents

The reagents in the experiment include the finishing agent EX-910E (made by Tianjin Dai-lchi Fine Chemical Co., Ltd) and the bridging agent F-2921E (made by Tianjin Dai-lchi Fine Chemical Co., Ltd).

1.1.3 Instruments and equipments

The instruments and equipments in the experiment include bench mangle NM-450 (Japan), laboratory modeling dryer DK-5E (Japan), electronic balance and self-made Bundesmann rain-shower test equipment.

1.2 Experiment contents and methods

1.2.1 Water and oil repellent finishing technology

The basic technology includes grey cloth rinsing and drying→ bathing and mangling twice in the finishing liquid (mangle expression is 70%) → pre-curing (100℃, and 2 or 3min) → curing.

According to the basic finishing technological conditions of fabrics, the orthogonal experiment is adopted in the experiment, and the three-factor and three-level orthogonal experiment is designed through changing the usages of the finishing agent and the bridging agent, and the curing temperature. The factor-level table is seen in Table 1.

1.2.2 Optimization experiment (Hang, 2007)

Because the optimized values obtained by the data analysis method in the orthogonal experiment can only been certain combinations of the level in the experiment, and the optimized results can not exceed the range of the level in the experiment, and the definite direction of the further experiment can not be confirmed, and the experiment still has strong exploring color and is not exactly enough, so in the primary selection, the orthogonal experiment method will have slow constringency speed, and can not confirm the data change law, and the optimization experiment is adopted based on the good technological conditions from the orthogonal experiment.

(1) Finishing agent optimization experiment

Respectively take 20g/l, 25g/l, 30g/l, 35g/l, 40g/l and 45g/l finishing agents (EX-900E) to pre-cure in 100℃ (2.5min) and cure in 170℃ (1min) in 6g/l bridging agent.

(2) Curing condition optimization experiment

Mix 40g/l finishing agent with 6g/l bridging agent, and cure the mixture respectively in the curing conditions of 150℃×3min, 160℃×2.5min, 170℃×1min and 180℃×40s.

(3) Bridging agent optimization experiment

Under the curing conditions of 40g/l finishing agent and 160℃×2min, and respectively take 2g/l, 4g/l, 6g/l and 8g/l bridging agents to do the experiment.

1.2.3 Water repellent effect test

Test the water repellent effect according to the "GB/T 14577-93 Textiles-Determination of water repellency of fabrics by the Bundesmann rain-shower test", and under certain flux, observe the residual fluid drops on the surface of the sample cloth to grade the water repellent effect.

1.2.4 Oil repellent effect test

Test the oil repellency according to the standard of "GB/T 19977-2005 Textiles-Determination of oil repellency of fabrics by the Hydrocarbon resistance test".

2. Experiment results and discussions

2.1 Orthogonal experiment result discussion

Analyze the orthogonal experiment by the intuitive analysis and variance analysis, and the result is seen in Table 2.

2.1.1 Intuitive analysis

From the analysis result in Table 3, with the increase of the concentration of the finishing agent EX-910E, the finishing effect is better and better, and the concentration of the bridging agent should not be excessive, or else, the water and oil

repellent effect will be influenced, and with the gradual increase of the temperature, the effect increasing is not so obvious, and the results of the curing condition of 150℃×3min and the curing condition of 170℃×1min are almost same, and to save the time and enhance the efficiency, the curing condition of 170℃×1min is selected to be one of the technological conditions, so the technology of $A_3B_2C_3$ can be primarily confirmed as the optimal technological condition, i.e. 30g/l finishing agent, 6g/l bridging agent, pre-curing condition of 100℃ (3min) and curing condition of 170℃ (1min).

2.1.2 Variance analysis (results seen in Table 4 and Table 5)

The critical value $F_{0.05}(2,2)$ is 19, and according to the experiment result, the F values of A, B and C are all smaller than the critical value, so they influence the water and oil repellent effect little. But for the comparison of three parties, the usage of the finishing agent can largely influence the experiment result. The concentration of the finishing agent directly influences its film forming performance on the surface of the fabrics, and influences the final water and oil repellent effect. Therefore, in the future experiment, the concentration of the finishing agent should be emphasized specially, and the economic and proper concentration should be sought to confirm the optimal technological conditions.

2.2 Optimization experiment result discussion

2.2.1 Finishing agent optimization experiment result discussion

From Table 6, the finishing agents with different concentrations will produce different water and oil repellent effects, and the effects after water bathing will be reduced a little, and the water and oil repellent effect of 40g/l finishing agent is good, so it can be selected to be the proper finishing agent in the experiment.

2.2.2 Curing condition optimization experiment result discussion

The experiment was performed under the conditions of 40g/l finishing agent, 6g/l bridging agent and pre-curing condition of 100℃ (3min).

From Table 7, their water and oil repellent effects after water bathing will be decreased to different extents, and through the comparison, under the condition of 160℃×2.5min, the finishing effect is good, but the handle of the sample cloth is hard under this condition, and though the finishing effect is not ideal under the condition of 170℃ or 180℃ and the cloth cover is little yellow under the condition of 180℃, but the handle is soft, so there still is hope to find the finishing result with good water and oil repellent effect and good handle through the technology selection.

2.2.3 Bridging agent optimization experiment result discussion

The experiment was performed under the conditions of 40g/l finishing agent, pre-curing condition of 100℃ (3min) and curing condition of 160℃×2.5min.

From Table 8, the usage of bridging agent should be proper, and with the increase of the usage, the water and oil effect will be enhanced, but when the concentration of the bridging agent exceeds 6g/l, the increase of the finishing agent has not significantly enhance the water and oil repellency of nonwovens. So the concentration of the bridging agent is selected as 6g/l.

As with all things, the proper technological conditions should include 40g/l finishing agent, 6g/l bridging agent, pre-curing condition of 100℃ (3min), and curing condition of 160℃×2.5min.

3. Finishing effects of fabrics with different structures

In the experiment, two sorts of polyester stitch-bonded nonwovens were selected. One is the white sample cloth, and its thickness is thin, and the polyester silks shuttle in nonwovens along one direction. The other one is the pink sample cloth which is thick, and the polyester silks shuttle in nonwovens along certain angle. Above technology was used to process these two sorts of sample cloth, and for the former, the water repellency was class 3, and the oil repellency was class 3, and after water bathing five times, the water repellency was class 2, and the oil repellency was class 2, and the effects was bad. For the latter, the finished water repellency was class 4.5, and the oil repellency was class 4, and after water bathing five times, the water repellence was class 4, and the oil repellency was class 3. Though the effect was enhanced a little comparing with the former, but the effect was still not ideal. From the finishing effects of two sorts of fabric, the ideal water and oil repellent class can be achieved through changing the structure of the fabrics or perfecting the components of the surface.

4. Conclusions

The experiment indicated that the optimal technology conditions of EX-910E for the nonwovens included 40g/l finishing agent, 6g/l bridging agent, pre-curing condition of 100℃ (3min), and curing condition of 160℃×2.5min.

The concrete conclusions from the experiment include following aspects.

(1) The organizational structure of fabrics influences its strength, and further influences the water bathing fastness. Concretely speaking, for two sorts of sample cloths in the experiment, the polyester silks in the white sample cloth

shuttled in nonwovens along one direction, which induced that the result of low strength, and the polyester silks in the pink sample cloth shuttled in nonwovens along certain angle, and the strength was a little higher, so the effects of two sorts of sample cloth after water bathing were very clear, the effect of the white sample cloth was much less than the pink sample cloth. The reason is that the white sample cloth fluffed after water bathing, and the organizational structure of the surface was damaged, and the film structure of the finishing agent was damaged on the surface of the fabrics, which made the film fastness reduced largely, and the water and oil repellent effects was largely reduced.

(2) The density and the thickness of the fabrics also influence the evaluation effect of the water and oil repellence. The water and oil repellent effect of white sample cloth was not ideal because of its low density and thin thickness, and comparatively the water and oil repellent effect of pink sample cloth was better because of its high density and deep thickness.

(3) The instrument needed by the water repellent evaluation test in the experiment was self-made according to the standards of "GB/T 14577-93 Textiles-Determination of water repellency of fabrics by the Bundesmann rain-shower test", and it was not standard enough, which would influence the evaluation effect to some extent.

(4) The evaluation of the water and oil repellence could not be quantified, and it contained certain subjective factors, which also would influence the evaluation effect to some extent.

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Table 1. Factor-level table in the orthogonal experiment

Factor / Level	Finishing agent A (g/l)	Bridging agent B (g/l)	Curing condition C (℃×min)
1	20 g/l	5 g/l	150℃×2.5min
2	25 g/l	6 g/l	160℃×2min
3	30 g/l	7 g/l	170℃×1min

Table 2. Results of the orthogonal experiment

Factor / Level	A	B	C	Experiment test results	
				Water repellency	Oil repellency
1	1	1	1	2	2
2	1	2	2	3	2
3	1	3	3	3	3
4	2	1	2	5	4
5	2	2	3	5	4.5
6	2	3	1	2	2
7	3	1	3	5	4
8	3	2	1	5	3.5
9	3	3	2	5	4

Table 3. Intuitive analysis

Factor	A	B	C	Experiment test results	
Level				Water repellency (Y)	Oil repellency (Z)
1	1	1	1	2	2
2	1	2	2	3	2
3	1	3	3	3	3
4	2	1	2	5	4
5	2	2	3	5	4.5
6	2	3	1	2	2
7	3	1	3	5	4
8	3	2	1	5	3.5
9	3	3	2	5	4
Y average 1	2.667	4	3		
Y average 2	4	4.333	4.333		
Y average 3	5	3.333	4.333		
Z average 1	2.333	3.333	2.5		
Z average 2	3.5	3.333	3.333		
Z average 3	3.833	3	3.833		
Range 1	2.333	1	1.333		
Range 2	1.5	0.3	1.333		

Table 4. Water repellency variance

Source	Deviation	Freedom degree	Mean square deviation	Value of F1
A	8.227	2	4.1135	5.294
B	1.54	2	0.77	0.990
C	3.538	2	1.769	2.277
Error	1.554	2	0.777	
Sum	14.859	8		

Table 5. Oil repellency variance

Source	Deviation	Freedom degree	Mean square deviation	Value of F2
A	3.723	2	1.8616	2.274
B	0.223	2	0.1115	0.136
C	2.723	2	1.3616	1.664
Error	1.637	2	0.8185	
Sum	8.306	8		

Table 6. Results of the finishing agent optimization experiment (water bath conditions: bath ratio is 1:25, the washing-powder usage is 2g/l, the bath temperature is 45℃, the time is 40min, and the rev of the test glass is 40±2r/min)

Finishing agent (g/l)	Effects after finishing			Effects after bathing five times	
	Water repellency	Contact angle	Oil repellency	Water repellency	Oil repellency
20	2	121°	3	2	2
25	3	123°	3.5	2	2
30	3	123°	3.5	3	2.5
35	4	125°	4	4	3
40	5	127°	4.5	4.5	3
45	5	128°	4.5	4.5	3

Table 7. Results of curing condition optimization experiment

Curing conditions	Effects after finishing		Effects after bathing five times	
	Water repellency	Oil repellency	Water repellency	Oil repellency
150℃×3min	5	4.5	4	3
160℃×2.5min	5	5	4.5	3
170℃×1min	3	3.5	2	2.5
180℃×40s	3	3.5	3	2

Table 8. Results of bridging agent optimization experiment

Bridging agent (g/l)	Effects after finishing		Effects after bathing five times	
	Water repellency	Oil repellency	Water repellency	Oil repellency
2	2	2	2	2
4	3	2	2	2
6	4	3	3	2.5
8	4	2.5	2	2

English Reading Base on Social Constructivist Approach

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Abstract

This paper explains the constructivist approach to reading teaching and shows how a dialogic approach to reading empowers readers to position themselves as participants in making meaning together with the text and its authors, rather than remaining as mute outsiders to the reading process. This shift in constructing reader -roles means that our students need to take a strategic approach to their reading, and will need careful scaffolding to help them develop effective, independent reading strategies and dispositions.

Keywords: Social constructivist approach, Reading, Strategies

1. Introduction

Language teachers views of language and language learning profoundly influence their practice on a day-to-day basis. Traditionally in the Chinese classroom, students have been expected to accept unquestioningly the words of the teacher and the texts they produce for their students to read. The student's role has been that of passive receiver of ideas. This view is beginning to change, however, increasingly, teachers believe that their students should participate actively in class, joining in interactive language learning tasks and becoming autonomous learners. This shift in attitude opens the door for a new approach to learning and teaching: social constructivism. This paper presents the key concepts underlying social constructivism together with some practical suggestions for teaching reading —perhaps the most important route by which Chinese students acquire competence in English.

2. What is Social Constructivism?

Social constructivism provides a psycholinguistic explanation for how learning can be fostered effectively through interactive pedagogical practices. It emphasizes that learning takes place in a sociocultural environment and views learners as "active constructors of their own learning environment" (Mittchell &Myles 1988). We learn not as isolated individuals, but as active members of society. What we learn, and how we make sense of knowledge, depends on where and when we are learning.

Vygotsky, the father of constructivism, claimed that learning occurs through dialogue (Vygotsky 1978). This dialogue is initially intermental —it takes place between teacher and student; between students; or even between text and reader (Wilson 1999). However, the learner makes sense of what is said or written through internal or intramental dialogue (Vygotsky 1978). Thus learning is interactive in the sense that learners must interact with sources of ideas/ knowledge in social settings, as well as in the sense that they must take an active part in reconstructing ideas/ knowledge within their own minds.

Further, Vygotsky points out that learning depends on the purpose or motivation for learning: activity theory (Lantolf 2000). As learners, what we select to focus on in our learning, and how we go about that, depends on the social purposes of the activity. For example, students acquire knowledge quite differently if they are preparing for a test on irregular verbs, or if they are reading an email from a penfriend or a magazine article about their favorite music. Teachers can play a large part in setting up learning environment which exploit different learning purposes — but what really counts is how the students themselves view the activity. For example, are they simply learning the verbs in order to pass tomorrow's test, or are they striving to learn the language in order to use it in communicative settings.

3. What is Reading from a Constructivist Point of View?

Constructivists see reading, like learning, as social practice. The social context affects when you read, what you read, where you read, who you read with, and of course WHY and HOW you read.

Interacting with text can involve practices as diverse as reading instructions, scanning a newspaper, or reading an academic article. So when we are designing curricula for reading in EFL classes we need to ask ourselves first of all: what do our students need to be able to do in terms of social practice?

Luke and Freebody (1990, 2002) define four different reader resources: code breaking, meaning making text using, and text analyzing. The most fundamental resource is code breaking: deciphering text at letter, word and sentence-level. For many students decoding text is synonymous with "reading" because this is the social practice they have been taught in schools. Decoding practices, including both top-down and bottom-up strategies, are usually the main focus of school reading classes. Top-down strategies include guessing meaning from context, predicting, using background knowledge, using text structure. Bottom-up strategies include looking up unknown vocabulary in a dictionary or glossary, working out sentence grammar, deciphering reference chains. Classroom reading practices which are based on bottom-up strategies may help to scaffold students development of reading skills. However, if students are not encouraged to go beyond these strategies, they may learn reading habits which are over-focused on decoding to the detriment of other reading resource. In the field of English as a foreign language teaching, reading aloud is one common classroom reading practice. It purports to support decoding, but it in fact has little to do with making meaning from texts and all to do with decoding the sound-symbol relationship. Many students have to work so hard to decode the sound-symbol relationship at the word level, that they lose sight of the bigger picture: decoding the overall meaning of the text. Yet classroom practices of sub-vocalizing or of diligently writing down translation equivalents often remain with students long after they are appropriate.

Obviously, there is more to reading than simply decoding. Luke and Freebody point out that making meaning is another essential reading resource. This is where dialogue is involved (Wertsch 1991). It is not enough to just hear/see the words on the page; the reader also has to listen, and to struggle to make sense in their own minds of what the writer is saying — intermental dialogue in Vygotsky's terms. In listening to the author's words, students need to construct their own representation of the author's message — intramental dialogue. Rarely do readers understand exactly what the writer had in mind (Lewis &Slade 1994). For example, in writing a recipe the author may write "Cut the carrots finely". This apparently simple phrase can be understood in many different ways, as different readers will have different interpretations of the meaning of "finely", different conceptions of what sort of knife should be used, how the carrots are to be held while chopping, and so on. Reading in a foreign language is particularly hard, because the words and grammatical structures, the text conventions and the cultural context are all less than familiar. In fact, there can be no perfect way to understand most texts. Even something as apparently factual as a train-timetable can be interpreted through different cultural lenses. Students need to understand that all readers construct meaning from texts differently, depending on their purpose for reading, their background and even their state of mind. There is usually no single, unequivocal meaning in a text. Thus, reading entails constructing meaning from text through intermental and intramental dialogue.

Finally, as text analysts, students need to gain text awareness, in order to build their own skills aswriters, observing how language is used within different genres to achieve different purposes. They also need to develop a"suspicious eye" (Wallace 1995) detecting bias, and identifying the author's stance. They need to learn how writers use language to persuade, entertain, inform, and influence their audiences.

4. What Does Social Constructivist Theory Mean for Foreign Language Reading Classes?

To give an idea of how the constructivist theory translates into action in teaching reading in EFL, we propose the following strategies.

4.1 Providing a context and purpose for reading

Students need to have a clear idea of why they are reading and to know how the text relates to other aspects of their course. For example, before tackling a reading passage in your coursebook, establish the context first using visual cues, discussion questions, or a link to students' own lives. Make sure that the students know which reader role you want them to adopt: making meaning, exploiting the text for useful vocabulary, looking at the text as a model for some other task, learning some new information in preparation for an assignment, finding out the author's opinion on the topic, or do you expect them simply to enjoy the story ?Is the text meant to be used as a language resource, or is it meant to stimulate dialogue ?Students also need encouragement to move beyond this teacher-textbook controlled situation into reading texts which they themselves have selected for their own purposes.?

4.2 Modeling

A useful form of scaffolding is to model the reading practices we want our students to adopt. You can do this by using a modified version of the think-aloud research technique The teacher stands in front of the class —not reading aloud as much as verbalizing her thought processes as she reads. This is a good way to model skimming for example, or processes such as relating one text to another, asking questions of the text, guessing the meaning of difficult words. It can demonstrate that reading is not necessarily a linear process, but involves jumping forwards, linking back, re-reading

sections which are problematic. Students find it very reassuring when the teacher verbalizes thoughts such as "What does that mean? Hang on, better read that bit again". It helps to break down the myth that many students have: "If only I were better at English, I would understand this perfectly."Above all, modeling helps students to see what it means to enter into dialogue with the text.

4.3 Asking questions

Constructivist theory emphasizes that we need to encourage students to create their own meaning from text, rather than to impose our interpretation of the meaning upon them —though of course we may help as resources to bridge the linguistic and cultural gap that students experience in reading a text. Too often, though, reading teachers dominate the lesson by "telling" students the meaning of the text rather than assisting them to create meaning themselves. Our questions need to show a genuine interest in the meanings the students construct rather than insisting on our own understandings. In fact, what we want students to learn from an EFL reading class is not the content of the reading text: rather we want to them to strengthen their ability to use the four reader resources. So our questions need to focus on text awareness rather than text content.

Perhaps the most effective text awareness questions are those which help students gain insight into the way texts are structured. "What words tell you that the author is introducing a new point?" "In this paragraph, how many times can you find the word X (the topic of the paragraph)." Similarly, questions which allow students to identify the author's stance are useful: "Do you think the author admires Helen Keller? How do you know that? What other words could the author have used?"

4.4 Integrating the four macroskills

Other people's texts serve as excellent models for students own writing. Close analysis of a reading text can enable students to emulate the text in their own writing. For example, if students are required to write a tourist brochure, it is a good idea to have them analyze other tourist brochures first —gathering useful vocabulary and sentence structures, observing the format and layout, comparing texts to see which ones work best, or which ones achieve the sort of effect they would like. This does not mean uncritically applying models as in the behaviourist approach, because it involves the students in informed and analytical choice of language for a defined purpose. Students own writing can benefit greatly from borrowing liberally from model texts in creating their own texts: a skill which is essential for EFL students, especially EAP students (Wilson 1997).

4.5 Creating awareness of the author behind the text

Text analysis can develop a strong understanding in our students that texts are written by real people for a range of different purposes, and that some are more successful than others in achieving this purpose. An interesting exercise with advanced students is to compare two reports of the same news item from different sources: how reliable are they? What sources have been used? What has been picked out as the key point? What verbs have been used and to what effect ?which one concords most with their own perceptions of the situation ?Obviously, this sort of activity is not only more motivating, but also leads to a much better appreciation of text, its participants and its purposes than the traditional "Write a summary of this article."The outcome is also more interesting: rather than being led towards "plagiphrasing" (Wilson 1997) from the article, students can develop a critical stance. They can later be asked to write their own article using the information —and the vocabulary and structures of the original articles where appropriate —to create their own construction of the situation.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the social constructivist approach to reading offers tools and principles for EFL teachers which can help them to draw their students into energetic participation in text events, entering into active dialogue with texts (and their authors), not as outsiders, but as active participants. In many ways this approach may challenge the traditional beliefs of EFL teachers. But if you believe that language is about communication, it is worth giving serious thought to social constructivist approaches to teaching reading so that your students learn to read as an authentic and meaningful activity rather than as a classroom exercise.

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Seton and His Woodcraft Movement

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Abstract

This paper briefly explains some aspects that spurred Seton to organize the Woodcraft Indians, an organization that stresses the conservation of nature and character-building by means of outdoor activities and states that Seton's admiration of Native American traditions and life style has a profound influence on Woodcraft Movement. From Seton's personal experiences, we can see that all his personal activities formed a solid foundation for his environmentally minded pursuits later in life. Woodcraft Movement is the legacy that the conservation pioneer Seton left to the humankind.

Keywords: Seton, Woodcraft Movement, Indians, Conservation, Nature, The young

1. Introduction

It is well known that the world-renowned naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton (1860-1946) wrote many famous animal stories, such as the *Wild Animals I Have Known*, *Animal Heroes*, and *Lives of the Hunted*, etc., which have encouraged and symbolized a hearty communion with nature and wild animals. But the Chinese readers little know that Seton was the founder of the Woodcraft Indians and the Boy Scout of America. Founded in April, 1902, the Woodcraft Movement, which is primarily an educational movement with outdoor activities, such as swimming, boating, camping, forestry, nature-study, scouting, photography, etc., was a "character-making movement with a blue sky method, for all ages and both sexes." The movement, which attaches great importance to the making of character, aims to cultivate the ideal figures of all-round development who are physically strong, happy in helping, equipped for emergencies, wise in the lore of the woods, courteous and self-controlled in dealing with people and affairs. In some sense, the movement is one that makes entertainment a medium of education, in which the form of recreation is applied to the character-building. Seton's admiration of Native American traditions and life style has a profound influence on the movement. This paper mainly discusses some aspects that fostered Seton in founding the organization Woodcraft Indians.

2. Personal experiences

Interestingly, Seton was not a born Canadian or American. He was born in England and then at the age of six immigrated to Canada with his family. Curiously enough, as a toddler, Seton should love nature so much that one of the ways his mother let him sit still was to tell him, "You are a tree. Trees do not move," and thus it is said that he would sit motionless for more than an hour. When he was very young, Ernest Thompson Seton liked exploring the forest on the edge of the town several miles away from his home. He liked listening to the wondrous songs of the birds and following the dim trails. He was so absorbed in the beautiful nature around him that he often forgot to eat his lunch. The only way to cure his pain from his father's whipping was to look for the treasures in the woods or dodge in the cabin he put up in the Don Valley by himself. When he was studying at the Collegiate, he wrote and acted out with his friends and younger brothers an Indian play, whose hero was a villain, who was triumphant over the Europeans settlers. The success of the play endowed Seton with gratification of his instincts and he wanted to do what he thought was right: to organize an Indian tribe among his playmates. Only after all the others did not agree with him on this, did he compromise with them to start a Robin Hood Band instead. In 1875, Seton was invited to spend his summer on Blackwell's farm; there he savored the rurality. He led the others on the farm in the ways of Indian life. There he built a dam, built his first tepee, made bows and arrows and did everything he could to reestablish ways of Indian life.

From his personal intercourses with the Indians, Seton realized that most of the Indian natives were good, courageous and friendly. So different from most of his contemporaries, Seton had a tender heart to the Indians. When he first hunted with a Cree named Chaska, "We took to each other from the beginning. There was an indefinable charm about this quiet, dignified manners—— and I knew that he could teach me much about woodcraft," he wrote in his autobiography. And

indeed he learned much woodcraft from the Indian.

In 1892, Seton was appointed as the naturalist of Manitoba Province. When he explored the Winnipeg prairie, to his great surprise and disappointment, he found that everything had changed because of the farmers' plough: the lakes, the Sandhills, the strictly prairie birds, the striped gopher the sharp-tailed grouse, the swallows from the barns and the grey wolf. To him, all the sweet and wild things were gone. He began to realize the disaster man's plough brought to the Manitoba prairie. He could not help being deeply concerned with the future of the prairie. He wanted to do something to establish reservations for Native Americans and parks for animals threatened by extinction. But the conscience to conserve nature at that time was only an impulse and ten years later could he put his dream into practice.

Another aspect that prompted him to form an organization to conserve nature was his connection with   Charles A. Eastman, a Sioux Indian from Minnesota. The latter acted as Seton's most effective instructor who taught him the Indian way of life. In establishing his own tribe of boy Indians, Seton absorbed various fine tribal cultures, for he bore the motto in mind: "The best things of the best Indians."

From Seton's personal experiences, we can see that all these activities formed a solid foundation for Seton's environmentally minded pursuits later in life. Through his continual exposure to nature and wilderness in Canada, toward life and the society of his time, he developed a quite revolutionary attitude, namely, he laid significant emphasis on a return to more traditional Native American-based relationship of humans with their surroundings. To sum up, Seton's personal life did have great influence on him and he gradually came to the direction of conserving nature by means of the Woodcraft Indians.

3. A successful educator of the young

Seton was successful in guiding the youth toward the directions he planned. One example will suffice in this:

In 1901, he had a large house of his own built in Connecticut. But soon after he moved in, he found that the youngsters nearby cut gaps in his high fence and wrote and drew shocking things upon his gate. Every morning he had to paint over the obscenities inscribed there the night before. This repeated for many times. It dawn on Seton that those boys had played, fished and hunted in the region long before he fenced it. Before long, he found that the boys entered and invaded his premises, shooting animals in his park and wreaking damage wherever they could. Instead of prosecuting the youngsters and putting the leaders of them into prison, as some of his friends advised him to do, Seton invited the boys to his house and dined together, played games together and then before they went to bed, Seton lost no time to tell they interesting stories about nature and the good Woodcraft Indians, who regarded chivalry, courage and honour as the three main virtues to be practiced. From then on, all these boys became Seton's intimate friends all their lives.

Seton believed that "not one boy in a thousand is born bad. Boys have their badness thrust upon them. They are made bad by evil surroundings during the formative period between school and manhood; between twelve and twenty years of age." And he believed that if a boy was given "something to do, something to think about, and something to enjoy in the woods," it was possible to lead his energies into some achievements. It is because Seton instilled the Indian woodcraft lore to the young, they had "something to do, something to think about, and something to enjoy in the woods", that nearly all of them became useful persons to the country when grew up, some holding very important social positions.

In educating children, Seton was unusual at that time. Maybe he had suffered enough from his father's cruel home government. Seton did not want to adopt the same punishment to the boys who were naughty and mischievous. Yes, indeed, at that time, he had no children of his own. He did not have any experience working with the children. He did not even know how to get along with the young. But in his mind, he felt that he would lead the young toward a healthy way, toward the way that would lead to a new, harmonious relationship between man and nature.

In Seton's mind, the solution to the deterioration of America, the hope and future of America lay in America's young people. He saw that the industrial growth and the expansion of urban America were depriving the country and its youth of many of the fine qualities which should have great impact on their lives: "money grubbing, machine politics, degrading sports, cigarettes, town life of the worst kind, false ideals, moral laxity, and lessening church power, in a word, 'city rot' has worked evil in this nation."

Seton was anxiety-ridden in facing such an austere challenge at the period of transformation. His personal experience enabled him to realize that "those live longest who live nearest to the ground, that is, who live the simple life of primitive times, divested, however, of the evils that ignorance in those times begot." To Seton, the Indian living in harmony with his environment accorded with this ideal, and the Indian unit of organization was most probable to make the dream come true. Thus he wrote in *The Gospel of the Redman*:

"No man owns the wood of the forest, or the water of the rivers, or the soil of the earth. He did not make them, they are the harvest of the land that belongs to the whole people; and only so much of them is his as he can gather with his own hands and use in his own home….

The Tribe may give to one family the exclusive right to hunt or gather wood or forage or wild rice or fruit in one tract or range, but the family cannot sell this right, nor can they hire others to hunt or gather for them, lest the hunting be destroyed by overdrain. " (Seton, 1966, p26)

By illustrating the Indian way of life, Seton depicted the mankind's ideal to live in harmony with its nature, so that in the future nature would also provide mankind with the necessities of life nonstop.

It must be said that another factor fostered him in his moving steadily in the direction of conserving and organizing the Woodcraft Indians: he was greatly influenced by James Mavor, a political economics professor at the University of Toronto, who had a strong propensity for Fabian Socialism. During the ten years prior to the founding of the Woodcraft Indians, they met frequently and discussed many times and Seton came to understand the ideas of socialism. It is apparent that his personal experiences, his exploration of the prairies, his connection with the economic professor, and his identification with the Indian and with wild creatures, all together molded his ideas of the Woodcraft Indians.

In describing the inspiration behind his organization of the Woodcraft Indians, he said, "It would help bring together young people from various so-called stations, break down the barriers that society has foolishly placed upon them, and establish in their minds when they are young a finer kind of humanity, a real understanding that the important thing is the association of a human spirit."

The Woodcraft movement proved to be a huge success with many members of the organization becoming upright and respectable citizens, and it soon caught the attention of newspapers and educators. One prominent educator even said to Seton: "What a monument such an organization would be to your life!"

A monument it is indeed to Seton's life and is of great consequence to the following generations. When it comes to the explanations, we must say that the reasons for his success are both complicated and varied. Admittedly, Seton's idea of the Woodcraft Movement emerged as the times required. Around the end of 19th century, a change was taking place unawares in the American lifestyle. The public began to rediscover their roots in nature and Native American society rather than to regard the materialism of the pioneering age as the pursuit of their life. To some extent, the movement met the needs of the society. Seton was strongly convinced that what was best for American people to do was to interact with the land in a concordant relationship, conserving their resources and landscapes, and learning from the Native Americans who had once lived in American forests and prairies.

4. Conclusion

Woodcraft Movement is the legacy that the conservation pioneer Seton left to our humankind. In retrospect, we can better understand what we should do in order to live peacefully with nature; we can better understand the ways in which the environment is conserved. Inspired by Seton's example, more and more people, old and young, the world over, are open-minded in terms of how to interact with nature instead of regarding nature as merely a source of profits. Just as Seton concluded in *The Gospel of the Red Man*:

"Our system has broken down——our system is a failure. Wherever pushed to logical conclusion, it makes one millionaire and a million paupers. There is no complete happiness under its blight and still I held my vision of the perfect man——athletic, fearless, kind, picturesque, wise in the ways of the woods, and without reproach of life. And, by a long, long trail, with ample knowledge of histories and of persons, I was led, as many before have been, to choose the ideal Red man. By all the evidence at hand, his was a far better system, a better thought, because it produced far nobler, better men. He, more than any type I know, is the stuff that fires our highest dreams of manhood, realized complete. Him, therefore, I proclaim as the model for an outdoor life, our travel guide of the fourfold way that leads to perfect manhood." (Seton, 1966, p110)

Ernest Thompson Seton did not merely regarded the Indian way as ideal; on the contrary, he led the young to put the ideal into practice. Seton and his Woodcraft Indians were representatives of the public awareness of the significance of the preservation of the wilderness and natural resources. It is obvious that by participating in the movement, many boys transcended their previous relationship with their natural surroundings, holding a new reverence for natural beauty and nature's creatures. Since then, not only the young people, but also more and more adults are gradually interested in the outdoor organization and begin to realize that nature and environment concern everyone on the earth. Through the Woodcraft Movement, Seton inspired the conservationist attitude into the people of the early 20th century and future generations.

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Study on the Balloon Ring Follow-up

Device Control System of Spinning Machine

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Abstract

To enhance the production efficiency of ring spinning and reduce the tension in the spinning process, the system which installed the balloon control ring on the ring spinning machine to control the balloon configuration of the yarn in the spanning process and control the tension in the spinning process was designed in the article. The system is the automatic control system based on PLC (Programmable Logic Controller) which uses MT5000 configuration software to compile the human-computer interface of eView touch screen, and control the balloon ring position of the ring spinning machine through the communication between the touch screen and OMRON CP1H PLC. This control system could be easily operated and monitored real-timely, and control the balloon ring position of the ring spinning machine.

Keywords: Spinning machine, PLC (Programmable Logic Controller), Touch screen, Step motor

High speed spinning has been the development tendency of the ring spinning machine nowadays (Jin, 1994, P.30-33). In the spinning process, when the peak value of the spinning tension exceeds the valley value of the spinning strength, the broken ends of spinning will occur, so to control and stabilize the spinning tension, especially to reduce the tension break and the cross opportunity of the tension wave peak and strength valley, is one of effective measure to reduce the broken end rate of spinning. The spinning tension is closely relative to the highness of the balloon. In recent years, the ring spinning machine develops from traditional single motor to present multiple motors, and the online checking of PLC application, industrial control machine, frequency conversion and servo control, touch screen display, subsection drive and technological parameters, and the network function have been applied very broadly, which makes the harmonized cooperation of multiple motors and the automatization degree achieve quite higher level (Song, 2003 & Luo, 2005 & Li, 2003 & Li, 2001). Gwaltne was the first scientist who applied the balloon control ring in the ring spinning machine, and he found that the balloon control ring could reduce the maximum semi-diameter of the balloon and decrease the spinning tension. At present, Fraser et al further studied the function of balloon ring in the ring spinning production. Except for reducing the tension, the application of the balloon control ring in the ring spinning production can help to form stable tow balloon (C. Mack, 1953, P.483-498 & W. B. Fraser, 1993, P.439-468).

However, the maximum semi-diameter and the correlative position of the free balloon in the spinning process are always changing, and the position of the balloon control ring should be dynamic. To optimize the position and size of the balloon control ring and enhance the production efficiency of the ring spinning, the balloon ring follow-up device of spinning machine was designed in the article, which could realize the computer digital control the balloon ring position in the spinning process. The new system only needs to modify the PLC program of the spinning machine and add corresponding drive machine, and this device is independent, and it can be applied in other digital spinning machines.

1. Confirmation of the control scheme

Based on the present digital spinning machine, the multi-motor independent drive is composed by PLC, touch screen and servo motor. PLC and touch screen are adopted as the upper system to monitor the production process and the dynamic change of the signals. Because the step motor can be controlled by the digital signals, and it can work in the open loop without feedback, and it has not the accumulated positioning errors, and its control precision is very high, and PLC is internally installed by the pulse output function and set up corresponding control orders to control the step motor (Zhou, 2008, P.100-101 & Wang, 2006, P.36-42 & Zhao, 2008, P.115-117). Therefore, the touch screen is used to communicate with PLC in the system, and PLC is the control core, and the step motor is the execution component to

realize the computer digital control of the balloon ring position in the spinning process.

2. Implementation of the control system

The system is mainly composed by touch screen, PLC, switch power supply, step motor driver, step motor, pulling-thread displacement sensor and linear module (seen in Figure 1). The control system mainly uses the programs to control the speed, direction and displacement of the balloon ring and keep the balloon ring at the 1/2 between the ring rail and the twizzle for perfecting the yarn quality.

PLC is the core of the whole control system, and it stores the technological parameters and controls the running of the step motor though certain control algorithm. The step motor driver converts and amplifies the control signals from PLC to control the pulse and direction of the motor. As the execution unit, the step motor mainly complete the ascending and descending actions of the balloon control ring of the spinning machine through the mechanical drive. The pulling-thread displacement sensor converts the displacement of the ring tail into the digital variables to PLC. The switch power supply offers the work power supply for the touch screen, PLC and step motor.

As the human-computer interface, the touch screen can set up the technological parameters and monitor the running status. The new generation industrial embedded touch screen eView MT5000 is adopted in the design. In the configuration software of MT5000, define the serial port equipment is OMRON CP1H PLC, the serial port number is COM1, the data bit is 7, the stop bit is 2, the baud rate is 9600, and check is even parity check, PLC station number is 0, and after define the equipments, define the I/O variables to respectively connect with input register and output register and control the switch. The connection between the touch screen and PLC is seen in Figure 2.

3. Work principle of the system

OMRON CP1H PLC is adopted in the spinning machine control system, and CP1H is the machine integrating multiple functions, which is embedded 4-axis high speed pulse output function (100KHz), simulation variable I/O function and serial communication function, and many functions such as high speed count input, pulse enactment PULS, frequency enactment SPED and positioning control PLS2 are very convenient to control the speed and position of various motors.

In the system seen in Figure 3, PLC output port 00 inputs pulse speed into the PU port of the step motor driver, and controls the revs and displacement of the step motor in the follow-up system. PLC output port 02 inputs the direction signals into the DR port of the driver to control the direction turning of the step motor. PLC input ports 03, 08 and 09 take the return values of the displacement sensor as the input signals of the high speed counter 0 to check the position of the ring rail real-timely. Input ports 00 and 01 respectively are the start signal and stop signal of the step motor, and the input port 02 is the reset signal of the step motor. The ports 04 and 05 are the input signals of the approach switch to control the highest point and the lowest of the balloon ring for protecting the balloon ring. When the manual operation is needed, the signals 06 and 07 can be inputted by PLC to control the positive and passive rotations of the step motor by the inching mode. When the port 06 is ON, the motor rotates positively and the balloon ring ascends, and when the port 07 is ON, the motor rotates negatively and the balloon ring descends.

4. Software design of the control system

Some special functions such as high speed pulse processing order, logic control order and count operation order offered by OMRON PLC can be used conveniently to control the ascending, descending, positively rotating, negatively rotating, and constant speed shifting of the balloon ring, especially, PLS2 positioning control can make the step motor achieve the sports status of desynchronizing.

Figure 4 is the control software program flow according to the electric control principle of the above balloon ring follow-up device and combining the program design method of PLC and the action requirement of the ring tail of the spinning machine.

5. Practical application

The raw materials including the combing pure cotton roving which ration was 3.98g/10m and the combing polyester/cotton 65/35 blended roving which ration was 5.97g/10m were respectively spun in the spinning machine installing the follow-up balloon control ring, in the spinning machine installing the fixed balloon control ring, and in the spinning machine without the balloon control ring. The data of the results are seen in Table 1.

YG172B instrument was adopted to test the hairiness, and the results included that the hairiness amount of the 2mm yarn of 30texT/C of the spinning machine installing the follow-up balloon control ring decreased 11.28% comparing with the spinning machine installing the fixed balloon control ring, and decreased 12.96% comparing with the spinning machine without the balloon control ring, and the hairiness amounts of 3mm respective decreased 43.17% and 30.11%.

The hairiness amounts of 2mm 23tex cotton yarn respectively decreased 25.07% and 8.16%, and the hairiness amounts of 3mm respectively decreased 37.18% and 30.15%.

The electric continuous tension test instrument R-3192 of Switzerland ROTHSCHILD Company was adopted to test the

dynamic spinning tension, and the result indicated that the tension of yarn reduced 2/3 after the follow-up balloon control ring was installed.

The spinning machine installed the control system could control the balloon configuration in the spinning process, reduce the fluctuation of the dynamic tension of the yarn, decrease the maximum tension of yarn, reduce the broken end rate, enhance the spinning efficiency, save energy and reduce the consumption. The control system possesses many characteristics such as flexible control, simple usage, convenient function extension, and stable running, and the control system program is independent module which can be applied in other digital-control spinning machines.

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Table 1. Main technological parameters of the yarn variety

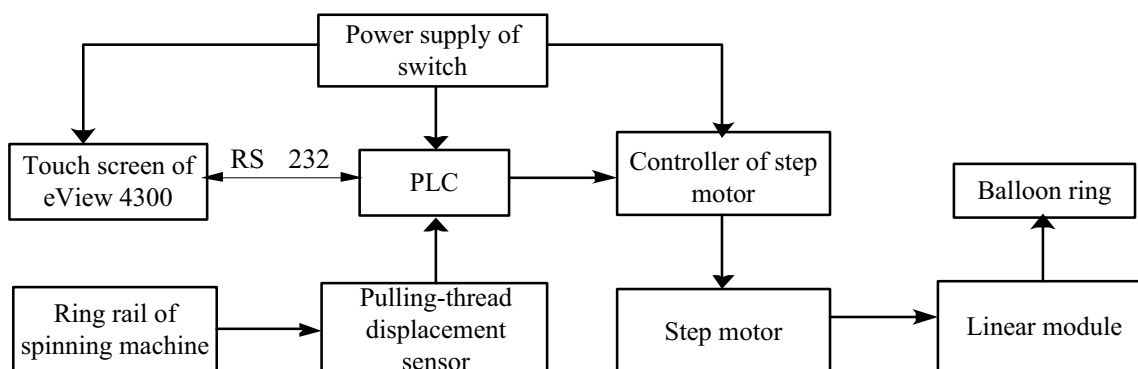| No.	Yarn variety	Spindle speed (r/min)	Total drawing multiple	Twist degree (T/10cm)	Weight of steel wire ring (mg)
1	Yarn of 30 tex T/C	8000	19.9	76	25.9
2	Cotton yarn of 23tex	8000	17.3	78	22.7

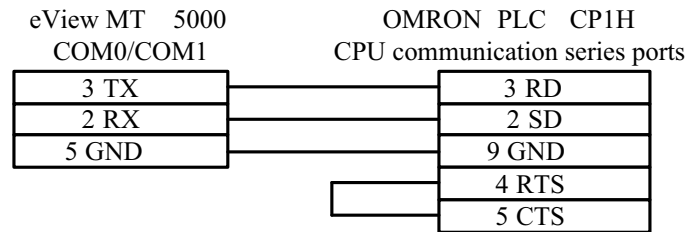Figure 1. Constitution and Structural Diagram of Control System

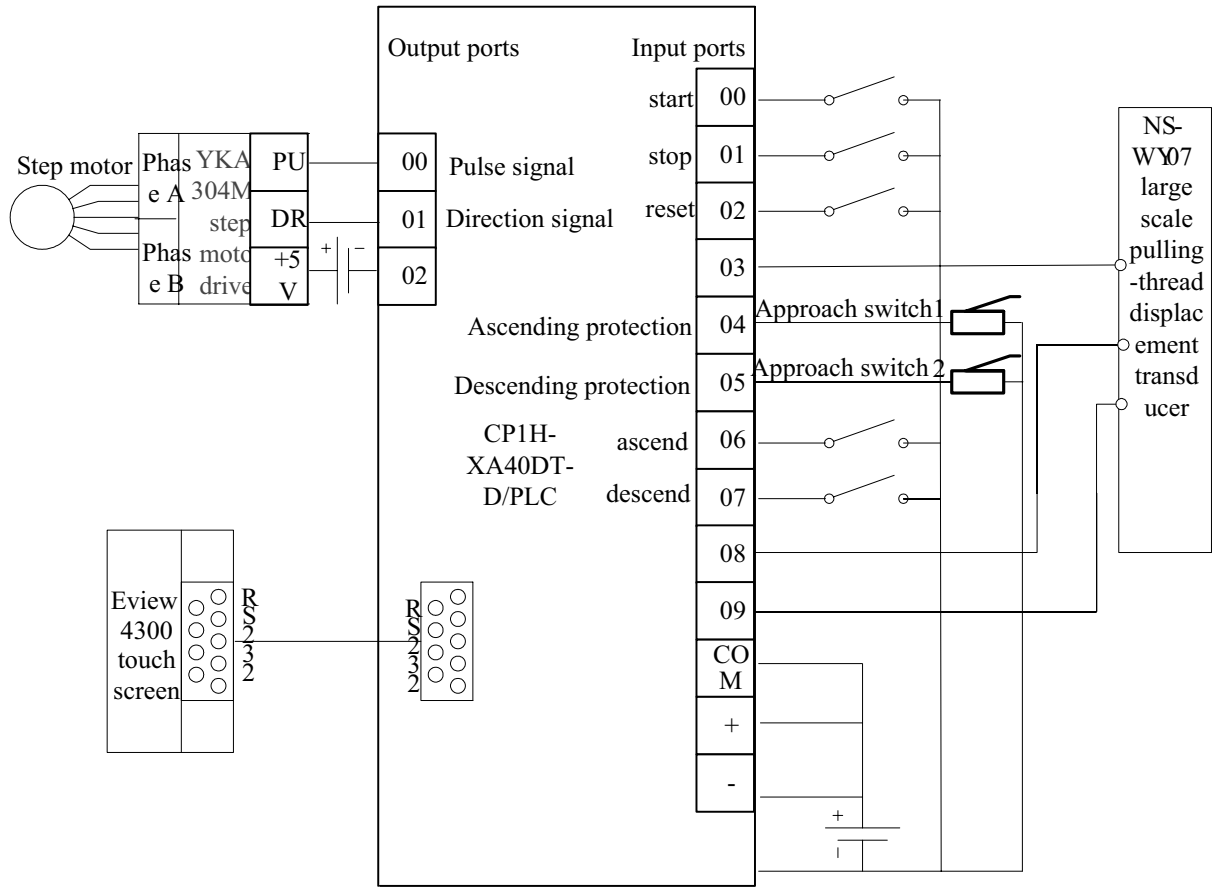Figure 2. Connect Diagram of eView MT5000 and OMRON PLC

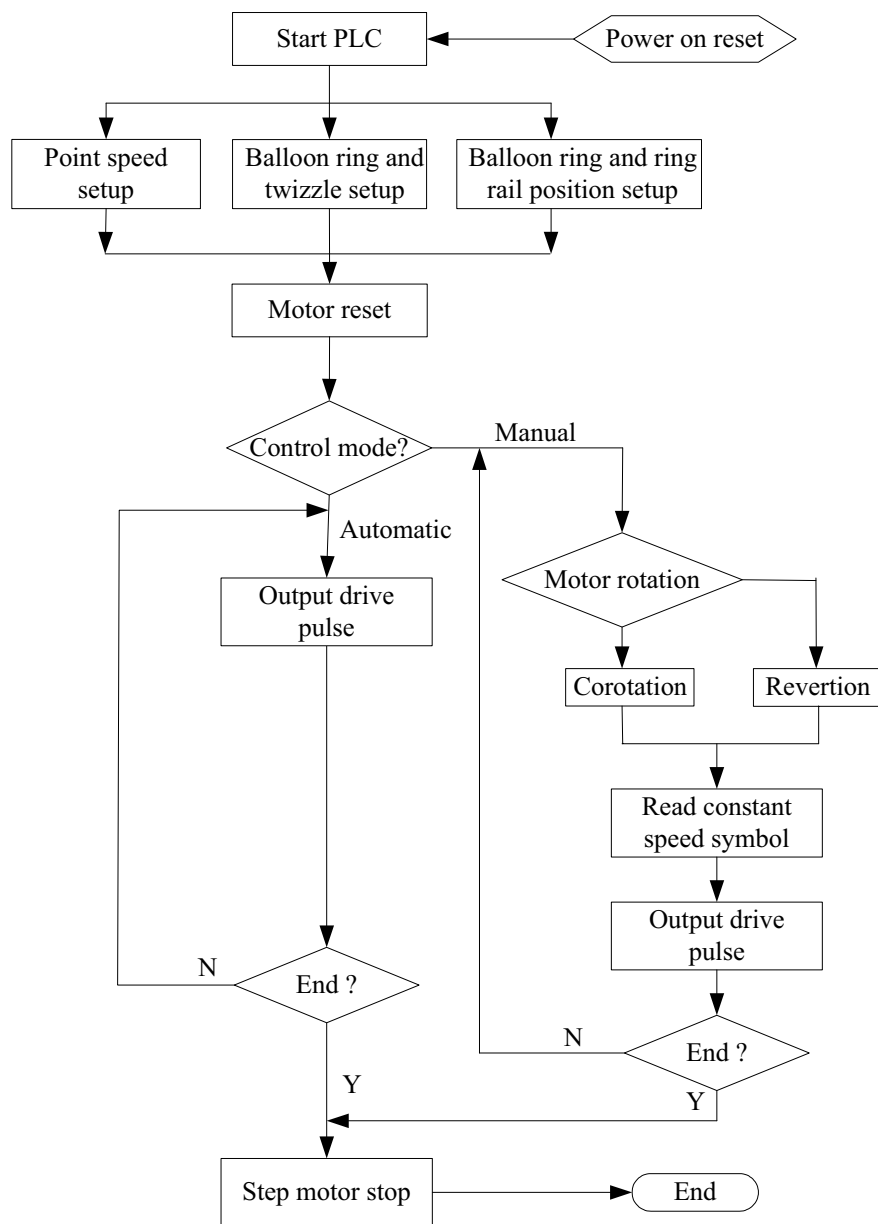Figure 3. Principle Diagram of Control System

Figure 4. Program Flow of Control System