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Native English Teachers in Hong Kong Building Communities of Practice?

Victor Forrester

Department of Education Studies, Baptist University

Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong (SAR), China

Tel: 852-3411-5793 E-mail: vforrest@hkbu.edu.hk

Beatrice Lok

Faculty of Education, Cambridge University

Cambridge, England, United Kingdom

E-mail: cybl2@cam.ac.uk

Abstract

A review of the formulation of the Native English Teaching Scheme in Hong Kong is offered establishing its unique characteristics which confound Native English teachers and local schools attaining successful integration. Reporting a three-step exploratory methodology, key elements are identified and operationalised which appear to support successful integration. Discussing these findings in terms of the literature on Induction and Communities of Practice, a case is made that the reported research methodology may be applicable across other integration contexts - where individuals, rather than remaining disengaged 'accidental tourists' seek to become engaged 'agents of change'.

Keywords: NETs, Community-of-practice, Hong Kong

1. Introduction

In Hong Kong the practice of employing 'native-speaking English teachers' from overseas to teach English in local schools is not new - extending back more than 150 years into the colonial past (Sweeting, 1990) – and is intertwined with changes in the local ideology and sociopolitical development. For example, the earliest lingua-franca English teachers' were missionaries who set-up western-style schools to offset perceived shortcomings of traditional Chinese education (MENET, 2001). The first commercial recruitment of English native speakers – in 1862 by Frederick Stewart, founder of the earliest British style school in Hong Kong, Ying Wa College - also associated the teaching of English with a western-style education (Bickely, 1998). To this end, it is interesting to note that Stewart required those native English speaking staff to acquire at least a working knowledge of Chinese (ibid). Over the subsequent century, the commercial recruitment of English native speakers slowly expanded, peaking in 1963 with 260 expatriates being employed to teach not only English but across all school subjects and all school levels.

In the latter part of the 20th century a shift in both ideology and socio-political development is signaled by a notable decline in the practice of importing native English teachers. By 1982, the term 'localisation' was used to describe the teaching of English in Hong Kong dominated by local teachers – a phenomenon the Review Panel considered as having a negative impact:

'We consider the 'localisation of staffing' policy ought to be amended so that children in their first years of schooling might be exposed to native English speakers, engaged as ancillary staff either on a contract basis or accepted as helpers (e.g. the non-working spouses of British expatriates or other suitable English speakers).'

(Visiting Panel, 1982, III.1.9)

Subsequently, in 1984, the Education Commission Report No.1 echoed the Visiting Panel's recommendation that schools employ 'locally available native English speakers', stopping short of recommending either a systematic or a large-scale recruitment (MENET, 2001). However, in 1986, the Education Department initiated the Expatriate English Language Teachers Pilot Scheme (EELTPS) to be run by the British Council (1989). This pilot scheme – which ran for one academic year from August 1988 to August 1989 - recruited 81 expatriate English language teachers from Britain to work in a representative cross-section of 41 schools with the intention of assessing their impact on both students' language learning and school life (ibid).

A modified scheme followed in 1989, the Expatriate English Language Teachers Modified Scheme (EELTMS), involving only nineteen schools in the first year of operation and fourteen more schools in the second year (MENET, 2001). Some 33 expatriate English language teachers were employed during the 1989-1990 academic year and 23 in the 1990-1991 academic year (ibid). The Education Department conducted an internal, un-published evaluation of the modified scheme, reporting publicly only that both school directors and the government were happy with the modified scheme (Lo, 1999). This modified scheme continued until the end of the 1996-1997 school year, by which time 87 expatriate teachers were employed.

One feature characterizes both the pilot and modified schemes (EELTPS:EELTMS). Both schemes employed teachers on single year, renewable contracts - proving problematic both for recruitment and retention. It is to be noted that whereas in 1963, English speaking teachers were permanently employed across the school spectrum, by the 1980's they were on short-term contracts and only in a relatively few selected schools. Given such terms and conditions, both schemes positioned these teachers less like 'agents of change' and more like 'accidental tourists'.

Whereas the latter part of the 20th century reflected an ideology and sociopolitical development that was content with the 'localisation' of English teaching in Hong Kong, a shift is signaled following the return of sovereignty from Britain to China on July 1, 1997.

Initially the change of sovereignty back to China may have been expected to favour 'localisation' - an expectation strengthened perhaps by the dual decisions first, to end the British Council's role as recruitment-agent; secondly, to implement the compulsory Mother Tongue Education policy in schools (Lai, 1999) which left only 114 secondary schools (ratio 1:3) using English medium of instruction (EMI) schools. Confounding these decisions, the dominant social perception persisted that English language plays an essential role to upward academic, social and career mobility in Hong Kong (Flowerdew, 1998; Johnson, 2001). This social perception additionally raised concerns that the Mother Tongue Education Policy would lead to falling standards of English (Education Commission, 1996), reduce English exposure and quality at CMI schools in comparison to EMI schools (Morrison and Lui, 2000), create unequal access to English (the language of 'power and prestige') between CMI and EMI school students (Choi, 2003) and taint the post-handover image of Hong Kong as an international business center (Lai, 1999). To tackle these problems, the first Policy Address (1997) of the newly formed Hong Kong Government announced the introduction of the Native English Teaching Scheme (hereafter the 'Scheme'). The Scheme empowered the Education Department to launch its first systematic recruitment of overseas native English teachers (hereafter 'NETs').

Under the Scheme, one NET is provided for each government aided secondary school with less than 40 classes - with two NETs provided where the school has 40 or more classes - providing an approximate teacher/pupil ratio of 1:1,000 (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2004). The defined roles of NETs in both Primary and Secondary school settings are the same:

'NETs are required to teach English as a second language to Chinese students and assist in teaching and curriculum development in Government and Government-subsidized schools and schools for students with special educational needs.'

(Education and Manpower Bureau, 2006)

2. Comparison with other Asian schemes

In Asia, two other countries also import native English speaking teachers to improve their English language education - South Korea has its English Program in Korea (EPIK); Japan has its Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) (Carless, 2004; Lee, 2001). Significant differences have been noted between these three schemes (see Ahn et al 1986 for comparison between EPIK and JET; also Lai, 1999 for comparison between JET and NET). Whereas, the Hong Kong Scheme aims at improving both teaching and learning, EPIK only focuses on learning, whereas JET seeks to provide its Western employees with a positive exposure to Japanese culture. Underpinning these significant focal differences is the Hong Kong Scheme's unique pre-employment requirement that NETs must have both relevant teaching experience and language teaching qualifications. When in-post, NETs are expected both to teach English as a second language to students and to support the development of language pedagogy and curriculum. In summary the characteristics of the Hong Kong Scheme differ from EPIK and JET in terms of the recruits' prior teaching experience, minimum qualifications and their expected teaching roles and responsibilities.

3. Summation of the Scheme's formulation

From a sociopolitical perspective, the Scheme and its predecessors - ranging from the earliest missionaries to the EELTPS in 1986 - may be seen as a socially-driven reaction against the perceived shortcomings of a predominantly Chinese education system. The center of this social reaction is a two-way concern about access to the benefits of Western/Chinese markets while its antidote is consistently founded in providing an - albeit limited - supply of 'native speakers' responsible for instilling more than language teaching. In a competitive market-place, limited supply leads to higher valuations while socially, higher valuations then leads to higher expectations - a formulae exemplified in 1997 by

the implementation of the Mother Tongue Education policy and the introduction of the Scheme which, unlike other Asian schemes (EPIK; JET), is formulated with high expectations that 'native speakers' will enhance not only the English proficiency level of students but also to provide professional support to the local teachers of English.

4. Implications of the Scheme's formulation

The uniqueness of the Scheme reflects the social factors that led to its formulation. This historical legacy places high expectations on newly recruited NETs who, unfamiliar with the local educational context, are sited as 'agents of change', held responsible not only for effective classroom English language teaching but also for developing local English teachers' pedagogy. Adding to this burden, NETs are most commonly allocated to schools in isolation - with little or no reference initially to the broader or prior NET-experience. From the individual NET perspective this siting can engender an early experience less of being an 'agent of change' and more of being 'an accidental tourist' unfamiliar with the individual School community. The situation is no less clear from the school community perspective. Whereas the popular 'social perspective' may endorse the value of acquiring a school-based 'native speakers', their professional school-based role is problematic – local teachers of English may feel their professionalism slighted; school-based administration which traditionally values local experience, may find difficulty in 'locating' NET expertise; pupils accustomed to exam-targeted learning may be confused by NETs' alternative learning focus; parents may feel unease if placed in face-to-face communication with a NET. Over-riding all such issues, is a Government policy – responding to strong social reaction - that has to be followed.

Based on the issues raised by the Scheme's *formulation*, we now turn to consider the challenges facing the Scheme's *implementation*.

5. Implementation of the Scheme

The aims of the Scheme embrace the improvement in Hong Kong of both the learning and teaching of English. Studies of the respective merits of native and local English teachers are well established (Medgyes 1992; Tang, 1997; Barrat et al, 2000) leading recent reviews of the Scheme's implementation to further develop this pedagogic focus (Carless, 2006). However, the aims of the Scheme are broad and place NETs as being held responsible across an impressive array of expectations - both for classroom teaching, for extra-curricular English activities (such as English drama and English debate), developing good teaching methods, preparing and developing teaching materials, and to aid in the professional development of teaching staff (Lok, 2004).

Given the comprehensive range of the Scheme's aims – embracing improvements across the spectrum of learning and teaching at both Primary and Secondary school levels – it is perhaps predictable that the Scheme's implementation should prove problematical. As a government-sponsored antidote to a strong social reaction, it is perhaps equally predictable that government-sponsored public evaluations of the Scheme should seek to be positive.

6. Review of the Scheme's evaluation reports

Publicly, the government has asserted that the Scheme brought about a professional development in English teaching (Policy Address, 2001), claiming that NETs facilitate not only the development of English teaching at school, but also of the design and planning of the school curriculum. In contrast, an unpublished government-sponsored report (Storey et al 2001) is cited as reporting that 'at the secondary level there was a lack of genuine collaboration . . . little shared understanding or common philosophy' (Carless et al, 2006). Other published reports have criticized NETs for 'not understanding the weaknesses and difficulties Chinese people have in learning English' and for 'failing to understand the syllabuses of Hong Kong public examinations as they were not familiar with the local education context' (Lung, 1999, Lu and Wong, 2002). NETs unfamiliarity with the local education context is a theme that re-echoes across both time and in reports from both Primary and Secondary sectors - Griffin et. al, (2005; 2004): Lok (2002): MENET (2001); Lo (1999), British Council (1989).

By definition, NETs may expect to face both language and cultural differences when interacting with local English teachers - challenges known to be problematical when negotiating their own identity within the school community (McAllister and Irvine, 2000). However, successful integration with the school community is essential if NETs are to implement the aims of the Scheme (Little, 2002). Benefits accruing from integration within a school community are well recognized – including improving teaching and learning, empowering teachers collectively to question ineffective teaching practices and school structures, developing innovative pedagogy and curriculum, and engaging actively in supporting professional growth (see respectively: Achinstein, 2002; Grossman et al, 2001; Witziers, et. al, 1999 and Strokes, 2001). Accordingly, successful NET integration not only would enhance pupil learning, but also empower both NET and local English teachers to professionally develop (Wilson and Berne, 1999).

Given the significance of successful NET integration it is helpful here to review what constitutes successful integration.

7. Methodology and Empirical Analysis

To explore the conceptual and practical needs of NETs working in local schools we report a three-step exploratory research methodology:

7.1 First we analyse one case study to understand more clearly the notion of successful NET integration in a Hong Kong school.

7.2 We then compare emergent key factors with data from NETs seeking integration help.

7.3 From this comparison we construct and report on an exploratory intervention Workshop aimed at promoting 'successful integration'.

7.1 the Notion of Successful NET Integration in a Hong Kong Secondary School

To understand more clearly the notion of successful NET integration, a case-study was conducted in July 2006 of one school recognised as a good example of successful NET integration by both the Education and Manpower Bureau and the Native English Speaking Teachers Association. The school is co-educational, secondary, founded in 1996, with two NETs. To understand the notion of successful NET integration we interviewed both the NETs (N1 and N2) and the English Panel Chair (P1).

N1, employed as a teacher mentor, has a doctorate in Education, is in her first year of teaching in Hong Kong, and previously taught in her home country, United States, for fifteen years in secondary school settings and ten additional years in teaching training. N2 teaches regular English lessons, is post-graduate teaching qualified, likewise is in his first year of teaching experience in Hong Kong, and has taught in Japan and previously in New Zealand for 20 years. Their Panel Chair (P1) has a Masters degree and has been teaching in Hong Kong for sixteen years. In summary, all interviewees are professionally trained with at least 15 years of school-based teaching experience.

An analysis of our pilot research interview data, identifies five key factors that here contribute to successful NET integration.

First, to be a successful NET, for N2, is the ability 'to accept': including being flexible, patient and tolerant, having the ability to be easy and not getting too upset about things in work. For N1, she identifies the importance of being 'accepted': 'I don't feel that they look down on me, although I look different and think different from them, I still feel accepted.'

Second, both NETs voice a strong sense of satisfaction, confidence in their teaching and professional growth – endorsed by their P1 who noted that the English classes taught by N2 obtained the best Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) results of the School, and that over 80% of the students passed their English subject in HKALE.

Third, both N1, N2 and their PI agreed on the importance of good communication – expressed by N1 as: 'I think a lot of that (successful NET integration) has to do with communication...this school has been wonderful in that, the Panel Chair includes us in everything, tells us what is going on, has meetings in English...I think that helps a lot.'

Fourth, for N2: 'it is important to ensure all parties are satisfied with what is asked and given'. Elaborating, N1 noted: 'we (English) teachers all work together well as a team, partly has to do with our Panel Chair, she developed that and she also makes sure that we all have a chance to co-teach together...' For their P1 she noted the importance of understanding both NETs' uniqueness and their need to understand the culture of the school.

Fifth, it is to be noted that access to the three interviewees was made possible only by the kind permission of the PI. Access to the school's local teachers of English was requested, but politely rejected on grounds both of 'work-load' and that the PI would fairly present their views. As an initial characteristic of this school's 'community of practice', this observation highlights a final key factor – that of accepting administrative control.

In summary, five key social interactions emerge from our 'successful NET integration' case study:

accepting and being accepted;

being a teaching professional;

using formal and informal communication,

engendering a good working relationship

accepting administrative authority.

To explore whether or not these five key social interactions inform another context we now compare these key factors with data from NETs seeking integration help.

7.2 NETs Seeking Help: Background

Voluntary NET respondents were drawn from across a spectrum of educational settings. The background of these NETs seeking help is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. NETs seeking help: Background

| Organisation | Education and Manpower Bureau | | NETs in Primary School Settings | | NETs in Secondary School Settings | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| No. of Participants | 2 | | 3 | | 7 | |
| Gender | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| No. of Participants | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

As displayed above, our respondents are drawn from across the NETS spectrum including gendered representation from both EMB, Primary and Secondary sectors.

To record their perceived needs, respondents completed a pre-Workshop open-ended questionnaire eliciting views on their NET teaching experience, issues they would like to discuss & help they would like to receive.

Findings indicated the complexity of being a NET in Hong Kong schools. Of the eleven respondents, six described their teaching experience as neutral and five described it as a negative experience. Illustrative voices include:

‘I have learnt a lot from being a NET in Hong Kong about a different culture and approach to things and about myself.’ (Respondent 1)

‘The Hong Kong primary school system is 50 years behind the west. It is like being a time traveler.’ (Respondent 2)

‘Despite my school being open to new ideas, it’s still far from what I thought I’d be doing.’ (Respondent 3)

They also raised a range of issues and requests for diverse forms of help - as displayed in Table 2:

Table 2. Respondents’ Issues & Help Requested

| Issues raised | Frequency |
|--|-----------|
| a) The role of the NET | 4 |
| b) Making changes to the current system | 3 |
| c) Knowing more about Local English Teachers | 3 |
| d) ELT Pedagogy | 3 |
| e) Communicating with colleagues | 3 |
| f) Administration & Management | 2 |
| g) Strengths of being a NET | 2 |
| Help requested | |
| h) Sharing Experiences and finding solutions | 4 |
| i) NET Contacts | 2 |
| j) Adaptation | 2 |

Marginally the most frequent issue of concern was the role of the NET ($f = 4$). Respondents however were also concerned about ($f=3$) their expected ‘change’ role within the current education system; the training of Local English teachers’ (LETS); current Hong Kong English teaching pedagogy and how to develop current levels of communication with their school colleagues. Other issues included understanding local school management practices and the local perceived strengths of being a NET.

Notably, the help requested by these respondents is directed towards two communities of practice. From their peer NET community they seek specific knowledge sharing - of teaching experiences, practices and solutions. From their local school community they struggle to conceptualise effective modes of discourse – as illustrated below:

‘be flexible and ready to adapt . . . introduce ideas . . . gradually and with sensitivity.’ (Respondent 4)

‘be very open minded and tolerant beyond belief’ (Respondent 5)

Respondents’ struggle to conceptualise effective modes of school-community discourse leads to an underlying frustration when working as a NET in school – a frustration that both raises self-doubts and doubts about the Scheme as expressed ironically in the response ‘*Being a successful NET...do I win a chocolate bar?*’

Having reported the help NET's seek how do these findings compare with our case-study analysis of 'successful integration'?

It is interesting to note the close similarities between being a successful NET - as narrated by our respondents – and those reported from our case-study. For example, both exemplify key roles for accepting and being accepted (Respondent 1); being a teaching professional (Respondent 5); formal and informal communication (Respondent 4), developing a good working relationship (Respondent 3) and accepting administrative control (Respondent 2).

From this comparison, it seems that although many of our questionnaire respondents may recognise elements of being a successful NET in Hong Kong, operationalising those elements appears difficult and problematic.

How to operationalising key elements of 'successful integration' leads us now to report an exploratory NET Integration Workshop.

7.3 An Exploratory NET Integration Workshop

An exploratory workshop was held half-way through the local schools' first term (November, 2006) when teachers generally are more settled into the school year and have these experiences to share and discuss.

Workshop participants comprised the same respondents to our initial questionnaire – whose background details are displayed in Table 1.

The Workshop Matrix (Table 3) aligns the expectations of the participants, the key features of our case-study of 'successful integration' and the workshop content.

Table 3. Workshop Matrix

| Workshop Session | Thematic | Workshop Content & Sequence | Respondents' Questionnaire Issues | Case-study Interview Findings |
|---|----------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Hong Kong school system, education reform and the local teaching context | | A review of the current Hong Kong education reform | c) Knowing more about Local English Teachers | 'To accept . . . and be accepted' |
| | | Empirical studies of the challenges faced by a local beginning teacher | e) Communicating with colleagues | |
| | | Teaching Education in Hong Kong and its implication for NETs | j) Adaptation | |
| 2. English language teaching strategies in Hong Kong classroom | | Classroom situation in Hong Kong | d) ELT pedagogy | 'Being a Teaching Professional' |
| | | Teachers' perception of students reticence | h) Sharing Experience and finding solutions | |
| | | Teaching Strategies in the classroom | | |
| 3. NET integration with Schools & students. | | Multiple identities of being a NET in Hong Kong | a) The role of NET | 'Formal and informal Communication' |
| | | NET integration with the school and classroom | g) Strengths of being a NET | |
| | | Access to the community of practice | e) Communicating with colleagues | |
| | | Preparation for being a change agent | b) Making a change to the current system | |

The above Workshop Matrix aligns the findings of our interview case-study with those issues raised by our questionnaire respondents (see Table 2). This alignment resulted in three thematic Workshop Sessions and related content (respectively columns 1&2). Comparing columns 1 and 4 displays the alignment of each of the three thematic Workshop Sessions with

our case-study interview findings. Comparing columns 2 and 3 displays the alignment of our Workshop content with respondents' questionnaire responses.

For example, Thematic Session 1 'Hong Kong school system, education reform and the local teaching context' provided participants with three sub-topics, each of which aligns with respondents' questionnaire topics (see: Table 2). Specifically, 'a review of the current Hong Kong education reform' aligns with the participants' questionnaire topic c) 'knowing more about local English teachers'; the Workshop topic 'empirical studies of the challenges faced by a local beginning teacher' aligns with the participants' questionnaire topic e) 'communicating with colleagues', while the third Workshop topic 'teaching education in Hong Kong and its implication for NETs' aligns with the participants' questionnaire topic j) 'adaptation'.

Additionally, Table 3 displays that the Workshop matrix alignment also embraces the findings of the case-study interviews on successful NET integration. For example the case-study finding 'To accept and be accepted' aligns both with the content and Workshop theme 1) 'Background information of Hong Kong school system, its education reform and the local teaching context'. This alignment continues across the remaining two Workshop thematic sessions.

Explicitly absent from the Workshop matrix are two case-study findings – however these items are held to be implicitly operationalised within the context of a Workshop. Specifically, 'Good working relationship' is implicit in being an active Workshop participant while 'Acceptance of Administrative authority' is implicit in both voluntarily joining a Workshop and working within the Workshop's agenda.

7.3.1 Evaluation of the Workshop

Workshop participants completed a closed and open-ended Workshop evaluation questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised two parts: 1) General evaluation scaled against a five-point Likert scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree, and 2) Feedback on specific areas.

Part 1: General Evaluation

All participants were satisfied with the contents of the workshop (mean=4.33) and its organization (mean=4.78). Over 80% of participants agreed that they would recommend the workshop to others and would like to attend similar workshops again in future, with a mean value of 4.22 and 4.33 respectively.

Part 2: Feedback on specific areas

Feedback on the Workshop's three thematic sessions suggested two improvements: more discussion between participants and more in-depth discussion about the teaching strategies and the relationship between NET and local teachers.

8. Discussion

In Hong Kong, provision is made by both the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) and the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) for all new NETs to attend a series of Induction programmes – a provision reasonably clearly justified in the literature 'not only for new teachers . . . (but also) for those who change roles' (Draper et al 2006) for 'the move to a new (context) throws into question the existing professional self and raises questions about coping' (Kelchtermanns, 1993). Such self-questioning is understood to stem from a recognition that 'learning is embedded in its context' (Lave et al, 1991) and that good teaching recognizes 'it is important to understand the setting . . . and to build on it' (Tickle, 2000). Specifically, good Induction recognizes 'that teachers . . . come with considerable work experience (for whom) induction may be learning about working in schools *as a teacher*.' (Gatherer, 2003) for induction addresses 'the link between teaching and identity' (Ball, 2003).

However, by definition, induction is an initial step and, despite an extended induction programme, our review of the Scheme's evaluation reports consistently point to issues of failed integration. To understand and remedy this problem of failed integration, we reported an exploratory NET Integration Workshop, which sought to operationalise five elements identified in a reported case-study which were then aligned with respondents' questionnaire responses.

Participant evaluations of this Workshop were strongly positive – indicating perhaps that our focus on aligning elements from a 'successful' case-study with their own needs as reported identified in their questionnaire findings, is meaningful to these participants. However our Workshop feedback also indicated participants' desired more discussion opportunities both between participants and on the 'coping' areas of teaching strategies and school-based relationships.

A further apparent weakness of our Workshop include the limitations of our findings for our Workshop focuses only on the NET perspective, has a small number of participants and is context-specific. Such limitations would normally invalidate the findings' generalisability. However these limitations do not detract from these findings illuminating the possibility of identifying and then operationalising key elements across contextually similar 'communities of practice'.

To understand further how to operationalise successful NET integration, we turn now to discuss our findings in the light of the literature on 'community of practice'

Initially, communities of practice ‘received attention in the early 1990’s when it was observed that learning takes place through informal social interaction anchored in the context of problem solving’ (Brown et al 1991). This observation places the formation of communities of practice as a pragmatic social response or shared need to ‘problem solve’ – such as posed by the Scheme’s problematic formulation and a Government Policy that mandates school communities and NETs to work together.

Subsequent research indicates that communities of practice address their ‘problem solving’ in a variety of informal ways e.g. through natural social interaction (Orr, 1996); group meetings and notes (Wenger 1998) and so provide a variety of organizational benefits e.g. increasing both performance (Lesser and Storck, 2001), competitive advantage (Teigland, 2000; Liedtka, 2000) and by supporting the sharing of knowledge (Fontaine and Millen, 2002). A similar link between organizational benefits and ‘informal ways’ of communication is also apparent in our data - reflected both in the reported interview and questionnaire findings (Table 3) such as, respectively, ‘formal and informal communication’ and ‘communicating with colleagues’. The Workshop evaluation equally reflects this link between organizational benefits and ‘informal ways’ of communication where participants noted a desire for more on-going discussion, beyond the formal structure of the Workshop – indicating perhaps their summative conclusion that building ‘communities of practice’ is not a one-shot affair.

Reflecting an evolving understanding, definitions of ‘community of practice’ have also evolved:

‘(Community of practice) is, in its essence, a fundamentally social phenomenon, reflecting our own deeply social nature as a human being’. (Wenger, 1998)

‘A community of practice is . . . matrix management done right . . . focusing not on reporting relationships but on knowledge, competence and innovation’. (Wenger et al, 2002)

‘Community practice is the application of practice skills to alter the behavioral patterns of community groups, organizations and institutions or people’s relationships and interactions with these entities.’ (Hardcastle et al, 2004)

‘The concept of ‘communities of practice’ has become an influential one in education . . . (embracing) issues around conflict, power and the significance of the broader social context . . .’ (Barton et al, 2005)

The above definitions of ‘communities of practice’ indicate that, essential to successful community-building and in particular here, successful NET integration, is the support given to how people interact.

Of particular relevance to our understanding of the problems facing the Scheme’s implementation is the observation by Blacker et al (2000):

‘knowledge sharing (between communities of practice) is a relatively neglected topic . . . and is likely to be more complex than intra-community knowledge sharing, due to the lack of shared consensual knowledge or shared sense of identity . . . the development of trust (i.e. developing social relationships) is seen to be a key . . . before effective

knowledge sharing can occur . . . (for) the shared infrastructure of . . . cooperation within particular communities . . . can act as a barrier to close collaboration with outsiders’

From our review of the Scheme’s formulation, it is clear that NETs are expected to enact ‘knowledge sharing’ between a range of communities of practice – with pupils, local teachers of English and the broader School community. However, as our review of the Scheme’s evaluation reports indicates, NETs are to achieve this ‘*knowledge sharing*’ despite being sited in school contexts that may lack the necessary ‘*cooperation within particular communities*’ and that this lack of ‘*cooperation*’ may engender ‘*a barrier to close collaboration with outsiders*’.

To help resolve such barriers, the methodology of our reported Workshop may be helpful. This methodology first identified key features of one successful ‘community of practice’; then the issues and needs of NETs ‘seeking help’ and third, aligned these two findings to generate a Workshop Matrix (Table 3). In this Workshop Matrix - unlike the common practice of Induction programmes - the focus was not on ‘reporting’ but rather on the community of practice elements of sharing ‘knowledge, competence and innovation’ (Wenger et al, 2002). From this community of practice perspective, our reported findings do not seek to produce generalizations but rather a methodological illustration which may be applicable to other contexts.

Although the notion of communities of practice provides both a useful analysis and a possible methodological intervention, there are acknowledged limitations. For instance, the current development of the concept fails to take into account both the power and the dynamics of the relationships among different practitioners in different communities of practice (Gee, 2005). Accordingly, future research may seek to incorporate such dynamics – as suggested by Keating’s (2005) activity theoretical approach – to explore how practitioners may be restrained, mediated and yet still introduce change within specific social structures.

9. Conclusion

The formulation of the Native English Teaching Scheme (Scheme) in Hong Kong has been reviewed in terms of problematising the integration of expatriate teachers of English (NETs) within Hong Kong schools' 'communities of practice'. A review of a series of exploratory research projects were then reported – case-study interviews; questionnaire data and a Workshop. These findings were then reviewed both in terms of the literature on Induction and that of 'communities of practice'. This review highlighted a limitation of 'induction' to help NETs successful integration – rather, a case was made for viewing our findings and methodology as illustrative of the workings of a successful 'community of practice'. The 'community of practice' perspective is held to be significant for it appears to have the potential to help move NETs from being 'accidental tourists' who feel largely disengaged from their school communities, to fulfilling the Scheme's aim of fully engaged NETs capable of acting as 'agents of change'.

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Russia's Foreign Energy Policy in the New Context of International Energy Security

Xiaoqin Chen

School of International Studies, Renmin University of China

Beijing 100872, China

Tel: 86-10-8205-7433 E-mail: cxqjwh@hotmail.com

Abstract

The factor of energy has played more and more important part in the international economic and geo-political relations in the era of globalization. In the face of growing demand for energy and various risks and threats it has produced, seeking security through cooperation is an inevitable choice for the international community to safeguard world energy security. The notable feature of the current international energy security situation is that the contradictions between oil producing and consuming countries have intensified. As a world-class energy-exporting country, Russia has the world energy interests. In recent years, Russia has taken an active part in the international multilateral energy cooperation at the global level while at the regional level it has continued to deepen the dialogues and bilateral cooperation with the energy subjects. It has strived to turn the scale against the West in the energy bouts in the Central Asia, and gone all out to enter the Asia-Pacific energy market. Russia advocates the establishment of the global energy security system in the framework of Group of 8 Nations (G8), harmonizing the relations of energy producing and consuming countries. Its participating actively in the process of the world energy integration has laid a solid foundation for the realization of economic rise and national rejuvenation.

Keywords: World energy security, International energy security situations, Foreign energy policy, Energy cooperation, Energy pipelines

1. Issues of world energy security and its causes.

World energy security is a comprehensive concept. It does not only refer to guarantee a reliable supply of energy for the world economic development at a reasonable price but means to minimize the damage to the natural environment. It also means a capacity of protecting the international community and its members from the potential risks and threats, which have something with the current and future world energy situations and will affect the world political stability and the balance of socio-economic development. (Note 1).

Different countries may have completely different interpretations on this concept. For most of the industrialized countries, because energy import is dominant in their fuel supply, energy security in the first place refers to the reliability of access to energy. That is to say, at acceptable economy (reasonable prices), by techniques (the equal treatment and security in the transportation) and on ecological conditions, they can have an uninterrupted access to energy supply from the outside. As far as energy exporting countries are concerned, energy security means that they have the adequate resources (ratio between proven reserves and the minable), the investment required for the exploration, technological and ecological feasibility, and the potential risks to maintain the position of providing raw materials which may undermine their own macroeconomic development. As for the relatively poor developing countries, to secure the economic sustainability, including the energy supply of daily use by the residents and modern energy services, becomes the main factor affecting national energy security of this kind. (Note 2). Today, when world energy is demanded increasingly, reserves of main types of resources (such as oil, natural gas, coal and hydro-energy) are imbalanced geographically, which leads to even closer energy interdependence of all countries. Time has gone by when national energy security was secured by relying on authoritarian rule and self-sufficiency. And seeking security through cooperation has become an inevitable choice for the maintenance of today's and future's world energy security.

The potential risks and threats of world energy security are mainly about the following aspects: (Note 3). Resource reserves in most industrialized countries are nearly depleted; economy of high energy consumption in such countries presses for more energy, as China and India with a large population; in the places rich in energy reserves, the political situation is in turmoil, such as the Middle East and Central Asia; pipeline transportation across the frontiers is getting more and more insecure because of aging equipment, official corruption and terrorist attacks; the world energy market has become instable due to the imbalance of supply and demand relationship and the speculation by market subjects,

which is conspicuously displayed by the drastic fluctuation of oil price in the current world; the process becomes comparatively slow to develop and utilize safe atomic energy, nuclear energy and renewable sources of non-fuel. Since energy is of more and more significance in the international economic and geo-political relations in the era of globalization, energy cooperation has become an effective means by which every country can achieve the stable development of its own. Facing the growing energy demand and a variety of risks and threats it has produced, to settle the issue of the world energy security, all members of the international community should be mobilized to take decisive actions together. Russia, as a new energy power, is striving to become a credible global energy supplier in the new century, acting as the intermediary or go-between of energy exporting and importing countries, then playing the role of securing world energy to realize the transformation from a military superpower to an energy superpower.

2. The new features of international energy security situation.

In the geo-political and economic reality of the new century, the development of the world energy will depend primarily on such countries and regions as the United States, the Middle East, Russia, China and the European Union. Among them, the United States is the world largest energy importer and consumer of oil. China is the fastest growing oil consumer in the world. Some developed countries of the European Union nearly depleted oil and gas reserves and their dependence on foreign energy is mounting up. Russia and the Middle East countries are the world-class energy exporting countries, and the Middle East are the place with the richest oil resources in the world. Russia has the largest reserves of natural gas and its gas pipelines trade also ranks first in the world. Its oil export quantity is less than that of Saudi Arabia, ranking second in the world.

The notable feature of the current international security situation in the energy is that the contradictions between oil producers and consuming countries have intensified. The root cause of the geopolitical conflict is the uneven distribution of the world oil resources. Most developed countries and the new emerging big countries are the major energy consumers while the world hydrocarbon resources mainly exist in a small number of developing countries and countries with economy in transition. It is this contradiction that decides the trend of international energy security and the behavior style of the important participants in the world energy market. As major energy consumers, the United States, the European Union and China have launched fierce tussles in the world energy market by using the economic and political resources of their own. At the same time, the Middle East, due to its continual turmoil situation and the pressure from the United States, has become less control over the oil prices. All these give Russia an opportunity to wage its energy expansion. Because oil exploration in the developed countries is declining gradually, it means that oil import in these countries will increase in the near future. Particularly, they will depend more on the countries with instable political and economic situation in the Persian Gulf. The world energy status quo is that almost two thirds of world oil reserves are in the volatile Middle East, and under the control of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). According to statistics, the daily crude oil output of 20 top producers of the world is 57 million barrels (covering 87% of the total crude oil output in the world), of which 24 million barrels are from OPEC member countries (including the new members of Angola and Sudan) (covering 43% of total crude oil output in the world). (Note 4). Therefore, the issue of diverse energy supplies has become the focus for many countries in their national energy strategy. More and more energy consuming countries and large multinational corporations have begun to turn to their eyeballs to the energy-producing areas which do not belong to the OPEC countries. These areas refer to the relatively stable Russia and the other CIS countries. Russia, with its rich energy reserves and a solid foundation for industrial energy and the potential capacity of exploration, has become one of the biggest exporting countries of hydrocarbon raw materials in the world. The stability and reliability of oil and gas supply in the world, to a large extent, depend on the operational efficiency of the Russian fuel complex. Russia has unique geographical location, which creates an objective advantage for it to consolidate its strong position in the international energy market and enable it to play a key role in ensuring the energy supply system for regional and global security.

Since the end of the 20th century, due to the soaring oil prices, continued instability in the Middle East, international terrorist activities, and the growing world energy consumption, energy security has become the main topic in many important global and regional international multilateral meetings, such as the G8, the United Nations, the International Energy Conference, the International Energy Agency, OPEC, APEC, and the Energy Charter Conference, etc. Energy security on agenda has focused primarily on how to protect the reliability of energy supply and how to prevent the energy supply disruptions due to technical problems and accidents.

After September 11th Incident, energy infrastructure and transportation pipeline have faced with the new threats from terrorist attacks. Thus, it is more urgent to give them timely and international protection than ever before. In this new geo-political case, the international cooperation aiming at ensuring energy security appears to be particularly important. At present, to all countries such as energy exporting and importing countries, the developed countries and developing countries, the oil prices which continuously make records and the drastic fluctuation in the international energy market have become the main economic threats that the world energy security confronts. Therefore, to continue strengthening the energy dialogues between energy producers and consumers is of great significance. In the context of economic

globalization, every country participating in dealing with the energy security, climate changes and other global issues has become the consensus of the international community. Different countries exchanging information concerning the national energy cases of their own, mid-term and long-term energy development planning and the outline will help to enhance the transparency, stability and predictability of the future international energy market.

3. The new trend of Russian foreign energy policy.

At present, the Russian energy export is the main source of its foreign exchange earnings. It was reported that Russia earned 220 billion US dollars of the energy export only in 2007. It is the important foundation for the Russian government to achieve its annual economic growth of 6.6 percent. (Jianhong, Yu. 2008). Increasing energy foreign exchange revenue does not only provide a strong driving force for the rise of the Russian economy but also gives Russia political influences in the international arena. The continued high demand for energy by international community will push Russia again at the center of the international stage, and has brought opportune time for Russia to enhance its international prestige in the field of energy. As a world-class energy power, Russia hopes to truly take on the responsibility of energy security guarantor and grasp this opportunity to reconstruct its own image as a major power. To achieve the above objectives, in recent years, Russia has carried out its comprehensive energy diplomacy and taken an active part in the world energy integration process. In practice, at the global level, Russia has participated in international multilateral energy cooperation while at the regional level continued to deepen the energy dialogues and bilateral cooperation with energy subjects. It has also supported Russian companies by diplomatic means to equally participate in international energy cooperation to safeguard its own foreign economic and geopolitical interests. In the new international security situation, Russian foreign energy policy is mainly displayed as the followings.

3.1 Going great length to turn its adverse situation in the trial with the Western countries in the Central Asia and make Europe more dependent on Russian energy.

Central Asia—the Caspian region is not only of strategic position but rich in natural resources. It is known as the energy base in 21st century. In recent years, the United States, Europe and Japan have implemented a number of oil and gas pipeline construction projects in Central Asia and attempted to break the situation that Russian's pipelines has controlled. It is notably mentioned that the United States has never given up its efforts to undermine the Russian energy monopoly in Central Asia.

In May 2006, the pipeline, supported by the United States, connecting the Caspian Sea and the Mediterranean while bypassing the Baku (Azerbaijan)-Tbilisi (Georgia)-Ceyhan (Turkey) has opened and run well. This greatly weakened Russia's control of the oil shipment in the Caspian Sea. Recently Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (Turkey) natural gas pipeline has been officially opened. Natural gas in the Central Asia can be transported immediately to the international market without Russia's control. The United States and the EU also support the trans-Caspian pipeline project from the Turkish port to the Europe. It is scheduled the natural gas through the pipeline is from Iran, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Which direction the tube walks to decides the interests. As the oil and gas pipeline projects have been implemented and put into use, the subtle geopolitical balance in Central Asia after the Cold War is broken. And the trend favoring the West in geo-political and economic strategy has come to the surface.

In this context, Russia, as for its energy diplomacy in the 2007, on the one hand, actively reasons Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to participate in laying new gas pipeline along the Caspian Sea, forming a strong competition against the trans-Caspian pipeline initiated by the United States and the Europe and succeeding in guiding the oil and gas in the Central Asian to go north to resist the distributary planned by the West. On the other hand, it urges Greece and Bulgaria to reach an intergovernmental agreement of building oil pipelines across Balkan to open the new channel of transporting the oil of the Central Asia direct to Europe by the Caspian Sea, Bulgaria and Greece. The new pipeline will avoid Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and other oil and gas countries, which in recent years repeatedly have conflicts with Russia on the issue of oil crossing borders. Thus European energy dependence on Russia is greatly increased.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on May 10, 2007 launched a Central Asia energy trip to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. The three heads, on May 12, held a high level meeting in Turkmen and with the president of Uzbekistan, issued a joint statement declaring that the natural gas pipeline available from Central Asia to Russia will be upgraded and new pipelines along the Caspian Sea will be paved. On 20th, Dec 2007, Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan signed the Agreement of Natural Gas Pipeline along the Caspian Sea. The new pipeline from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to Russia is expected to connect with the old pipeline. Its annual transportation capacity is 20 billion cubic meters. It is planned to be put into use in 2010. (Note 5). This will enable Russia in access to new chips in the energy dialogue with the United States and Europe. First, Russia has again strengthened the energy and pipeline control in Central Asia, and the cooperation with the Central Asian countries helps Russia consolidate its world energy power status. Second, once the natural gas pipeline project along the Caspian is implemented, the largest natural gas transportation system in the Central Asian region will come into being, which will undoubtedly maul heavily the gas pipeline plan of the West, or even lead it to an abortion. The Russian media have pictured it as that Putin is turning off the gas valve.

On March 15, 2007, Russia, Greece and Bulgaria signed in Athens the intergovernmental agreement, namely, On paving Inter-Balkan Oil Pipeline from Burgas to Alexandroupolis (briefly, the Papua Oil Pipeline Project), ending the 15-year-long marathon negotiations. This will be an only direct channel for Russian oil to Europe. Russia accounts for 51% of the shares in Papua project and gains the holding power on construction, management and operation, and an absolute leadership position as well. The rest 49% stock is divided by Bulgaria and Greek equally. Laying Papua New pipeline is consistent with Russian strategy of expanding its oil export, which can realize the high efficiency and diversifications of the export supply. The pipeline completed will ease the bottleneck of the current Russian crude oil export, improve transportation capacity and speed, consolidate the share Russia has at the European and world markets. This is the basis and premise for Russia to have negotiations with Greek and Bulgaria. Papua pipeline completed will further deepen Europe's energy dependence on Russia, to some extent, compensate for Russia's declining control over energy in Central Asia, thus turning the scale of the difficult situation that Russia faces in the international energy competition pattern.

Judging from the current situation, Russia has led up in the energy competition with the West. But the future energy cooperation between Russia and the Central Asian countries is bound to be bothered by the West. Furthermore, in order to achieve the maximization of their own political and economic interests, the Central Asian countries have been seeking diversified energy exports. Therefore, the export channels completely controlled by Russia are clearly incompatible with the long-term interests of the Central Asian countries. In fact, when the Central Asian countries reached a series of important agreements with Russia, they have not given up the energy cooperation with the Western countries. They have made for complete success all the time. It can be predicted that the United States and Europe, with a lot of funds and advanced technology, will not stop the fight for the geopolitics with Russia. Their competition in energy field of the Central Asia will proceed on.

3.2 Russia speeds up developing the new oil and gas fields in its eastern part, and goes all its out to push ahead the oil pipeline construction in the Far East, marches toward the Asia-Pacific energy markets in accordance with its energy strategy.

Europe is the traditional market to which Russia exports its oil. Although western pipeline has inadequate capacity and aging equipment, generally speaking it is still relatively complete comparing with the east. As for the Asia-Pacific market, Russia is currently in an embarrassment of no basic pipeline. However, the Asia-Pacific energy market is the fastest growing market in the present world. According to the assessment by the International Energy Agency, demand for energy will increase faster than any other countries in the world. The annual average of oil consumption is 3% to 4%. And gas consumption increases 4% to 6% annually. For this reason, Russia has begun to pay more attention to Asian and the Pacific countries in its energy strategy. On the whole, the Asia-Pacific market is expected to cover the share of the Russian oil export from the current 3% to 30% in 2020 (100 million tons will be increased in export). And natural gas increased from 5% to 25% (65 billion cubic meters will be increased in export). (Note 6).

Development to the east is of strategic significance in Russian foreign energy policy. Japan and South Korea are influential in the world economy. China and India have vast markets and great potential for industrialization. Southeast Asian countries are in great boom in economy with strong confidence. While as for its internal parts of the eastern Siberia and the Far East, it is extremely difficult to develop relying on the plan of west development. Probably the words by Lomonosov, a famous Russian poet are gradually becoming true. He said, strong Russia will be closely linked to Siberia.

On December 31, 2004, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov signed the order on the construction of the Far East oil pipeline (Eastern Siberia-Pacific pipeline). The total length of the pipeline is more than 4,800 km. It will become the longest oil pipeline built in Russia. By that time, Russia will have significantly increased its oil export capacity.

What that Russian Far East oil pipeline carries is mainly from the new oilfield of Eastern Siberia and the Kasha Republic. The pipeline construction will have been completed in two phases. For petroleum resources in the new areas is at the early stage of exploration, Russia is preparing to use oil resources in West Siberia to secure the oil supply of the pipeline project at the first phase. When the second phase starts will depend on the exploration progress of the new oilfields in the East Siberia and the Republic of Sakha.

According to Russian Ministry of Natural Resources in 2007, at the current speed of exploring oilfield in East Siberia and the Republic of Sakha, the whole oil pipeline capacity of the Far East will have not been likely to reach 80 million tons annually of the design scale by 2012. The main reason for this is the evil natural conditions, complex geological structure and too much investment in the oil exploration. There still exist some risks and dangers, too. In addition, Russia stops foreign investors from exploring its oil and gas fields of strategic significance, which is also considered to be one of the factors to slow the pace of developing oil resources in the area.

In light of this situation, the Russian Federation is expected in the next few years will greatly increase finance for oil and gas exploration in the region and take effective measures to attract and encourage investors to develop the difficult

mine. (Most belong to this type). That is to say, by the tax lever can the enthusiasm of the oil companies be evoked to develop new oil field. Department of Energy proposes that a tax-free period (of 5 to 7 years) should be implemented in the new producing area. And in the area developed by the investors no tax rate of mineral resources exploitation will be combined with the priority of using the mineral resources. This will prompt the companies able to develop the mineral resources with high risk in East Siberia, the Far East and the continental shelf waters. (Note 7). Russian government is making efforts to resolve the bottleneck that constraints the second phase of the pipeline project and protect its transportation of Far East oil pipeline, which is the important measure that Russia has taken to implement its Eastern energy diplomacy strategy and achieve diversification of energy export. On November 6, 2007, Chinese premier and Russian prime minister held the 12th regular meeting in Moscow. They once again stressed to ensure that the Sino-Russian crude oil pipeline must be completed and put into operation in the end of 2008, at the same time to speed up the negotiations about long-term cooperation of oil supply trade and enhance cooperation in downstream oil and gas field.

It is obvious to see that the long-term national interests of Russia lies in the fact that by virtue of its geographical advantage of the Far East region and its advantages in resources, it strives to attract more domestic and foreign capital to participate in the exploration and utilization of resources in its east part, giving impetus to the national overall economic development. By means of energy as a breakthrough, Russia has sped up to melt into the Asia-Pacific multilateral economic cooperation to lay a foundation for the genuine integration with the world economy.

3.3 Within the framework of Group of 8 Nations, Russia harmonizes the relations of energy producing and consuming countries and advocates the establishment of the global energy security system.

Energy security issue has always been one of the main topics for discussion that Group of Seven and the current G8 have paid much attention to. In this sense, Group of Seven set up in 1975 can be seen as the response to the 1973 energy crisis in the world. The crisis resulted in the first soaring oil price in the 20th century and threatened economic development in many countries. During that period, Group of Seven had played an active part in harmonize energy reserves policy of the industrialized countries and building up strategic oil reserves. The energy issues thus have become the central ones for the United States and other industrial countries. (Note 8)

Members of Group of Seven are the major energy consumers. After accepting Russia as a member, from the viewpoint of energy security, G8 is more capable of harmonizing the relations between the energy producing and consuming countries. Advocated by Russia, G8 and the EU energy ministers held the first conference in Moscow to discuss the world energy issues in the spring of 1998. Since September 11th Incident, great changes have taken place in the world geopolitical situation. And the world energy market has undergone a fierce competition. In May 2002, G8 and the EU energy ministers held the second conference in Detroit of the United States to discuss energy security and how to maintain the stability of world energy market. In July 2006, summit meeting was held in Petersburg. Russia, grasping the chance that it was its turn to become the chairman, decided issues of energy security to be the main topic for the meeting, and promoted G8 to pass St. Petersburg Energy Security Initiative. On the eve of the summit, G8 energy ministers held meeting in Moscow in March 2006 to give an extensive discussion on the global energy security issues on behalf of mutual interests.

In the framework of G8, Russia advocates establishing a long-term energy security strategy and a global energy security system. The energy proposals that Russian have mainly focus on that a balance point of interests between the energy producing and consuming countries must be found because it is the only way to prevent the world energy market from turbulence and resulting soaring prices. From the resolutions of St. Petersburg summit, it can be seen that proposals of Russia have covered the key elements of energy security issues—from increasing energy production to promoting the energy efficiency of economy, which reflects the environmental issues that the industrialized countries are concerned about. And the pressing demand that the Third World countries have is also taken into consideration, for example, how the developing countries can shake off energy poverty had been deeply explored. (Note 9).

It is obvious that energy has become a ticket for Russia to squash in G8. And energy security issues will occupy more lasting and unique position on the agenda of G8. Russia participating in the discussion on energy issues and exploring ways to resolve them does not only conform to the interests of Russia itself, but also to the interests of other partners in G8. (Note 10). Although Russia is not the member of International Energy Agency and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, it still develops positive mutual relations with the international energy organizations. Russian energy industries have given more and more impact on the stability of the world energy market, which has been recognized by major developed countries.

As a world-class energy producing country, Russia has its world energy interests. Russia is making good use of its natural energy advantages and taking active part in the world energy market governance to earn a more favorable position in the existing international energy order (Note 11) and have a greater voice in the international oil and gas market. (Haiyun, Wang, 2007.12. p.30.) The rise of Russia in the field of energy has accelerated the adjustment of the pattern of international energy strategy in the new century. In the overall situation that the world oil supply and demand

relationship will continue to change, Russia by actively participating in the design and operation of the new global energy management system, can gradually improve its international prestige in the field of energy and lay a solid foundation for steadily pushing forward the strategy of strong state and rich nation to achieve the great cause of its national rejuvenation.

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Notes

Note 1. Проблемы глобальной энергетической безопасности. Энергетическая политика. 2005, №4, с. 65.

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Note 6. Виктор Христенко (министр промышленности и энергетики РФ). Энергетическая стратегия России: Прорыв на Восток. – 06.02.2006. №19(1546). – <http://www.vedomosti.ru/newspaper/article>.

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Note 11. International energy order is a vital part of the international political and economic order. It refers to the system arrangement concerning the international energy power relations. It concentrates on the expression of the power balance, interrelationship and the mechanism of rules among various international energy subjects. In the existing international energy order, a serious imbalance of power exists between developing and developed countries. At the same time, the existing international energy order is under a dynamic change. The oil and gas exporting countries have a comparatively higher position. The US dollar international oil and financial system is facing serious challenges. A multi-polar energy pattern has loomed in the world.



Research on Corporate Image Orientation

Hao Lv

Business Administration Department of Management College, Wuhan University of Technology

Wuhan 430070, China

Tel: 86-27-6268-8931 E-mail: luhao@126.com

Abstract

Corporate image orientation is the base of corporate image planning and the first step to implement CIS (Corporate Identify System) designing. According to different schemes and design aims, strategies adopted by corporate image orientation are different. Generally speaking, we can adopt demand adaptation, reciprocal thinking, dominance prominence, reorientation and improving the occasions to implement corporate image orientation. According to their own developmental characters, situations in the market, situations of market competition, enterprises can flexibly adopt corresponding strategies in different stages of enterprise development to make the corporate image orientation clear and exact and make the corporate image impressive.

Keywords: Corporate image, Orientation, CIS

1. Introduction

Corporate image orientation is the base of corporate image planning and the first step to implement CIS (Corporate Identify System) designing. It grasps customers' heart world and mental endurance space and expresses corporate image through simplified information, connects corporate image with the receptive point in customers' heart world, and sequentially balances supply (corporate image) and demand (customers' intrinsic demands), transmission (effects of advertisement) and feedback (customers' reaction), and makes enterprises search their exact positions in the market and shares a place in customers' mental space based on that enterprises recognize themselves, know well opponents, understand social public mentality.

Various enterprises have different situations and their aims of corporate image orientation are different also, so in the process of corporate image orientation, they cannot but adopt different strategies of corporate image orientation. In the following text, we will put forward several effective strategies of corporate image orientation.

2. The strategy of demand adaptation

Image orientation of modern enterprises is inclined to catch demands and changes of customers' heart world and combine customers' interior demands with the development strategy of enterprise, and to cater for customers' mental situation or occupy customers' mental space. Therefore, many enterprises have changed traditional self-praise positioning strategy, adopted euphemistic, contrastive and neutral techniques to cater for customers' mental situation and fulfill customers' interior demands, and accordingly confirm the special position of the enterprise.

For example, US Detroit is the world famous auto manufacturing base. But when auto manufacturers in Detroit were immersed to produce heavy, long and low streamline cars, Ford developed a sort of short, fat and guly "Beetle" car. Then, if Ford blindly boasted itself and only propogandized advantages of "Beetle", it might not be accepted by customers. However, the orientation watchword of Ford was "to think over the advantage of small car". The wise advantages of this orientation were that it fulfilled consumers' interior demands to small car and catered for consumers' psychology to pursue new fashion, pursue difference and pursue surprise, and the words were simple, the mood was euphemistic to make people feel kind and finally found a space belong to Ford in customers' heart.

Otherwise, modern customers very emphasize industrial strengths of enterprise, notice science and technology contents of products, and advocate green and healthy living. So, professional concepts, high science and technology concepts and green environmental protection concepts should be wise selections in image orientation for modern enterprises.

3. The strategy of reciprocal thinking

To make corporate image orientation effective, we can use the method of reciprocal thinking to influence and stimulate consumers. For the strategy of reciprocal thinking, it very emphasizes that the method can not be repeated and imitate others and must start from human thinker. And the open of thinker door is influenced by human knowledge and experiences to large extents, and the information which cannot match intrinsic knowledge and experiences always is rejected, and even if it is accepted, first impressions are strongest. Investigations have proved that the market

occupation rate of the brand which first enters customers' brain is double to the second one, four times to the third one. Therefore, simple simulation almost has no hope to succeed.

For example, many famous perfume brands such as Arpege, Chnel No.5 and so on take female as their appeal objective. Max Factor Company also positioned its perfume brand as "Just Call Maxi". And after it came into the market, it was failed before long and the president of this company also lost his position. However Reclon adopted the strategy of reciprocal thinking and succeeded by means of the pure mail brand "Reclon's Charlie", obtained female consumers' favors and became the best-selling brand in the whole world.

The 7-UP acquired success through the strategy of reciprocal thinking when Coca Cola was fashionable. Its orientation catchword is "7-UP, non-Cola". 7-UP positions its brand by "non-cola", because it takes Cola as its compare objective, and easily makes customers associate famous drinks such as "Coca Cola", and accordingly drives up its own social status. At the same time, it offers a new choice for those persons who don't like the taste of Cola. In addition, because customers always have sorts of desire to know unknown things, many customers of Cola also want to taste this new drink which dares to compare with "Coca Cola" and is different with "Coca Cola". Otherwise, this orientation also brings strong effects that advertisement can not achieve, because Coca Cola Company takes action to 7-UP because the later forms infringement because of "7-UP, non-Cola", but the recover is "7-UP". The fact is that 7-UP is carbonated drinks, and it is not Cola, because Cola is a sort of soft drinks containing caffeine, and it is not the patent name of "Coca Cola". This lawsuit arouses maximum attentions of social public, so the recover "7-UP" is also recognized by numerous customers and its well-know degree has been fully advanced. Therefore, this orientation of "7-UP" is very smart.

4. The strategy of predominance prominence

Nowadays, on the one hand, new material and new technology emerge in endlessly and they make the technical innovation ability of modern enterprise fully changed, on the other hand, the development of communication technology makes various information come in a continuous stream. They all offer more selectable opportunities for the development of modern enterprise and many enterprises just follow this tendency of social development to go after opportunities bringing various possibilities for success. Therefore, diversification management occurs. For the enterprise which has been in the leading status in the market, its enterprise image has hard occupied customers' special mental space by means of the charm of dominant product. Therefore, it give no cause for more criticism for enterprise to take its leading product as its bibcock to develop diversification management, develop business, increase incomes and reduce risks. However, some enterprises always forget their own advantages and image orientation when they acquire successes, and accordingly suffer undeserved failures.

A predominant enterprise should fix image predominance ever and again, and can not forget there own orientation of corporate image at any time. Though many large companies are implementing diversification management, but successful large companies are famous by their leading products. Japanese SONY is famous because of its TV, acoustics and other consumed electric products, and not its travel agency and drugstore. US General Motors is proud of the largest auto manufacturers, not other industrial products it produces. Therefore, though corporate image orientation doesn't conflict with diversification management, but the primary and secondary positions of both should have a clear limit.

Successful enterprises profit from their special predominance, and failing enterprises often meet with misfortune because of the loose of predominance. It is another key for corporate image orientation to recognize the predominance of enterprise. This sort of predominance can not be balanced by capital strength and transferred by other investment opportunities with allures. A promising entrepreneur is a spoony pursuer, and though there are many targets he deserves to pursue, but the objective he pursues is the only one that makes his enterprise figure special image in the predominant industry.

5. The strategy of reorientation

If the enterprise wants a sort of new concept or new product enter customers' brain, it must make former same opinion or brand image in customers' memories display old impressions and easily eliminate. It needs to research competitors and product brand image which have occupied consumers' thinkers, find out their disadvantages or weaknesses and implement reorientations. The essential aim of reorientation is to establish advantageous new order in consumers' memories, and once this order is established, competitors' old concept and old brand image will lose charm to customs, and new image of enterprise can enter customers' thinkers that are vacant.

It is a very smart method to exert the strategy of reorientation to deal with superiors. "Tylenol" had exerted this sort of "sudden thrust of the mace". When "Aspirin" was without equal as the king of easing pain, Tylenol cautioned against people "shouldn't use Aspirin" in its advertisement time after time, and pointed out Aspirin would "erode blood vessel wall", "induce hypersusceptibility reaction" and "induce concealed minim stomach and intestines bleeding", and draw Aspirin from the status of the king. Consequently, Tylenol occupied the first position in pain medicine and obtains success.

The strategy of reorientation is a sort of evident strategy, and if it can not be used, it is easy to break law and regulations, and induce dissensions among enterprises, even lawsuit, and finally harm itself. Therefore, whether it is good law or not is the key to whether this strategy can be adopted. Since 1972, US Federal Trade Commission has allowed various manufacturers to advertise comparisons in ABC and CBS TV Net. In 1974, US Advertisement Association constitutes guidelines of comparison advertisement. In the same way, England Independent Institution also allows play comparison advertisement in its TV net. In China, the comparison advertisements are rare and there are no specific laws and regulations. Therefore, if China manufactures want to adopt the strategy of reorientation, they must be very careful to avoid entangling law dissensions.

6. The strategy of improving the occasion

Those enterprises in the competition have different market status which would continually change. The corporate image orientation must improve the occasions and flexibly adopt corresponding strategy according to different market status of the enterprise.

6.1 Market leaders' orientation strategy

How leaders position their own brand image, i.e. how they keep their first position in the industry? The best method is to enhance the class of the product and always occupy the position that can not be exceeded. For example, Coca Cola orientates itself that "only Coca Cola is the real Cola". It not only occupies the top rundle, but disallows others to invade its status.

What should leaders do when their images meet competitors' challenges? The best method is to develop new brand to suppress opponents, and if the orientation of new brand image can exert the strategy of reorientation for competitors, the effect will be very obvious.

If the image of enterprise, especially the leading image in the service industry suffers challenges, changes including changing the name of the company, shrinking connotation and magnifying extension are good approach. For example, "Eastman Kodak" was transformed to "Kodak", the Mitsubishi Electric Company was renamed to Mitsubishi, and the Kikkoman Sauce Company was changed to Kikkoman. This sort of change is not only the change of name, and it is the reorientation of image in fact, the orientation to enhance rundle, which can not only suppress competitors, but develop in larger domain in the market for the enterprise.

6.2 Market followers' orientation strategy

It is the orientation strategy or the position which should be adopted by the enterprise when it exactly analyzes competitive situation and confirms that it can not occupy the first in the market. When the enterprise is on the position, it should admit leaders' status and follow definite aim, and accordingly occupy the vantage point of the second in the market.

The famous example which stands in the followers' position to orientate its own image and obtains success is Avis Rent Car. After continual ten years' management losses, Avis admitted the leading status of Hertz Company in the same industry, and alleged that "in the rent car industry, we are only the second, but why people still rent our cars, because we try harder." After this orientation, in the first year, this Company made up the deficits and got surpluses, and gain 1.2 million dollars, and in the second year, it profited 2.6 million dollars, and in the third year, the return had achieved 5 million dollars. Follow makes Avis' image in customers' thinkers about upon leaders, and produce magnified effect for potential customers. In addition, Avis makes itself under the shadow of "Hertz", which also expand someone's psychology who sympathize weaker and support weaker.

6.3 Market challengers' orientation strategy

The challengers' character is that they possess the quality of aggression, and they always gaze at leaders and put them at the opposite position of leaders, and once they have opportunity, they will challenge leaders' status, declare war on leaders and confront leaders. So challengers are also attackers and confrontationists. Challengers want to win opponents, for image orientation, on one hand, they must strengthen their own orientation image aiming at opponents' weakness, and build up the wallop of attack, on the other hand, they should reposition opponents and grasp opponents' weakness and depreciate opponents' images.

For example, as the importer of Russian "Stolichnaya", Pepsi Company found that most US vodkas looked that they were made in Russia, which worked huge pressures to the distribution of "Stolichnaya". Therefore, Pepsi Company decided to sweep the market by the pose of challenger. It pointed out in its advertisement, "The brand of "Samorar" is made in Pennsylvania, the brand of "Smirnoff" is made in Hartford of Connecticut, the brand of "Wolfschmidt" is made in Lawrenceburg of Indiana, and the larruping brand of "Stolichnaya" is made in Russia". The label on the bottle also was labeled that "Made in Leningrad of Russia". So Pepsi Company wined other competitors, and inaugurated wide sales market for real Russian vodka, Stolichnaya, and the sales rapidly increased.

7. Conclusions

Above several sorts of corporate image orientation strategies possess their own characters. The strategy of demand adaptation takes customers' demands as its direction and is easily accepted and recognized by customers. The strategy of reciprocal thinking abounds in originality and wisdom, tries to win through newness. The strategy of predominance prominence starts from its own characters and makes the focus of orientation centralized and definite. The strategy of reorientation takes competition as its aim, and gets effect instantly. The strategy of improving the occasion pursues impersonality, and makes the orientation and the market harmonize.

For the choice of strategy, according to their own developmental characters, situations in the market, situations of market competition, enterprises can flexibly adopt corresponding strategies in different stages of enterprise development to make the corporate image orientation clear and exact and make the corporate image impressive.

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Managing Change with Integrity in Malaysian Institution of Higher Education

Siti Akmar Abu Samah

Universiti Teknologi MARA, MALAYSIA

Tel: 016 639 6407 E-mail: sitiakma@salam.uitm.edu.my

Hj. Kamaruzaman, J (Corresponding author)

Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

Tel: 603 89467176 E-mail: kamaruz@putra.upm.edu.my

Abstract

Change is a perennial buzzword in today's world. In every facet of life that all of us undergo, will constantly and consistently meet the condition of change. When it happens, this chain of action will attract reaction of various multitudes which could either be desirable or undesirable. With every noble intention, change is supposed to improve, enhance and upgrade the aspects of living so that everyone in the organisation will benefit for its very existence. In the educational institution, the members in the organization inevitably face the challenges, be those imposed or designed, must learn to adapt or adopt to meet the demand. Change that takes place within as well as outside the institution can culminate mixed reception and perception among the clients. This paper attempts to explore the issues of integrity and the challenges that educational institution like that of Universiti Teknologi MARA faces in managing change.

Keywords: Change, Educational institution, Integrity, Challenges, Managing change

1. Introduction

Change to its very meaning refers to alteration, variation and conversion. The interest in the nature of change happens habitually in life. It does not only occur in organic cycle, but also in the inorganic cycle which evolves around us in our daily living. Living things change according to time, space, environment and condition of which they need to survive. In order to sustain existence be it organic or inorganic, change must take place. It is suffice to state that elements of inorganic structure particularly, evolve around change for its continuous existence.

As for higher education, the need to change is so inevitable due to the need to survive and to remain relevant. Competition happens overnight with the mushrooming of private institutions of higher learning offering academic programmes similar to those establishments of several government-run institutions and universities. Many of these private institutions offer programmes that are attractive and flexible in which market for the enrolment of prospective students is ever ready for them. With these private-run institutions, money churning strategies allow them to import expertise and experts who can enhance the product marketability.

Another force of change that institutions of higher education in Malaysia have to face is the aspiration to achieve that is to be recognized globally and that also to attain world class status. This objective which is aspired by every university in the country calls for change to take place. In order to do this, the institution of higher education has to meet the requirements that can render it world class status. Some of the initiatives include internationalization and recognition from top-notch world organization in the aspects of research, innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. In doing so, change has to remain constant at all times. In addition, it is necessary to change as institutions such as Universiti Teknologi MARA has to make continuous national contributions in various aspects – socio-economic in particular, as these will become part of nation growth and nation building. To fulfill this obligation, educational institutions of higher learning have to be able to determine the mechanism of which change can occur. It requires the ability to identify the mechanism, how to implement and operate as well as finally, to be able to make lucrative contributions to the fullest. The need of knowing how to implement new excellent ideas is critical since good ideas will be wasted of one does not know how to do it well.

To be able to emulate successful organization in managing ideas for change to take place, it is helpful to look into mechanism that may promote the initiative. In the book "The Heart of Change" by Kotter and Cohen (2002), highlighted eight steps for successful change as illustrated in Table 1.

2. Change management with integrity in facing challenges

When change has to occur, it can never be left in peace. To a certain extent, when change happens, the human community is forced to shift condition which can sometimes be unpleasant (Kotter, 1996). This initiative attracts reactions. At the tertiary level, when the buzzword is flashed, the involvement ranges from the issues of leadership, people, environment, technology and finance. As the organization plans for amendments or change to take place, these issues need to be addressed in accordance with the information dissemination, implementation strategies and continuous commitment. As the teaching staff of local universities, the authors have the liberty to observe the scenario for the last two decades. It is of great importance that these issues be managed effectively and efficiently in order for the initiative to realize eventually, harmoniously.

2.1 Leadership Credibility

For change to happen, leaders at the helm have to be clear of the directions that they are spearheading the followers to take. Leaders by definition (Harvard Business Essentials, 2003)

“...create an appealing vision of the future and then develop a logical strategy for making it a reality. This also motivates people to pursue the vision, even in the face of obstacles.”

In enjoining them, managers of educational institution have to work hand in hand particularly in the implementation and operational strategies for change to occur. It is useful to note Kotter's (1996) outline in Table 2 which he states that there are possibilities in the following outcomes that may be encountered by leaders and managers in managing change. (See Table 2)

As both leaders and managers are the prime shaper and mover of the change agenda, the initiative must come together with moral values and ethics that should become the pillar of strength and stability. Thus, integrity in its place will help the leader and manager conduct their obligation which can inspire the people factor in the organization. In the concept of change, leadership retains its credibility by ensuring that there are no top-down exhortations and, at the same time, having the ability to control aimless bottom-up improvisations.

2.2 People focused

Educational institutions, the public university in particular, like any other organisations comprise a population of people of varying level of academic qualifications, of different expectation and perception and varying beliefs and commitment. The member of this organisation such like the academicians, students and support staff as well as stakeholders and other interested parties make up the composition of agents for change. As far as Universiti Teknologi MARA is concerned, the government factor too is important as it lies here, the aspiration of the country's leaders, who profess that the socio-economic status of the population remains competitive. In this commitment, the University has to be dynamic in change and constantly adjusting to current needs and drives.

To effectively manage change, responses also have to come from the two major groups of people of the institutions: the academicians and the students. As they are very much involved as the life line in the University's operational strategy, considerations on the following pertinent elements must not be compromised. These include curriculum, teaching method, learning style as well as human resource and administrative requirements. In order for change to happen in the University, the above factors should be the basis of principles that should not be ignored.

Harvard Business Essentials (2003) had made suggestions that may be helpful in terms of motivating the people factor to handle organisational change. These include among others:

- (1) Encourage innovative thinking
- (2) Delegate and not micromanage
- (3) Extend trust
- (4) Be flexible and extend that flexibility to others at the first opportunity
- (5) Encourage risk taking and be tolerant of failures
- (6) Spread decision-making authority around

These are strategies that may help to promote gradual acceptance to change. Since resistance is another barrier that will impede the change initiative, in the university, it will be very useful that in the later section of the paper that a discussion be put forth, that is the issue on curriculum change. With the advent of economic and social factors arising from technological, international integration, extensive opportunities, the university is usually challenged by the inadequacy of the curriculum designed and the graduates that it produces. Hence, there is the need for curriculum review at regular interval of every five years, which is commonly practiced in local university.

2.3 Environmental sanctity

Universiti Teknologi MARA has evolved historically, socially and economically from its humble beginning as Maktab RIDA in 1956, Institut Teknologi MARA since 1967 and now a university since 1999. As its status now, tremendous growth has taken place up to this very day with the implementation of the Ninth Malaysia Plan, a governmental master

plan, in which every chapter of the blueprint emphasizes the achievement of the objectives, in terms of the function of the branch campuses, faculties, centres of learning, institutes, units and how all these assist in the development of the academics, students, management, research, information and communication infrastructure and facility management.

With the Ninth Malaysian Plan, implementation of change has to take its course, with or without resistance. This will then require effective management of change for the organization to be steered towards the directions the stewardship wants it to flow to. A clear understanding of these directions has to be in place by the leaders and the people, so that the very existence of the university remains relevant and competitive. This endeavor should be able to motivate the human factor to support change.

2.4 Technology with accountability

Wherever change is a priority, another impact that can be identified is on the technological factors which require first-at-hand basis of change management. In the university, learning is the trade of the market and online information acquisition is in today's demand. In online learning, there are a variety of relevant applications of technologies which are useful for powerful and effective learning.. These include simulations, interactive learning, online search and retrieval, electronic surveys, online video with discussions just to name a few. These capabilities come with cost, energy and expertise of which change towards this, if not properly planned and managed may result in several inadequacies and frustrations.

Simultaneously, in the learning system, technology has taken centre stage whereby lecturers have included various instructional materials which student can access anytime and anywhere. This has also allowed the sharing of knowledge and communication among lecturers made very feasible and simple. In Malaysia, the pursuit of e-learning has been striving hard to ensure that it takes off very well with everyone in the educational institution. The target population, namely the lecturers who are responsible in uploading the content material of the course taught and the students responsible for the downloading and usage of content material for their very own purpose, has been continuously given training, demonstration and courses to help them get started and to move on. The approach in teaching and learning in institutions of higher education needs to accommodate to this drive for e-learning, hence change is inevitable.

2.5 Financial truce

After all, the following agents of change: leadership, people, environment and technology are mobilized in every which way, with the state of finance that every organisation has to account for. In the case of Universiti Teknologi MARA, managing of change has been airbrushed by the support of the government, being a public university with the largest student enrolment – at 100 000 currently, stakeholders as well as successful alumni that have been the product of the university since the initial establishment in the 1950's. Nevertheless, concerted effort has been put in to generate self-income by the university itself, apart from the dependence on the governmental budget. In its change effort, the university has established a business entrepreneurship of its own called UiTM Holdings with the stewardship of an appointed Chief Executive Officer.

With the changes that have to be constant, managing this initiative is a big task for every member of the university. Every sector in the business entity above, is very much involved with the issues discussed in the paper. The human factor drives the maintenance of credibility and integrity in running these establishments successfully.

3. Selected sample case study on change management: The case of UiTM

It is useful to take note of details that will help the organization, UiTM in particular, to consider, in its effort to manage change. From an article by Jones *et al* (2004), a list on principles of change management seems helpful. However, it is pertinent to note too that there is no single methodology that can fit every organization, what more an institution of higher learning. Then again, there are sets of practices, tools and techniques that can be adapted according to various situations, among the guiding lines, Jones *et al.* (2004) had outlined the following in Table 3 which may be of assistance in the management of change in an organisation. (See Table 3)

In the discussion below, a case sample is displayed in terms of curriculum review effort undertaken by the Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA during the late 1990's, which since then has brought about changes as far as teaching of English language is concerned. Academy of Language Studies or prior to 2003 has been known as the Language Centre (Pusat Bahasa) and has undertaken curriculum review exercise every five years The recent one was in 1999. In managing this academic change, the people factor is given the initial consideration and these are the academic managers, lecturers and students. In this exercise the managers play their role effectively by providing clear information based on calculated judgment and facts for the need to have a curriculum review.

Prior to the exercise, the Ministry of Education, Malaysia introduced the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) for diploma-level students to sit for and to pass before they are accepted for entrance to the degree programme. To meet this requirement, the academic managers were well-informed and self-directed to carry out the change. The move was made clear to every responsible party in the organization. A staff meeting was called. This involved the academic and

the administrative staff, all of whom were informed of the impending change. It was received with mixed feelings as the teaching staff, especially, apart from other work obligation, has to slowly adapt to the new requirement. Within a certain time frame, textbook writers were selected and directed to publish homegrown teaching materials to complement the curriculum change.

In the communication process, the academicians were regularly informed of the progress made by the curriculum committee as well as the textbook writing team. Through this constant address by the academic managers to the staff, the mammoth change that took place in early 1999 was able to see results when the new curriculum was adopted coupled with the completion of writing the textbooks in the middle of 1999. With the accomplishment – writers were rewarded, language lecturers were provided with the new materials for teaching, student's learning was more directed and the organization has been enjoying the fruit of the labour for the past six years since. However, at the time of writing this paper, the Academy of Language Studies is in the process of reviewing the said curriculum.

This case sample is documented to indicate that large scale change can successfully take place, and in this case – the language centre. The steps in realizing the initiative was not as simple as it seemed to be. However, based on earlier discussion, issues on leadership, people, environment, technology and finance were dealt with surely well, for the major change in the Academy of Language Studies to take place.

4. Conclusions

Albert Schweitzer once said, "Example is not the main thing influencing others. It is the only thing." Over and again, the world has seen organisations change successfully and unsuccessfully during the process of transformation. From the discussion above, the current change agents have to maintain high integrity for transformation to happen effectively. Their sense of purpose to remain relevant will make them enlighten to continuously work together for the good of the organizations. One block of hindrance that managers of change must never ignore is the emotional shift: from those emotions that hinder change and those that facilitate change. The leaders/managers have to be prepared with facing anger, pessimism, cynicism, anxiety and insecurity. Therefore, leaders and managers by exemplary models help to change these emotions to those of trust, optimism, enthusiasm and hope.

The power of the people is another crucial agent for change to take place. Leaders need to address the initiative to colleagues and subordinates very clearly of the need for change. The establishment of relevant committees to assist the management is another approach to attract the people to work together to achieve a shared vision for the university. It is the centre of learning to play its role effectively and efficiently.

Finally, the crucial ingredient that mobilizes change is finance. Thus, University has taken a very proactive step in generating income for its sustainability. The dynamics of this effort involve competence of the university treasury, product supplier's credibility and maintenance provider. In managing transformation in the university, financial distribution and re-generation has to be done fairly, with transparency and clear procedures. With all these issues addressed and placed in the right frame of mind and attitude, it is hopeful that any change initiatives that take place in the university will reap good for all.

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Table 1. The eight steps for successful change

| Step | Action | New Behaviour |
|------|------------------------|---|
| 1 | Increase urgency | People start telling each other, “Let’s go, we need to change things!” |
| 2 | Build the guiding team | A group powerful enough to guide a big change is formed and they start to work together well. |
| 3 | Get the vision right | The guiding team develops the right vision and strategy for the change effort. |
| 4 | Communicate for buy-in | People begin to buy into the change and this shows in their behaviour. |
| 5 | Empower action | More people feel able to act, and do act on the vision. |
| 6 | Create short term wins | Momentum builds as people try to fulfill the vision, while fewer and fewer resist change. |
| 7 | Don’t let up | People make wave and wave of changes until the vision is fulfilled. |
| 8 | Make change stick | New and winning behaviour continues despite the pull of tradition, turnover of change leader etc. |

Table 2. Outcomes of managing change

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Transformation efforts can be successful for a while, but often fail after short term |
| 2 | Results become erratic |
| 3 | Transformation efforts go nowhere |
| 4 | All highly successful transformation efforts combine good leadership with good management. Short term results are possible, especially through cost cutting or mergers and acquisitions. But real transformation programmes have trouble getting started and major long term change is rarely achieved. |

Table 3. Principles of change management

| Principle | Guiding Line |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Address the human side systematically |
| 2 | Start at the top |
| 3 | Involve every layer |
| 4 | Make change a formal case |
| 5 | Create ownership |
| 6 | Speak to the individual |



Cheong and Mateship: The Socialization of Media Relations

Richard C Stanton

Department of Media & Communication

The University of Sydney

Abstract

Corporations, governments and other organizations can contribute to the growth in transparency in a society through the study and practice of balanced media relations. By adopting and blending successful social and cultural practices and applying theories of framing and relationship building, strong long-term media relationships with diffuse societal benefits can be constructed.

This paper draws on two cultural concepts in Korea and Australia - Cheong and Mateship - to support the case for building ethical media relationships and social transparency. It attempts to argue that elements of two very different sociocultural models can be effectively conflated to develop balanced media relationships. It uses examples of media coverage of Korean government policies to demonstrate the potential for the conflation of the models using theories of framing and relationship building as the basis for the development.

Keywords: Media relations, Government transparency, Cultural practices

Introduction

While this paper examines the case of South Korea, it is instructive to begin with images from another north Asian country that has similar difficulties to South Korea in its attempts to frame important issues and to form serious relationships with Western news media.

In the summer of 1971, after a protracted struggle, Taiwan lost its seat in the United Nations to the Republic of China. In such a position, as a country without statehood, Taiwan's image as a satellite of the People's Democratic Republic of China may have appeared hopeless. But since 1993 Taiwan has applied regularly, if unsuccessfully, for UN membership under the name 'Republic of China'. This continuing strategic attempt to overcome diplomatic isolation was reconstructed in July 2007 with a number of initiatives, one of which was described by the world's leading newspaper, the *Economist*, as being 'backed [] with a public relations campaign that will culminate in a mass rally on September 15th, three days before the annual session of the UN General Assembly' (*Economist* 8. 9. 2007: 35).

The *Economist*, along with other important Western news media is not shy about imagining government and global institutional issues and events in negative public relations terms, a position from which, I will argue, it is difficult to build strong media relations. In 2005 the *Economist* imagined the International Criminal Court (ICC) creating a 'public relations bungle' (*Economist*, 22. 10. 2005) because it announced it was issuing warrants for Joseph Kony, leader of a Ugandan rebel organization responsible for the torture and deaths of 20,000 children. In announcing the issue of the warrants, the ICC was presenting its credentials in the public sphere as this was its first public act since its establishment in 1998 as a permanent war crimes tribunal. For the *Economist*, the time between establishment and delivery of a practical application of the ICC's mandate was nothing more than a public relations mess.

The *Economist's* stories and the angles they take reveal a lot about the newspaper as a global news source and about the meaning it attributes to media and public relations. On one hand it suggests media and public relations ought to play a significant role in framing important global issues, yet at the same time there is an overt contempt for the actual practice of media relations. This raises some interesting questions. If national governments such as that in South Korea, and supranational institutions such as Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), or the World Trade Organization (WTO) attempt to act positively to achieve increased levels of well-being for citizens in a socio-economic context, can they expect positive support from the news media and other important stakeholders in attempting to reach their goals? Can they build relationships with global news media, particularly Western news media, in which important issues are framed so that they resonate with citizens? Can media relations, and hence public relations, ever be imagined by the news media as being of value in the pursuit and exercise of transparency?

1. A Brief Glimpse of Coverage of the Taiwan Case

In the West, the news media represent themselves as independent and objective, reporting issues and events as they observe them. They also represent themselves as stakeholders vital to the outcome of many complex and important social, political and cultural goals and objectives. The Taiwan case is instructive in that it demonstrates how media

relations can be used at government and supranational institutional level to attempt to achieve socio-economic or socio-political goals and objectives. The case was reported in different ways during the week before the United Nations decision on September 18, 2007. Singapore's *Straits Times* reported in advertising image terms that 'selling the "Taiwan" brand to the world [] was the theme of a rally [] in support of a controversial referendum advocated by the ruling Democratic Progressive Party' (*Straits Times* 17. 9. 2007).

Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* described the 500,000 rally participants as 'marching under green and white banners and shouting Taiwan my country (*South China Morning Post* 15. 9. 2007). The same story provided images of marchers unfurling banners which read 'ordering the UN to open its doors', lifting huge balloons in the shape of a globe, and the rally itself as having a 'carnival atmosphere'. A day later the same newspaper reported of threats emanating from Beijing in which it would 'not tolerate any moves to separate Taiwan from the mainland' (*South China Morning Post* 17. 9. 2007), referring to the marchers and supporters of the President of the previous day as 'demonstrators'.

Japan's *Kyodo News* reported that the mass rally in Taiwan's second largest city of Kaohsiung had been foreshadowed by a presidential press conference that was broadcast in New York. It reported that the rally, which was expected to draw more than 500,000 supporters to a 'parade' through the city, would 'culminate with a speech by [President] Chen that will be televised live in front of the United Nations' New York headquarters, where the DPP plans to hold a coinciding rally' (*Kyodo News* 15. 9. 2007).

The cynical observer of the Taiwanese government strategy – the mobilization and management of such a large gathering for the purpose of demonstrating collective will – might be tempted to argue that it was a pointless exercise as the Chinese veto power in the UN presented an impasse for any Taiwanese intervention. Such a position was imagined by the *Straits Times* which provided a five paragraph opinion on the matter two days after the rally, and a day before the UN vote. It stated that since 1971 Taiwan has repeatedly failed to rejoin the UN, and that like in past attempts it is 'certain' to be blocked by China (*Straits Times* 17. 9. 2007). To balance its cynical observation it provided a glimmer of hope by suggesting that the bid has 'attracted unprecedented attention this year because of the planned referendum' (*Straits Times* 17. 9. 2007).

2. Applying Media Relations Theory: The Social Model

Ihlen and Ruler (2007) argue that public relations has a social dimension that is inherently more important than others and that the quest for one great theory to encompass and embrace the field is an impossible dream. A literal translation of media relations is the relationships with and between media, media relations practitioners, and clients. Media relations can have broad implications, when attached to a globally sensitive conflict between Palestine and Israel, for example, but at the other end of the scale it can attract attention as the preparation of a popsy bubblehead event as banal as a television song contest.

Historically, media relations has attempted to define itself by what it is not: it is not propaganda, it is not lobbying, and it is not advertising. But defining something by saying what it is not, is an apologetic position. Along the scale, between the extremes of global conflict and popsy bubblehead, lie an array of differentiated activities that are ascribed to media relations. What they have in common is the aim that an issue or event shifts from one space to another. This can happen with the application of persuasion and influence upon the news media. Or it can happen as a communication with stakeholders that does not rely on the news media for its transfer.

The importance of an understanding of persuasion and influence as they are applied to all types of media is palpable. Less obvious is the need for media relations to implement other, less direct types of communication with non-media stakeholders. Media relations is therefore concerned with building relationships with media.

The field of media relations, as a relatively newly constituted arena, is one which is filled with agents and forces who are always operating on behalf of others (clients) that exist in fields other than media relations (Stanton 2007a). While the field of journalism is filled with agents and actors operating as journalists, much the same as the field of medicine is filled with medical practitioners and law filled with lawyers, media relations is filled with agents and actors theorizing and practicing about things outside the field. They are effectively, agents and actors operating overtly, competing on behalf of clients within other fields to maintain a position or to transform a position (Stanton 2007a). And the news media are the logical vehicles for media relations agents and actors to use to reach 'accessible' and 'inaccessible' stakeholders. The news media are acknowledged as being of primary importance to the campaign communication goals and objectives of all types of issues and events (Stanton 2007b). In this it is important to examine one of the West's leading newspapers; one that claims to act on a global scale. The *Economist* is one of the most influential news media in the world. In general, it reports issues and events in a balanced fashion relying upon sources that it values and trusts from a perspective that requires them to demonstrate the same level of symbolic capital as is demanded of the newspaper itself by its stakeholders. But how much of the material that appears around the globe each week in the pages of the *Economist* is sourced from media relations practitioners? Is every article about governments, sourced from governments? How much of the material sourced from governments can claim objectivity? If material appearing in the

Economist is sourced from governments, how did those governments build a strong relationship with the newspaper so that it was able to consider them sourceworthy?

3. Two Theories that support media relations: Framing and its application to relationship building

There are two theories that contribute to the development of media relations: framing and relationship building. Framing requires us to think about an issue or event in a particular way. It needs us to think about it as part of a wider ideology and to frame it within that ideological position. It also requires us to have some understanding of the ideological position of the media so that our frame matches the agenda embedded within the media ideology.

Media ideologies come in all shapes and sizes but most importantly in the West, they are linked to the central position of commercial ownership. Opinion writers and journalists working for News Corporation, for example, may hold different views to News Corporation's majority stakeholders Rupert Murdoch or John Malone (Liberty Media) and sometimes, their writing may reflect this position. But generally speaking, the ideological position of commercial ownership or majority shareholding will be paramount. (In this the Western news media is not very different to its non-Western counterparts that appear to construct news along government lines.) Framing an issue in ideological terms related to the news media implies a pragmatic position is a primary component of a media relations campaign. It also implies a non-ideological position for a client who is then seen to be willing to engage in any ideological position to suit the purpose of persuading the news media. This is not always the case and indeed, is diminishing as a strategy in global terms (Stanton 2007c). The need to understand the ideological position of the news media does not translate into a media relationship-building pragmatism devoid of its own ideology. The need to understand a news media ideology allows the media relationship builder to frame an issue in such a way that it reflects its own ideological position - not a compromised position because it adapts to a particular news media ideology.

It requires a corporation, government or other stakeholder to think like a news medium and thus to:

- Measure how much it knows about an issue
- Measure how much others know about an issue
- Evaluate where it got its information
- Evaluate the validity of the information
- Evaluate sources of information other than its own

4. The Importance of Framing Theory in Media Relations

A definition of framing theory that can be applied widely to South Korean, Australian and other governments or organizations with an interest in building relationships with Western news media is *the capacity of a media relationship builder to comprehend and interpret the agenda-setting policies and source selection processes employed by the media. It is the construction of a suitable ground onto which an issue or event can be projected as an elegant story (characterized by grace of form; simple and effective) relevant to specific media stakeholders (Stanton 2007a).*

Framing theory thus requires SGI:

- Strategy (design)
- Ground (foreground/background)
- Image (story)

Issue framing in media relations takes its lead from Goffman (1974) in which the idea of what an individual could actually be attuned to at any particular moment was defined by the framework that was built around a particular situation. Goffman began his investigation into framing and frame analysis by asking what it was that an individual did when confronted by any current situation. (For example, how did the journalist for the *Economist* reporting on the Taiwan strategy, imagine the issue? How did he or she see it as part of their particular view of the world?). For Goffman, the question itself required us to be alert to a number of possibilities, chief among them that the answer could be framed in any way that supported whatever needed supporting. (Some critics suggest this is the only reason that media relations exists: to shape and frame responses that match something other than reality.) Goffman argued that the width or narrowness of focus of an issue or event was determined by who answered the question ... 'what is it that's going on here'? If we consider the issue of Taiwan's attempt to gain entry to the United Nations, the answer will be framed as a different response by competing interests: it will be different for China, different again for the United States and different again for individuals or groups in Taiwan. Just as individuals must ask what it is that is going on before they can get an answer framed in a particular way, so too journalists seek answers to the same question before they can construct and write what they consider to be objective accounts of issues and events.

Journalists answer the question by investigating the 'frame' in which the issue or event has been presented. They try to make sense out of it by matching it to already known frames of reference. These known frames of reference may have

been established or entrenched in the mind of the individual journalist for some time, or they may be the product of some sharp occurrence that has had a profound effect on that individual's beliefs, or codes of ethical and moral conduct. For example, the journalist may have had a personally moving experience in childhood — family life shifting from stability to poverty — which sets up a frame around the issue of poverty as personal experience for the journalist.

In the social world the organization of issues and events governs the way in which we see them and the level of acceptance we apply to them. If, for example, we as citizens feel confident in the policies of our government and by extension, the principles upon which it plans our sociopolitical or economic place in the world, we are less likely to demonstrate distrust when government policies are reported in a negative fashion in the news media. We frame our personal response within our own view of what the government has done already. If we have less confidence in the government, we may be more likely to feel less trust in its policies. Both responses might be the result of how we frame the issue in our own minds.

The duty of the media relationship builder is to frame an issue or event in such a way that it resonates with the existing or known frames of reference used by the media itself so that it has meaning (Stanton 2007a). But the media relations builder must also be concerned that issues and events can be framed in a certain way or appear to be 'fabricated' or embedded in reality so that they take on the shape of reality to the extent that it becomes difficult to tell fake from real. This is the central argument put by the news media today about the role of media relations in the embedding process. And it is no co-incidence that this process reached a stage where the United States Defense Department referred to journalists working in war zones as being 'embedded' with its troops. They are effectively, to highlight Goffman's point, taking up space in the reality of the war, rather than reporting it from an objective sideline.

While the news media in the West thinks of itself as 'good', investigating fake from real, many journalists believe media relations practitioners to be inherently 'bad'; inventing fake and attempting to embed it in the real. Journalistic reality is organized around the principle of the binary opposite; if you're not with us you're against us. This frame allows news journalists to see media relations itself as fake, rather than as part of the real.

Goffman suggests that whatever it is about the real that makes us believe in it, those in the business of producing the fake will use the same ingredients, making it difficult to know fake from real. Just ask any Seoul street vendor with a trolley full of Louis Vuitton handbags selling for 300 Won each. But this assumes fabrication is the province of public relations and that the building of media and other stakeholder relationships relies on fake.

There is no question that media relations is exercised by all types of organizations to persuade and influence stakeholder publics in all spheres; political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE). The reverse is also true; media relations is used by stakeholder publics to exert persuasion and influence as a countervailing measure. In this it is neither a positive nor a negative tool of persuasion and influence.

5. Building Relationships: Some Korean Australian Comparisons

There are some interesting and important comparisons that can be made between the building of relationships in South Korea and in Australia. The presence of the spiritual notion of *Cheong* is an important factor in the development of relationships in Korea. In Australia, a similar relationship-building ritual exists and is known as *Mateship*. I argue that these sociocultural traditions can be conflated and framed to create a valuable media relations building strategy.

While *Cheong* has been given important status as a key to relationship-building between journalism and media relations in Korea (Berkowitz & Lee 2004), similar to the importance of *Guanxi* in Taiwan (Huang 2000), *Mateship* has been accorded less theoretical importance, despite the empirical evidence of its strong existence across traditional Australian and New Zealand media (Stanton 2007a). *Cheong* is a vital element in relationship building, I suggest, however, there is a fundamental difference between it and *Mateship* that provides a clue to its future expansion and to the interweaving of the two as a valuable media relations tools. By way of explanation, let me expand the Australian example and then provide some empirical evidence in support of my argument. Australians tend to view 'Mateship' as long-term. The long-term nature applies evenly to both the building of relationships outside immediate communities such as families and neighborhoods as it does to families and neighborhoods. If a social/business relationship is developed between an Australian and a Korean, for example, the Australian will more often wish to maintain regular contact and want the relationship to exist outside its business requirements. This continuity of contact also occurs in some other western countries such as Canada and America. I have heard it referred to as a 'need to keep connected' (Calderwood 2007). In the past few years Australian *Mateship* has become part of the political vernacular in which holders of high office such as Prime Minister, seek to present an image of their relationships with other global leaders as surpassing the ordinary business of government and international relations. The image of *Mateship* has been constructed specifically between the Australian Prime Minister John Howard, and the United States President George W Bush as one of mutual values that transcend politics. Similar images of *Mateship* have been constructed by previous Australian Prime Ministers, most notably R J L Hawke in the early 1980s (with US President Bill Clinton) and in the 1960s, Sir Robert Menzies, who cultivated a *Mateship* image with HRH Queen Elizabeth.

Interestingly, while the Mateship motif is as alive in New Zealand as it is in Australia, I suggest there has never been a conscious attempt by those in high office in either country to construct an image of Mateship between themselves.

So, while Mateship attempts to engage at community and family levels as well as at international levels, Cheong, appears to be more localized – it is not considered to be as relevant beyond Korean society as it is within. In this I would suggest there are two elements in Korean social relationship development that can be extrapolated into media relationship development.

(1) Cheong – that which exists between Koreans.

(2) No-Cheong – non-developmental contact with others – which appears to be closer in form when thinking about relationship building between Koreans and others to the notion of Guanxi. In this, as Huang (2000) has pointed out, business and personal relationships are fostered and developed for the period of time they are necessary. Afterwards, there is little or no contact until necessity again arises.

For the Western journalist, the idea of long-term relationship-building occurs for them at a personal level within their own sphere of news media. Global journalists frequently meet each other at news sites around the world. And because they are working in an environment in which sense-making and framing must be achieved quickly and accurately, they build relationships with each other that they consider long-term, in much the same way that Mateship is a long-term process. The Australian idea of Mateship derived from the vastness of the country itself and the relatively small population. Mateship – of which one element is mutual assistance – can also be applied to the circumstances in which journalists find themselves when reporting global news: they are often in unfamiliar places, so the idea of developing relationships with other journalists beyond business is a natural progression.

While Cheong can be used to keep connected between media relations practitioners and journalists, it appears to extend only to Koreans. It is important to develop Cheong beyond national boundaries between Koreans to other cultures and societies. The four key characteristics of Cheong applied by Berkowitz and Lee (2004) – historical, being together, warm-heartedness and absence of reserve – can be applied equally in the Australian context to Mateship.

6. Australian Media and Mateship

The nature of Mateship can be applied to the relationship between journalists and practitioners at a number of levels in Australia and can be extrapolated into the Korean case. The most noticeable is at the level of ‘trade and business’ publications - those magazines and journals devoted to editorializing and advertising specific industry sectors such as construction, mining, manufacturing or textiles, for example. At this level, it is not uncommon for journalists and editors to develop longstanding friendships (Mateship) with media relations practitioners who have the potential to supply large quantities of editorial copy (and, quite frequently who may have been themselves former journalists). This copy can take the form of product and service information, but it is equally likely to be issue-oriented or event-oriented. These relationships can be strengthened when editors and journalists are invited on field trips – national or international – so that they ‘live’ for short periods of time with practitioners. A ten day trip, for example, made by an earthmoving manufacturer might be made by twelve or more editors and journalists from Australia travelling across America to view and ‘test’ the manufacturers products on site. Under these circumstance, the application of Mateship is primary to the development of a relationship that will benefit both the editor and the practitioner. (It is worth noting that while the development of the relationship may begin with the client/media relations practitioner, in a large number of cases, the continuity of the relationship is sustained equally by the practitioner and the journalist (Stanton 2007c).

In the Australian context, the mateship metaphor extends further in the hard-working, hard-drinking industries such as construction and mining. It is not uncommon for (male) editors and journalists to feel a strong empathy for the industries they report. (My own observations indicate this is also the case in Korea.) A similar situation arises in more general news gathering and reporting with specialist rounds journalists such as police and emergency services. The deeply emotional nature of the work being done by those they are reporting allows journalists to develop a strong bond with the specialists and with the media relations practitioners who are also on these ‘front lines’ (Stanton 2007c).

7. News selection and the relationship building process

Kim & Bae (2006) point up an important three-factor model (developed by Jo and Kim 2004) that provides a good basis for examining media relations in Korea. The model argues that there are three primary factors influencing practitioner-journalist relationships:

- (1) The development of informal relationships
- (2) The provision of gifts
- (3) The development of formal responsibilities.

While media relations practitioners in Australia are less likely to invoke what Kim and Bae(2006) refer to as the second in a three phase model – providing monetary gifts – they are more likely to attempt to blend the other two elements –

informal relationships and formal responsibilities. The attempted blending of informal and formal elements sometimes leads to what Berkowitz and Lee (2004) describe as distrust and even 'contempt', as journalists perceive the development of the relationship as being weighted towards the practitioner. The actual level of distrust and contempt is much lower in Australia than reported, particularly when we take into account media other than 'mainstream' national and metropolitan news (Stanton 2007c).

Specialist publications, such as those mentioned above, combined with regional and rural newspapers, television and radio, account for the bulk of news media in Australia and it is these which are less inclined to look to confrontation with media relations practitioners. In this the characteristics of Mateship are similar to Cheong – the development of familiarity, trust and considerations [] for each other (Berkowitz and Lee 2004: 434) that are derived from working in the same industry. Further, if we consider the emphasis of the public relations profession to be on media routine factors such as news selection (Shin, Park and Cameron 2006) then the relationship may be strengthened due to the practitioners' honoring of the journalists' professional practices.

I would summarize this by arguing that media relations is a two-way process. Media needs sources and sources need media. Media relationships are built strategically around trust and reliability, usually over a long period of time. Media relations practitioners spend a lot of time thinking about how they can get the news media interested in their client's issues and events. But on the other side of the 'zone', the news media is thinking about how it can get information about issues and events from clients, or if they have them, the client's media relations people that can be transformed into news.

Within the primary factor model invoked by Jo and Kim lie two additional requirements if the relationship is going to be of value. These are:

- (1) Information that the media is interested in, and
- (2) The ability of a media relations practitioner to supply it.

From the perspective of the media relations practitioner, the supply of information that has the potential to become news is part of every campaign that involves the media. A practitioner, or agent, must investigate the angles on the issue or event to build a story that has news potential. But this raises some additional interesting questions:

- (1) What is news and how is it perceived by different media?
- (2) Is news the only element in a media relationship building process that interests a practitioner?
- (3) Is news something that exists between the media and those issues or events from which it emanates?
- (4) How is news imagined by the media?
- (5) How is news imagined by practitioners?

Journalists produce news on behalf of client stakeholders in the same way that coal is produced and generated as energy on behalf of clients. Coal is extracted from the Powder River Basin in the United States and generated as energy in steel mills in Korea. It is extracted from the Hunter Valley in Australia and generated as energy in power stations to electrify the state of New South Wales. Clients of the commodity owners in the Powder River Basin are Korean shipbuilders. There is no citizen involvement in the trade. The client of the commodity owners in Australia is the governments of NSW. Clients of commodity owners can be involved in private enterprise, state enterprise or be dual organizations with interests in both private and public sector activities. Clients of commodity owners of news are the same manufacturers, the same shipbuilders and the same traders, all of whom have an interest in the validity of the trade taking place in the competitive market in which they operate.

Thus journalists are producing news for the benefit of those with the capacity to act upon or to verify something in response. The citizen is not part of the action or verification in any important way. Citizens may act or verify in some marginal way - acquiring end products or services generated by the initial activity - but involvement is restricted to a peripheral role as observer of the main game. The mere act of consumption of news does not place a citizen in the main game other than in a minor role. There is no avenue for that citizen to become an important actor in either a political or economic sense. In this, business journalists and reporters are of special interest as they work in an environment where the citizen is even more marginalized. The news gathering and producing activity revolves around generation of interest by commodity owners for commodity owners in much the same way as English economist David Ricardo outlined the operations of earlier mercantilists in a competitive market. Business journalists gather and produce news specifically for business clients. The citizen has little or no interest in it. Business news is thus imagined in such a way as to fit the frame of business activity.

8. News as it is Imagined by the Media Relations Practitioner

For the Western news journalist, there are two important stakeholders: the media owner and the news source. Audiences, readers, viewers - stakeholders who absorb news as a commodity - are secondary to the ritual of news gathering and production.

For the media relations practitioner or agent, there are also two primary stakeholders: the client and the news media itself - reporters, journalists, editors and producers. For the media relations agent, the relationships are more complex. The client, like the media owner, is the primary stakeholder with financial control of the commodity. But importantly, the client is also the source. While the journalist is building two relationships that run parallel, the agent is building two separate and discrete relationships within one entity; the client as owner and source. For the agent, a third stakeholder relationship - the news media - is equally important. In this the relationship between agent and journalist is sometimes unbalanced.

A journalist may use a media relations agent as a source, but is also free to use other sources and to produce news that is un sourced - issues and events that are observed and reported without interpretation. The media relations agent, however, is usually obliged to interpret and find an angle from material sourced directly from the client. This has been the traditional method of building media relationships. The agent investigates client source material, interprets it, finds a suitable angle, then directs it to the news media. The strategic intent is to find a suitable angle that reflects a particular medium and then find an alternative angle for another medium. This does not always result in success. Thus a tactic that is in wide use is to find 'partnerships' in the story angle. This allows the agent to split the source and the client, and in doing so to create a more objective frame for the story, the same way a journalist seeks an alternative viewpoint for story balance. This tactic, however, requires the client's agreement to include an additional stakeholder in the frame and to have an understanding that the additional stakeholder may receive more or better news coverage than the client.

A good media relationship can be built by anyone, just the same as a good personal relationship can be built. The difficulty for media relations practitioners is two-fold. It begins when they believe they have a stronger claim to the relationship than non-public relations people. In this journalists will sometimes appear to have stronger relationships with citizens whom they perceive to have no active involvement in attempting to gain from influence and persuasion. Journalists sometimes view media relations clients in this way. But they do not usually view practitioners in the same constructive or positive way they view clients. And they do not view all practitioners through the same lens. If they did, there would be no space within the public or private spheres for relationship building or dialogic communication.

In building a media relationship a campaign issue or event is the central focus. The client and the media are attached to the campaign at either end. To achieve success, an agent must put together three elements

- (1) A coherent issue
- (2) An informed client
- (3) A receptive media.

It is the media relations agent's responsibility to shape the client's informed-ness just as much as it is to shape the news media's receptiveness. So the agent must be informed and receptive to the issue or event. When framing an issue in a certain way, an agent must think about the type of people they are framing it for. The agent must think about the type of event or activity that might support the issue and assist to frame it in a favorable way. Sending a picture of an event such as the launch of a new car to a radio program is not a good way to develop a relationship with a radio journalist. Similarly, sending a ten-page detailed back-story about the technical specifications of the car to a morning television entertainment program would be equally silly (Stanton 2007b).

9. Two Examples of News Frames

Louw (2004) describes the hegemony of Western journalism and how its values are represented in news of the rest of the world. Louw says journalists in the West are not equipped to 'read' foreign issues and events so that they resonate with home audiences. They are therefore most often imagined as 'conflict' or as victim and villain situations. Louw suggests that Western journalists covering foreign issues and events misread and misunderstand the context in which they have been located because they have preconceived images that are 'grounded' in their Western sociopolitical culture.

But Western news images of issues and events in some countries are not as binary as others. For Western news media, Africa and the Middle East fit a binary position described by Louw because they do not conform to Western sociopolitical values. They can be seen in terms of their opposition to Western sociopolitical and cultural positions. Some other countries, especially those formerly imagined in binary terms, present difficulties for Western news journalists because they no longer conform to conventional images of opposition (Stanton 2007b).

An example comes from the *Economist's* reporting of an issue in Korea. Unification of the two Koreas (and government initiatives towards re-unification) is an issue that receives attention in the Western news media, but it is rarely imagined within a positive frame. An additional important issue which has strong newsworthiness and value — sandstorms from Mongolia's Gobi Desert that blanket Korea with thousands of tons of topsoil each year — is ignored by the West (and will be ignored here for space reasons). Within the Republic of Korea, there appears to be a strong wish for re-unification with North Korea for economic, social and political reasons (Jonsson 2006). At the border, in an area known as the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) two important events have taken place in the past few years, one of which was reported in mildly negative terms by the *Economist* and the other ignored generally by the Western news media.

The *Economist* reported the development of a trade zone that has been set up by South Korea inside the DMZ. Known as *Kaesong*, it houses South Korean manufacturing plants in which labor is supplied by the North. South Korea, its government and its citizens, see this as a positive move towards re-unification with the North. The *Economist* lead a twelve paragraph story of May 27 2006 (headlined *An Industrial Park Causes Tensions With America*) with

America's chief negotiator on North Korea, Christopher Hill, visited Seoul on May 25th, part of an effort to re-start talks over North Korea's illicit nuclear programs. Increasingly though America and its ally South Korea are at odds about the North (*Economist* 27. 5. 06: 27).

The story represented American interests, noting that the government of the United States sees South Korea as being 'soft' on its northern neighbor. The angle of the story supports my argument. The *Economist* was unable to frame the issue as it is seen in Asia at government and street level: as a north-south dialogue that had the potential to lead to a reduction in tensions between North Korea and the West. As a classic example of developing diplomacy, the issue could easily have been imagined thus by the *Economist*, but, it did not conform to Western news values of diplomacy and political communication because it did not include the United States. Additionally, and this becomes important when considering the angle chosen by the newspaper, the issue of re-unification had the potential to redirect US foreign policy on North Korea. In 2003, US President George W Bush used powerful rhetoric to describe North Korea as a third pillar in an 'axis of evil' that included Iraq and Iran. After first applying military force in Iraq, then in 2005 turning its attention to Iran's nuclear development program, the United States government would have been uninterested in having a friendly neighbor developing diplomacy when it had made clear and unambiguous statements about the confrontation it intended with North Korea. The news report in the *Economist* implied support for the US position by highlighting human rights issues of low wages and conditions in the Kaesong plants, and argued that while the factories might be seen by the South to encourage reform in the North, the development did not supply freedom of association for workers, nor the ability to take industrial action or become involved in wage negotiation. In highlighting these particular factors, the *Economist* is imagining the issue of manufacturing in Asia as it would like to believe it exists in the West. While freedom of association, industrial action, and wage negotiations are enshrined in industrial mythology in most Western countries, the reality is that individual contracts and enterprise agreements have become normative when manufacturing is still located in Western countries. As Bhagwati (2004) demonstrates, the real issue for Western labor unions is not the wages and conditions of Asian factory workers, but an unacceptable decline in Western labor standards when Asian workers accept relatively lower standards and conditions. I suggest this is the real issue behind the *Economist's* imaginative representation of dialogue and diplomacy between the two Koreas: human rights. United States foreign policy on North Korea is grounded and framed around that country's poor history of human rights; a position which Western news media such as the *Economist* adopt as it fits snugly into their image of Asian exploitation of citizens. (Note 1)

A second example, reported widely in the Korean press at the time that supported the argument that South Korea was employing a diplomatic strategy in its aim of re-unification, was the proposed train journey between the Korean capitals of Seoul and Pyongyang scheduled to take place on the reconnected inter-Korean railway line. For a variety of reasons, most notably the cancellation of the event by the North, which cited the absence of a military accord to guarantee safe passage, and unstable political conditions in the south (*Korea Times* 27. 5. 2006: p2), the event was reported widely in Asia. For the West, however, the idea of a test-run train journey between North and South adds tension to the issue of North Korea being imagined as a nuclear threat. Train journeys in the imagination of the West are gentle things taken by tourists and citizens traveling for pleasure and work. They cannot be reconciled with images of aberrant nations developing nuclear warfare programs. Train journeys do not fit the image of non-Western societal organization that has become what Louw (2004) describes as despicable and incomprehensible to the Western journalist. Additionally, Koreans traveling by train from Seoul to London via North Korea and Russia does not fit the nuclear war frame.

10. Towards Transparency

Botan and Hazleton (2006) demonstrate that the US has played a dominant role in the development of media relations and public relations theory, adding that evidence suggests the field is becoming more international in its focus with important contributions being made from Germany, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, with the possibility of large contributions in future coming from China and Brazil. The value of the theoretical contribution of China and Brazil, I would suggest, will be more circumscribed than the others by cultural, political and language issues. This is not to suggest they will not contribute, but the significance of the contribution will lie in the relationship that stakeholders have with governments as both countries have very different political and legal systems, making transparency and internationalization more problematic. This paper presents an argument that South Korea also has a large role to play in development.

Governments, corporations and other large organizations that have traditionally played a hegemonic role in defining media relations are re-assessing their relationships. Stakeholders who were once considered subversive, or at the very least irritating, are seen more often in partnership. The reason for the shift lies partly with the transformation of media

relations. Secondly, its transformation towards an ethical profession is the result of all types of alternative organizations and groups adopting and successfully using strategies and tactics that were once the secretive province of profit-based organizations. In the past, when corporations and governments used media relations campaigns to persuade and influence, they were perceived to be doing so asymmetrically. The adoption of campaign strategies and tactics, or more importantly, the overt acknowledgement that not-for-profit organizations and environmental groups such as the Red Cross, Oxfam and Medecins sans Frontieres employ full-time media relations experts, is aiding the image and reputation of media relations. It can no longer be decried as a persuasive tool of big business. As smaller and less well-funded organizations and individuals began understanding and using media relations strategies and tactics for all types of stakeholder communication, including local government election campaigns and environmental awareness campaigns, the demonization of the subfield of media relations by the news media can no longer be sustained. The result will be a more transparent society.

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Notes

Note 1. English language newspaper The Korea Times reported in late May 2006 that the Kaesong project had the support of Guido Westerwelle, chairman of the German Free Democratic Party (FDP) who stated during a visit to Korea that had Germany had a similar opportunity during the time of its division, it would have done the same thing.



Formation of Cultural Competitive Force When Doing Business in China

Maohua Sun

School of Mathematics and Computer Science, Nanjing Normal University

Nanjing 210097, China

Tel: 86-25-8528-2055 E-mail: dongxiaobo@163.com

Abstract

With the globalization of world business, *China* has become an appealing market for foreign investors. The problem of cross-cultural management arises as the cooperation between China and its culturally different Western partners continues to increase at an unprecedented rate. This paper presents an understanding on the general cultural differences between the west and China by applying the cultural dimensions of Hofstede and Bond. The author points out that the all-round impact of cultural difference over transnational operation of enterprises affects not only the cooperative strategy, but also the operation and management. It is only through cross-culture communication and management that enterprises can establish good reputation and attain success in its operation. Culture is one of the decisive factors for the success of operation. To realize cross-culture effective management, we must consider solving cultural conflict as the key. In the process of the management, we must pay more attention to the influences of cultural difference on the market choice, product service, entrance mode and system cost, and accordingly formulate a correct strategy, ignore and reduce the cultural difference, or adapt and make use of it. As economic globalization is driving cultural globalization, the culture in the multinational corporation will fuse gradually from differences.

Keywords: Transnational operation, Cultural difference, Cultural competitive force

1. Cultural differences in transnational operation of enterprises and its influence

1.1 Cultural differences exist objectively in transnational operation of enterprises

What is culture? Among researchers who have given a variety of definitions of culture, Hofstede is one of the first to adopt a pragmatic problem-solving approach in the field and relates culture to management. As is pointed out by G.Hofstede that culture is a kind of "collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another" (Hofstede, 1980). With the globalization of world business, China has become an appealing market for foreign investors. The problem of cross-cultural management arises as the cooperation between China and its culturally different Western partners continues to increase at an unprecedented rate. Hofstede explained that culturally-based values systems comprised four dimensions: power distance, individualism/ collectivism, masculinity/femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. Further research by Michael Bond (Bond and Hofstede, 1989, pp. 200) identified a fifth "Eastern" dimension called long-term/short-term. By applying Hofstede's and Bond's cultural dimensions, a cultural comparison between America and China is made. (Pan Fan, K. & Zhang Zigang, K. , 2004)

Table 1. *Cultural Dimension Scores of United States and China*

Legend for Chart:

B - **Cultural** Dimension Scores Power Distance

C - Individualism

D - Masculinity

E - Uncertainty Avoidance

F - Long-term Orientation

| | A | B | C | D | E | F |
|---------------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|
| United States | | 40 | 91 | 62 | 46 | 29 |
| China | | 80 | 20 | 50 | 60 | 118 |

Table 2. Cultural Differences Between America and China

Legend for Chart:

A - **Cultural** Dimensions

B - USA

C - **China**

| A | B C |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Individualism/Collectivism | Strong individualism Strong Collectivism |
| Power Distance | Medium Centralised, tendency toward democracy |
| Uncertainty Avoidance | Risk-taking Risk-avoiding |
| Masculinity/Femininity | Medium Masculinity Medium Femininity |
| Long/short-term Orientation | Short-term Orientation Long-term Orientation |

In general, China stresses the social role of the group, whereas Western people emphasize individuality. Collectivism is believed to generate more submissive behavior among Chinese in group interaction processes. Specifically, the collectivist concern of Chinese to avoid interpersonal disharmony becomes salient, and this concern can consequently encourage an Chinese group member to avoid open disagreements with other group members and shift toward the majority position more often than Westerners do. Compared with their Western counterparts, Chinese are more situation-centered and are more externally oriented. Chinese people believes in “yuan”, which derives from Buddhism and is often used by Chinese as an explanation for personal outcome by alluding to fate. Westerns admire the self-made person---the one who, with neither money nor family influence, fights his or her way to the top. Chinese culture stresses the importance of maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships and acting in a manner appropriate to one's position in a hierarchical social situation. Therefore in group interaction processes, they are inclined to be more restrained, cautious, patient, and self-contained, and less impulsive, excitable, spontaneous, and natural than Westerns

1.2 Major influences caused by cultural differences

It has been widely accepted that cultural differences greatly affect human thinking and behavior and thus business organizations in which people interact on the basis of shared values. The disadvantageous influences will be discussed from the aspects of strategy Cooperative management and operational management.

1.2.1 Impact of cultural differences on cooperative strategies

It is generally believed that entrepreneurs’ attitudes toward cooperation are likely to be influenced by the underlying values of their society (Weaver, K Mark. 2000, pp. 591). China is strongly for collectivism and medium feminism. The Chinese depend more on groups or institutions to determine what they should do and emphasize loyalty to the group. They are more likely to cooperate with others to avoid risks and reduce responsibilities. Their value systems appreciate duty to the group and harmony among its members while pursuing personal goals is viewed rather negatively in Chinese society .While as discussed above, western people are strongly for individualism and medium masculine. They depend on their own view to determine what they should do. They tend to work alone and are reluctant to cooperate because their individualism and masculine culture view cooperation in general as a sign of weakness and place a high value on independence and control. On the other hand, The Chinese and westerns tend to resolve conflicts in different ways. Since the Chinese believe in a strong collectivism and medium feminine society in which harmony and personal relationship are emphasized, they will try to make full use of indirect ways to avoid direct and open conflict. When they face conflict, they prefer to use authority to suppress it, or settle things in private. They prefer to resolve conflict through negotiation and compromise. Individualistic and medium masculine western managers are used to confronting problems directly and bringing things out in the open. In addition, Western managers are reluctant to invest the time and effort required to enlist the help of other people, when they have conflicts or problems with another party. In contrast,

the strong collective orientation and uncertainty avoidance values in China encourage Chinese managers to use indirect forms of influence that involve the assistance of a third party (Bond M and G Hofstede, 1989, pp 195).

To deal with a difficult or controversial request, indirect forms of influence are preferred by Chinese managers to avoid losing face and damaging *guanxi*. When their Western partners propose to use direct and open ways to deal with the conflict, they may feel embarrassed. On the other hand, Western partners may get totally confused by the roundabout way the Chinese use to solve seemingly simple problems. The different ways that Chinese and Western managers resolve conflicts seem to find support from Weaver's finding that feminine societies prefer to resolve conflict through negotiation and compromise. (Weaver, K Mark, 2000, pp. 609)

1.2.2 Impact of cultural differences on transnational operating management

Cultural differences certainly lead to market opportunity loss and low efficiency. On inner management the differences of value concept, life objective and behavior norm results in increased administrative expenses, the difficulties in integration and practice of enterprise target, in the long run, will enhance operating management cost of the enterprise. On outside operation differences of languages, habits and values make operating environments more complex and increase the difficulties of market operation. The research based on dozens of Sino-American enterprises by John Kotter, a professor from school of business in Harvard University, indicates that enterprise's cultural differences substantially affected enterprise's operating accomplishments of long standing. Operating accomplishments of the corporations, which place high emphasis on all key managing elements (consumers, shareholders, employees) and leading arts of the personnel at all levels are far superior to those of the ones without such kind of characteristics of enterprise cultures. Gross earnings of the former averagely increases 682%, those of the latter only amounts to 166%; enterprise employee of the former increases 282%, those of the latter is 36%; the company stock price of the former increases to 901%, those of the latter is 74%; the net income increase of the former is 756%, and those of the latter is 1%. (Shi, Tianlin, Ma, Yangxiang & Fan, Jin, 2004, p. 90)

It goes without saying that if the enterprise doesn't proceed to communicate effectively aimed at the cultural difference, cultural clash from either different types or different elements of culture will occur. This kind of clash includes the conflict with cultural concepts of the host country in transnational operation of enterprises as well as inside conflict among clerks coming from different counties and different areas. The core task of cross-cultural management is to solve cultural clash. It is only through cross-culture communication and management that enterprises can establish good reputation and attain success in its operation. Culture is one of the decisive factors for the success of operation.

2. Cultural blending and formation of cultural competitive force

2.1 Cultural blending is a trend of globalization

Cultural clash derives from cultural difference. Different cultural categories determine different degree and different type of cultural clash. As Edward Hall, U.S. anthropologist, put it that culture can be divided into three categories: formal norm, informal norm and technique norm. The formal norm is the person's basic value and judging standard on the right and the wrong, which can resist the exterior power that tried to change it. Therefore, the friction caused by formal norm usually cannot be changed easily. The informal norm is people's living habits and customs etc. Its caused cultural friction can be overcome through cultural interaction of long standing. The technique norm can be obtained by the study of the technique knowledge and changed very easily. Therefore, in the process of transnational operation the enterprise should, acting on the law and aiming at different "culture conflicts" caused by "cultural differences", blend the concept of value, operating scope, moral behavior standard and organizational structures and proceeds to practice gradually cross-cultural management. In the process of the management, the enterprise must pay more attention to the influences of cultural difference on the market choice, product service; entrance mode and system cost, and accordingly formulate a correct strategy, ignore and reduce the cultural difference, or adapt and make use of it. As economic globalization is driving cultural globalization, the culture in the multinational corporation will fuse gradually from differences. To form a strong cultural competitive force in world market, the enterprise should absorb various cultural nourishments, emphasize on the use and embody going with the times on the bases of inheriting good traditions and managing styles.

2.2 What is cultural competitive force?

What is cultural competitive force? Generally speaking, It is a kind of cohesive force, leading force, inspiring force and pushing force caused by all kinds of cultural factors pushing economic advance and human all-round development. It mainly embodies in three aspects: firstly cultural creative ability; compared with other creations, cultural creation has special meanings. In a sense, creation is the life of culture. Whether cultural product is competitive or not mainly depends on cultural creation. Secondly cultural transferring ability, which means enterprise's culture can be easily adapted to popular culture and simultaneously accepted by main culture. Thirdly high-quality talents, In transnational operation of enterprises high-quality bicultural or multicultural talents is core of cultural competitive force.

2.3 Modes of the formation of cultural competitive force

2.3.1 Mode of localization

Because of governmental inflexible rule in host country, especially because the native employee acquaints with the native macro and micro environment, choosing and training the native personnel to manage and operate the abroad subsidiaries not only benefit the multinational company to lower the high cost of sending personnel abroad but also can blend with native social culture, reduce crisis motion the region society facing outward capital, benefit the transnational corporation to expand the market in the region and stand firmly the heel. Meanwhile, the mode benefit employment opportunities in host country, improving managing level, and the both parties' interests. Therefore localization strategy become the basic guiding thought of many multinational companies to practice cross-cultural management.

2.3.2 Mode of culture transplantation

The main characteristic of culture transplantation is that key positions of the enterprise held by the people from mother country. The precondition using this mode is that the multinational company have mighty economic power and have enormous influence in the world, in addition its corporate culture has been recognized all over the world and accepted by other nationalities. U.S. McDonald's is a good typical example.

2.3.3 Mode of culture grafting

The mode requires using mother country culture as the corpus culture of the subsidiary, meanwhile, marrying the host country culture to the mother country culture. Its advantage is successfully to consider global unified strategy and different backgrounds of host country culture, while its disadvantage is that whether succeed or fail require many specific demands.

2.3.4 Multi-cross mode

As international business activities increasingly globalize, the products create quickly, different nationalities communicate multifariously, the individuals of multinational group company appeared multi-cross cultural trend. To avoid cultural conflicts caused by cultural differences in inner part of parent company, in inner part of subsidiary and between parent company and subsidiary, the following staff should be chosen carefully: (1) foreigners with the native nationalities of mother country ;(2) native people with local nationalities;(3) local foreigners studying and working in mother country;(4) native people studying and working in local country; etc.

2.3.5 Mode of asking for help

If the multinational company can't adapt to completely the environment of the host country in a short time, usually ask for help from comparatively neutral culture of the third party which has reached agreement with the mother country's culture for management in order to avoid direct conflict between mother country's culture and host country's culture.

3. Conclusion

To sum up, in the process of transnational operations of enterprise the managing staff must adapt to inevitable trend of culture developing from the single to the multiple and come to know all kinds of disadvantageous influences caused by cultural differences. They should continuously study and practice to master a variety of arts and techniques of cross-cultural management and communication. To improve its cultural competitive force throughout world market, the enterprise should choose appropriate modes of depending on its own situations and gradually increase its own cultural transferring ability. The formation of cultural competitive force needs a long way to go. In the long run only the enterprise having cultural competitive force can establish good reputation in international market and gain operating success.

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Financing System Construction Based on the Development Strategy in Binhai New Area

Liping liu

College of Industry and Commerce, Tianjin Polytechnic University, Tianjin 300160, China

E-mail: anliu24591483@126.com

Yaping Wei

College of Industry and Commerce, Tianjin Polytechnic University, Tianjin 300160, China

Abstract

The proposal to develop and open Binhai New Area in the 11th Five-year Plan of China has provided a great opportunity to promote the economic development both in this area and in the whole Tianjin city. According to the experience of the development areas in some developed countries as well as in Shenzhen and Pudong, the innovation in financial system is important, especially the construction of financing system. Based on an analysis on the features of the development strategy of Binhai New Area, together with the consideration of some policies on the construction of this area and some experience in dealing with the relationship between financing system and development strategy in and outside China, this article establishes financing system for Binhai New Area in accordance with its development strategy.

Keywords: Binhai New Area, Development strategy, Financing system

In China's 11th Five-year Plan, the development of Binhai New Area, as well as Shenzhen Special Zone and Pudong New Area, is listed in China's overall development strategy with the hope to stimulate regional economy. The strategy to develop Binhai New Area in this five-year period is set as follows: with the support of Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei Province, serving the circum-Bohai region, radiating its influence to the three northern regions and facing Northeastern Asia, Binhai New Area will work hard to develop itself into the northern gateway to the whole world, a high-level base for modern manufacturing, R&D and transfer of high-tech achievements, an international shipping as well as logistics center in Northern China, and gradually become an inhabitant-friendly and eco-friendly area with prosperous economy, harmonious society and charming scenery. In order to achieve this goal, the innovation of financial system plays a quite important role, especially the construction of financing system. According to the guidelines set by Chinese government, some significant reform in financial enterprises, business, market and opening can be experimented in Binhai New Area first. In this situation, it is particularly important for the development and opening of this area to construct financing system conforming to its development strategy.

1. The Current Financing System in Binhai New Area

Currently, the capital in Binhai New Area mainly comes from the following sources: government grants and bonds, bank loans, issuing bonds and stocks at capital market, absorbing foreign investment, enterprises' internal financing and so on. With a certain scale and structure combining the variety of financing sources, Binhai New Area has formed its own financing system.

1.1 *Great Dependence on Enterprises' Internal Financing and Loans*

Currently, most enterprises in Binhai New Area get over half of their capital independently, which reveals the importance of social credit financing, especially enterprises' internal financing. However, the current financing sources seem far insufficient in order to achieve its development strategy in the five-year period.

1.2 *Small Proportion of Direct Financing*

Nearly all the present security financing is obtained from stocks instead of bonds. However, there are only 6 listed companies in Binhai New Area up to now, whose total and net assets are even lower than the average of all listed companies throughout China. Of course, they have an even greater gap when compared with those companies in Pudong and Shenzhen. Due to its poor influence at capital market and inability to exert its stimulating effect in financing resulting from its small scale of listed companies, Binhai New Area cannot satisfy its own demands for development with the international securitization of capital.

1.3 *Insufficient Financing in Scientific Research*

Just as Xiaoping Deng said, science and technology are the primary productive force. It has been proved in some

developed countries' experience that science and technology play particularly important roles in the contribution to economic development compared with capital and labor force. In the scientific research projects of Binhai New Area, government grants are mainly relied on in early stage and foreign investment in late stage. Therefore, some core technologies have been monopolized by foreign enterprises, which is unfavorable for this area's sustainable development. Although some special funds for R&D and transfer of scientific achievements and funds for the infrastructure construction of science and technology have been established to support scientific research and construction of scientific research bases, the amount is too limited.

1.4 Dependence on Foreign Investment

Foreign investment takes a certain proportion in Binhai New Area's financing sources, which reveals its feature of export-oriented economy. However, it relies too much on foreign investment. What's more, mainly absorbing direct investment, Binhai New Area has no access to foreign capital in financial industry which is also turned to in Shenzhen and Pudong.

1.5 Insufficient Nongovernmental Capital

With the reform in state-owned enterprises and the policy to improve large enterprises and enliven small ones, private economy has taken dominance in national economy in quantity as well as quality. With its less-than-10% proportion of private economy, Binhai New Area suffers from a great disparity with Shenzhen and Pudong.

2. The Contributing Factors of the Current Financing System in Binhai New Area

2.1 Dependence on Financial Grants and Loans Determined by its Geographical Features

With its ports and low-tax, tariff-free zones, Binhai New Area must put the construction of basic facilities to the first place, which is featured by large investment scale, long construction period, high requests for supporting facilities and long period to get investment return. In this way, financial grants and bank loans must be relied on much more than market.

2.2 Dominance of Internal Financing Determined by its Industrial Structure

The industrial structure of "secondary industry---tertiary industry---primary industry" is adopted in Binhai New Area, in which processing industry, with its capital-intensive and technology-intensive features, plays the dominant role. Industrial investment is the main channel to promote industrial upgrading and quality improvement, therefore, investment, mainly coming from enterprises' retain income, is distributed in great amount to secondary industry to purchase fixed assets and employ advanced technical equipment.

2.3 Dependence on Foreign Capital Determined by Its Open Economy

With foreign enterprises taking over 80% or 90% of all and 121 among the world top 500 enterprises settling down in Binhai New Area, there has been a constant increase in both the number of enterprises with investment and the amount of investment.

2.4 Insufficient Capital from Other Provinces

In spite of its increasing experience in foreign investment introduction, Binhai New Area should exert more efforts to cover its less importance and insufficient preferential policies on introducing nongovernmental capital from other provinces.

3. Successful Financing Experience of Other Special Economic Zones in China

3.1 Successful Financing Experience of Shenzhen Special Economic Zone

As the first experiment plot of China's reform and opening, Shenzhen has accumulated much experience.

First, its over-centralized, rigid and onefold banking system is broken and a multi-layer, multi-form financial system comes into being in which different kinds of financial institutions cooperate with each other. Currently, a modern financial system with a full range of institutions, orderly division of labor and sound operation has been formed in Shenzhen, hence developing it into a city with highly-developed financial industry. In addition, corporation financial institutions in Shenzhen have extended their service centers to tens of large and medium cities throughout China and have established business agent relationship with over 300 financial institutions in nearly 200 foreign countries and areas all over the world.

Second, with the support of Shenzhen government, Shenzhen Stock Exchange began to be pre-operated in Dec. 1, 1990, becoming the first of this kind. In the past decade, it has achieved great success in market scale, transaction means, information revelation as well as market monitoring. Now, the financial market in Shenzhen has radiated its influence to all parts of China from an original regional market, and, together with Shanghai, has become two financial centers in China as well as a huge capital distribution center.

3.2 Successful Financing Experience of Pudong New Area

First, Pudong constantly perfects its financing system and establishes diversified financing channels including applying for bank loans and loans from national debts, issuing construction bonds and enterprise bonds, applying for listing on stock market and taking advantage of foreign investment. In this way, enough capital has been provided to construct Pudong.

Second, national market of factors has been established here, which includes Shanghai Stock Exchange, Shanghai Futures Exchange and Shanghai Diamond Exchange and so on, hence laying solid foundation for Pudong's position as an international financial center as well as absorbing many domestic and foreign financial enterprises to rush here.

Finally, in terms of their ways to introduce foreign capital, it takes efforts to introduce some innovative ways such as BOT besides the traditional ways to process raw materials on clients' demands, to assemble parts for clients, to process according to clients' samples and to engage in compensation trade.

Seen from the above analysis, both special economic zones share something in common in their financing: first is perfect financing system; second is a national stock exchange; third is the innovation in their internal and external capital introduction.

4. Financing System Construction Based on the Development Strategy in Binhai New Area

In this part, we are willing to give some advice on the construction of Binhai's financing system based on its development strategy and regional features.

4.1 Perfecting Indirect Financing System

Multi-layer, multi-form direct financing channels, with a variety of financial institutions cooperating with each other, should be established. In addition to the four national commercial banks in existence and newly-established Bohai Bank, more efforts should be exerted to draw more domestic private financial institutions as well as foreign banks to come here, including banks, insurance companies, trust institutions, financial companies, security institutions and so on.

4.2 Strengthening the Construction of Direct Financing System

Due to the small scale of security financing and the small number of listed companies in Binhai New Area, there is a pressing need for the development of direct financing.

Firstly, Binhai's financial industry should be developed with great efforts. First, it should apply for the establishment of a northern stock exchange in its area, which will give constant capital support to Northern and Northeastern China as well as Binhai itself. Second, the secondary market should be developed if the above application is declined. In addition, the scale of private equity funds should be extended to collect more construction funds and encourage the flow of nongovernmental capital. Third, the present Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong stock exchanges, small and medium enterprise board and overseas red chip market should be taken good advantage of to get more companies in Binhai listed.

Secondly, Enterprises' financing ability by issuing bonds should be enhanced. First, the former limitations in scale and volume should be cancelled to improve the bond-issuing efficiency of those enterprises meeting relevant requirements. Second, the construction of local bond institutions as investors should be facilitated. Besides, the regional over-the-counter market should be established to increase the liquidity of bonds. Third, according to the actual situation of Binhai's enterprises, the variety and type of bonds should be innovated to better resist risks, protect investors' interest and to absorb more investors as a consequence.

4.3 Converting the Methods of Absorbing Foreign Investment

With China's entry into WTO, Binhai is shortening its disparity with other countries and areas in absorbing foreign investment. In this case, innovation seems more important. At present, there are three fundamental methods to absorb foreign investment: FDI, FPI and OFI, in which FDI was mainly turned to before World War II and after that it took the form of foreign countries' direct investment. Now, based on the formed pattern, FPI should be relied more to absorb foreign investment.

4.4 Establishing and Perfecting Talent Introduction and Selection System to Improve the Quality of Financial Talents in Binhai New Area

The construction and operation of the above-mentioned financial system, specially the innovation of financial industry, call for a great amount of high-quality financial talents. Consequently, completely new ideas should be employed to break the traditional talent-employing methods and to innovate the systems for talent introduction, selection, cultivation and encouragement in order to expand financial talents in Binhai New Area.

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An Assessment of Analysis on the Penetration of Malaysian Contractors into India

Nur Aishah Mohd Hamdan, Hamimah Adnan
Department of Quantity Surveying
Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor
MALAYSIA
E-mail: hamimah_uitm@yahoo.com.my

Abstract

This paper will give insight to India as a developing country and an emerging super-power in the world's economy. It will explain the factors that contribute to the development of India and the changes India has gone through to achieve the success. Following a thorough literature review, questionnaire surveys were sent out to G7 contractors registered under CIDB Malaysia to understand the situation of contractors in their venture into the Indian construction market. It was found that the successful contractors viewed profit margin as the most important factor when tendering compared to building reputation in the Indian market. The contractors need to make groundwork or research, build/increase tolerance and skills in negotiation. An offer of attractive financial package and comprehensive services and good Indian partnership with local representatives to build better relationship and accumulate better market information are several main factors to succeed in the Indian construction market. The findings of this research provide useful information for any contractors to their intention in penetrate the Indian construction market.

Keywords: Penetration, Malaysian Contractors, India

1. Introduction

The Indian construction industry growth was quite volatile especially in the early years since the liberalisation of its economy. The growth has escalated to a more comfortable momentum since 1998 due to the intensification of construction investments by the government. Institutional and administrative reform to make construction investments more feasible had successfully lured foreign investors into participating in the development of India's construction. According to the World Construction Outlook 2003-05 by Davis Langdon & Everest, London, India ranks 12th in the Global construction market and this amounted to 4 trillion dollars (Davis Langdon & Seah International, 2003). The same study forecasted an average growth rate of 5% per annum in construction investment world over by 2012 and India is growing at considerably higher rates of 7.9% per annum, making it the third largest behind China and the US in economy.

Indian construction, which was previously lagging now provide ample opportunities in sectors such as road and highways, power, telecom, ports, airports, real estate as well as urban infrastructure. In the course of time, the industry will evolve and settle into order. At present time however, the standard of construction technology in India is backward Malaysia by 10 to 15 years in comparison to Malaysia. The biggest construction projects implemented by the Indian Government are infrastructure projects mainly road constructions. However, the government also needs to close the widening gap between demand and supply for other infrastructure developments such as power, telecom, ports, airports and recently the increased demand for urban infrastructure to complement the interest of the public for real estate. Economic reforms are aimed to accelerate the country's growth to be on par with other developed nations. Its large population creates a massive market for economic. The biggest middle-income population with impressive education, India was the preferred choice for outsourcing of labours and manufacturing activities.

In realising its full potential, India has developed extensive infrastructure development programmes to accelerate the involvement of foreign investors in the country. India is also determined to provide acceptable living condition for its people. Lack of experience in massive infrastructure construction projects had opened up windows for global construction players to penetrate the market. Major policy changes were implemented to accommodate the construction players in effectively executing the projects. Increased incentives are given to BOT projects to reduce capital spending by the Indian Government. It is also a means to secure long term investments of foreign contractors in the Indian market. This is most beneficial for Malaysian contractors who have had the experience of executing similar jobs locally.

To date, Malaysian contractors have completed 47 projects valued at RM7.397 billion (US\$ 28 billion) in India. The value itself reflects the high involvement of Malaysian contractors in the country's construction sector. Research had indicated that the sector that attracted the most involvement of Malaysian companies was in the road and highways sector with a turnover value of almost 81% from the overall value of secured contracts. However, the efforts were not free from various obstacles and difficulties. Among the main difficulties encountered were bureaucracy and delays from the client, the contrast in culture and working environment and the unexpected costs incurred due to unfavourable taxes and corruption among Government officials.

Most Malaysian contractors were able to sustain through the difficulties to maintain their operation in the market with exception to a few. Self financed visits were the most common initial research done to gather first hand information on the market environment. Independent representative offices are a necessity for long term operations to reap full benefits of the market and to ensure efficient operations.

The hurdles faced by Malaysian contractors were addressed using salient strategies to achieve favourable success from the venture. The strategies were formulated as a response to anticipate obstacles and towards realising the company's vision. Low initial profit for longer market operation and diversification of company's activities had shown considerable success for the companies.

The most important thing as perceived by the Malaysian contractors is to have strong financial capacity as the road to success in India is barricaded by unexpected costs. Well diverse experience in several sectors has provided high level of endurance for the companies. Trust, compliance to client's requirement and quality in construction serve as the route to gain recognition in the market. Once trust on the capabilities is established, further expansion in the market is a smooth sailing journey.

India's embarkation on an ambitious infrastructure development programme will continue to provide huge opportunities for Malaysian contractors. Most ventures had proved to be profitable for Malaysian contractors. The determination to push through difficulties and conducting thorough studies separate the success and failures of the market venture.

2. Opportunities in the India construction sector

Construction activities are an integral part of the development of a country. The integration of other industries through forward and backward linkages makes construction an important part in ensuring continuous growth. India is committed to provide the best infrastructure facilities for its people. The vision is to provide world class infrastructure in India. Therefore, to realise the challenge, the capacity of construction has been increased through massive investments by the government and private sectors creating substantial construction opportunities in the Indian construction market.

2.1 Real Estate Sector

The nationwide housing shortage in India is estimated at 20 million residential units and continues to increase. Rapid population growth and the growth of India's middle class, is creating demand for housing. Indian macroeconomic fundamentals are strong and the changing economic profile and demographics cater well for all segments of the industry. With income yields at 10% -12%, the Indian real estate sector is one of the most attractive sectors for investment. Commercial space requirements across a range of industries have soared. The fastest-growing sectors, IT and IT-enabled services (ITES), is expected to require 50 million to 70 million square feet of space over the next two to three years (CIDB, 2005). The government has begun to develop a mortgage market. Financing is becoming available to more first-time buyers and buyers of second or vacation homes.

2.2 Roads and highways

India has more than 3 million km. of road network, making it one of the largest in the world. However, the quality of the roads is inappropriate and cannot meet the needs of efficient and fast moving transportation. National Highways are the prime arterial route span about 52,010 km throughout the country and cater to about 40% of the total road transport demand. The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) was constituted under the National Highway Authority of India Act, 1988 and was made operational in February 1995. Initially it was entrusted with the task of implementing five externally aided National Highway improvement projects. Subsequently, it was asked to implement several other projects including some BOT projects on National Highways.

NHAI has been mandated to implement National Highway Development Program (NHDP) which constitutes 4/6 laning of Golden Quadrilateral Connecting Delhi-Mumbai-Chennai-Calcutta-Delhi and North-South and East-West Corridors connecting Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Silchar to Saurashtra respectively and Salem to Cochin.

To encourage private sector participation, a Model Concession Agreement for major projects costing more than US \$ 222.22 million has been introduced under BOT Scheme. Another Model Concession Agreement for projects less than US \$ 222.22 million has also been introduced by the Government. To date 20 projects involving an investment of around US \$ 222.22 million have already been taken under BOT scheme (CIDB, 2005).

With a major shift from the railways to roads, the potential to develop national highway is immense, considering the fact that the national highways represent less than 2% of the overall road network, although traffic density is 40% (NST, 28th November 2003).

2.3 Airport

Airways form a very important role in India's economy. It plays a very important role in the overall transportation network plus in India's foreign trade. It also has a big impact on the tourism industry as majority of the foreign tourists arrive through air transport.

In India, there are around 450 airports, including those managed by the defence services, government local bodies and private parties. The management of the civil airports is under Airports Authority of India (AAI). AAI manages 120 airports including 5 international airports (Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata and Bangalore), 87 domestic airports and 28 civil enclaves.

According to the 11th Quarterly Survey of Projects Investments (30 June 2003) conducted by ProjectsToday, the industry had 63 projects worth US \$ 4435.77 million in various stages of planning and implementation. These include new airports and renovation and modernization of the existing ones (CIDB, 2005).

The bulk of the projects investment is in the new international airports proposed at Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Uttar Pradesh. The state and the central government form the major part in terms of projects investments.

2.4 Ports

India with a coastline of 6,000 km has 12 major and 139 minor/ intermediate ports. The major ports are situated at Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Paradip, Mangalore, Kochi, Ennore, Kandla, Visakhapatnam, Tuticorin and Mormugao. All ports together handle 90% of India's foreign trade, in terms of tonnage. Major ports account for nearly 75%.

Minor ports in India are under-utilized as the major ports handle most of the traffic. This overstretches their capacity resulting in high turnaround time and pre-berthing delays.

According to World Bank estimates, the delay in container handling costs India \$70 million per annum. Long turnaround time also adds up to the cost of the products. In 2000, the major ports handled 272 million tonnes as against the capacity of 258 million tonnes implying a capacity utilisation of 105% (CIDB, 2005).

According to the 11th Quarterly Survey of Projects Investments (30 June 2003) conducted by Projects Today, the industry had 45 projects worth US\$ 7,528.44 million in various stages of planning and implementation. Out of the 45 projects, as many as 39 projects constituting 91% of the investment were in initial stages. Only three projects with an investment of US\$ 715.33 million were under execution. Thus the project implementation ratio was very low (CIDB, 2005).

The majority of investments in ports were by the private sector (around 63%). The state governments accounted for 31% and the Central government's share was a mere 6%. In the private sector, 18% of the total investments have been envisaged by foreign companies while the domestic companies share stood at 44%.

Around 60% of the investment in the port projects was concentrated in the western coast. The investment is also skewed in the eastern coast with Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu cornering 64% of the investment in the region.

2.5 Urban Infrastructure

Urban infrastructure refers to the framework of facilities to promote and sustain human settlements. In India, the term refers to water supply, sanitation, solid waste management and street lighting (Venkatachalam in Rajesh, 1999).

Rapid urbanisation has led to pollutions of river waters and falling groundwater levels. The annual cost of environmental degradation is around 4.5% of the GDP. Only 58% of the urban population have access to potable water (Ramakrishna, 2004).

Therefore, technological interventions from experienced parties are badly needed to provide a well developed water supply system for India. Currently, investments in BOOT projects estimated at US\$221 million are in place. In the next two to three years, the government is expected to invest approximately US\$9.5 million for the modernisation water supply and urban sanitation. Recently, the opportunities include the encouragement private investment in Mass Rapid Transit System (LRTS). Cities planning to introduce MRTS system include New Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad (India Business Opportunities, 2001).

2.6 Power

The growth of the economy developed a surging need for increased power supply in all parts of the country. In order to sustain to GDP growth of 6% per annum, the demand for power was expected to grow at 9% per annum.

The investments for power supply have always been under the responsibility of the public sector. The National Thermal Power Corporation is India's largest power generating company and is under the jurisdiction of the central government. Currently, the investments in power supply have attracted the interests of private investors. Despite increased supply, the demand still cannot be met.

India continuously faced power shortages. In 1999, the energy shortage was about 8% and at peak times was about 17%. Also, per capita energy consumption in India is among the lowest in the world. China and India was reported to need almost 40% of the additional requirement on electricity in the world (Venkatachalam in Rajesh, 1999). Over the last decade, while electricity consumption has been increasing at an average annual rate of 8-9% per year, supply has increased by only 7.5%.

2.7 Telecom

The Indian telecom network has been ranked among the top 15 networks in the world with over 14 million lines. Due to its wide geographical area, it needs a wide telecom network. India's Infrastructure: Investment Opportunities, in 1997 placed India's telecom network as the twelfth largest in the world and third largest in the developing world (Rajesh, 1999).

Until recently, the telecom sector was monopolised by local companies covering only in operation. The telecom sector today has wide range of services like cellular radio paging, voicemail and videotext service. Value added services are mostly provided by private operators. The technological advances have provided endless possibilities of services in this sector.

The demand for basic telephone services is expected to be about 64 million lines in 2006. To meet the demand, it was expected an additional of 52 million lines will have to be added over the next ten years.

3. Aim of the research

The aim of the research is to identify the construction strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats that are exposed to Malaysian contractors in India.

4. Research methodology and analysis of findings

Questionnaire surveys were adopted and carried out on selected Grade G7 Malaysian contractors registered under the Malaysian Construction Industry Development Board Malaysia who had working experience in India. The objective of the questionnaire survey is to assess the general environment of operation for Malaysian contractors in the venture into the Indian construction market. The method used for this analysis is statistical data formulation and the data presented is in terms of percentages (%).

The Questionnaire was divided into two (2) sections.

Part A

Question 1- General Information

1) Does your company still operate in India?

Out of fourteen (14) contractors who had completed the questionnaire, only two have stopped their operation in India. This indicates a rate of 86% 'successful' as compared to 14% of 'unsuccessful' Malaysian in penetrating and maintaining their venture in the Indian construction market.

2) How long has your company been operating in India?

Fifty percent (50%) of the successful contractors' operational period ranges for less than five years. Forty two percent (42%) successful contractors' operational period ranges less than 10 years. Eight percent (8%) successful contractors' operational period ranges more than ten years. From the response, Malaysian contractors who ventured into the Indian construction market have had reasonable time to experience and understand the market environment.

3) How much do you know of the contracting opportunities that are opened to foreign companies in India?

Seventy five percent (75%) of the successful respondents have much knowledge of the opportunities that were available in India, seventeen percent (17%) claimed they have much knowledge on the opportunities available in the market. Only eight percent (8%) of the successful contractors have little knowledge of the opportunities. Hundred percent (100%) of the unsuccessful contractors attested to having much knowledge in the Indian construction market. This proves that knowledge of opportunities does not always aid the contractors to be successful in the foreign market.

4) From which source did you learn of the opportunities mentioned above?

This question was a continuation of the previous question regarding the knowledge on opportunities available in the Indian construction market. The source that provided the most information on the opportunities as responded by the successful contractors was CIDB (Construction Industry Development Board) of Malaysia with twenty two percent

(22%), followed by private agencies or market research groups and also international construction journals and consultants of previous jobs with fifteen percent (15%) and twelve percent (12%) respectively.

Despite the efforts of Government agencies such as MITI (Ministry of Trade and Industry of Malaysia) and MATRADE (Malaysian External Trade Development Corporation) as well as the Malaysian Embassy in India in organising trade missions and business seminars, the three agencies only received seven percent (7%) of the responses. The stock and merchant banks and Indian Embassy provided the least information for the successful contactors, both as only five percent (5%) of the responses. Sixty seven percent (67%) of the unsuccessful contractors felt that clients of previous jobs gave them the most information on the opportunities followed by sixty three percent (63%) who gathered information from consultants of the same category.

Part B – Company's Operation in India

5) What is/are the types of work that your company will execute / are executing / have executed in India?

Some successful contractors have been involved in various types of construction works in India. However, many of them only focused on only one type of work. Thirty three percent (33%) of the successful respondents are executing / have executed road building projects. Seventeen percent (17%) of the successful respondents are / were in the public utility business mainly in the water and water treatment services. Eleven percent (11%) of the construction on airports projects and real estate development was secured. Others include power, oil and gas and buildings sector as well as metro rail project and structural steel works (design and erection). Each of the above carries a marginal six percent (6%) response from the respondents.

Meanwhile, fifty percent (50%) the unsuccessful contractors were involved in the oil and gas sector and the other fifty percent (50%) were in the road building sector. None of the respondents are / were involved in any ports projects in India. Major involvement of Malaysian contractors in road building sector supports the literature review that states the road and highways projects as having the highest value of work done by Malaysian contractors at eighty percent (81%) from the total value of projects executed in India (Unpublished report from CIDB, 2006).

6) What type of tendering system did you enter for the projects mentioned above?

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of the successful contractors responded that the open tender method was selected as the most popular tendering system entered in India. Competitive bidding followed this with twenty-eight (28%) respondents. The least preferred tendering system by the successful contractors was through negotiation and government to government agreement with seventeen percent (17%). Hundred percent (100%) of the unsuccessful respondents were involved in competitive bidding to secure projects in India.

It was noted that the contractors who managed to secure projects under the Government to Government system were involved with the consortium formed under the Malaysian Construction Industry Development Board Ventures.

7) What type of procurement system did you used for the projects mentioned above?

Despite various considerations given to BFOT (Build, Operate, Finance and Transfer) contracts, seventy one percent (71%) of successful Malaysian contractors were keen to be involved in Lump Sum using BQ (Bills of Quantities) or Drawing and Specification contracts. Only twenty-nine percent (29%) of the respondents were involved in BFOT projects. For the unsuccessful contractors, hundred percent (100%) of the respondents were involved in the Lump Sum contracts.

The reason behind the responses is that BFOT contracts involve higher financial capabilities and longer time to recoup profits. Lump Sum contracts usually provide clear cut basis for pricing and claims and require only several years of involvement. None of the respondents were involved in Management contracting procurement system.

8) What is the average contract period of the types of works mentioned above?

Eighty three percent (83%) of the successful respondents were involved with projects with an average contract period of below five years. Seventeen percent (17%) respondents were involved in projects with an average contract period of five to ten years. Hundred percent (100%) of the unsuccessful contractors were also involved with projects with an average contract period of five to ten years.

None of the respondents were involved with projects with less than one year or more than ten years of average contract period. Assumptions made that the value of contracts involved by the contractors were considerably quite large due to the average contract period ranging from two (2) to ten (10) years. Shorter contract period also provided opportunities for Malaysian contractors to be involved in other projects as well.

9) How did you first make your foothold in India?

Forty percent (40%) of the successful respondents used self promotion and joint ventures with Indian partners in making their foothold in the Indian construction market respectively. Fourteen percent (14%) of the successful

respondents entered the market through joint ventures with other Malaysian companies. Seven percent (7%) made their foothold under the alliance with the Malaysian government.

Fifty percent (50%) of the unsuccessful contractors first made their foothold in the market through self promotion and another fifty percent (50%) through joint venture with Indian partners.

The choice of entering the Indian construction market was previously through a Joint Venture with an Indian partner, which was the main selection of Malaysian contractors. The trend is assumed to change with the increasing number of self promoted contractors to India. Currently, this is the most popular choice of entry due to lesser dependency on the Indian counterparts with an increasing knowledge on the market operation provided by the pioneers who have succeeded there.

10) Do you have any representative office(s) in India?

Sixty seven percent (67%) of the successful contractors have at least one representative office in India. Only thirty three percent (33%) chose not to have any representative office there. Hundred percent (100%) of the unsuccessful contractors also have representative offices in India.

Physical presence through representative office(s) was a necessity for contractors who entered the Indian market through self promotion or by partnering with Malaysian counterparts in order for them to be able to bid for projects. In addition, representative office(s) allowed the contractors (regardless of method of market entry) to closely monitor and have first hand experience of operating in the Indian environment.

11) How long have the office(s) mentioned above been in operation?

Operational period of representative office(s) can make significance difference in the venture of Malaysian contractors into the Indian construction market. Seventy percent (75%) of the successful contractors (who have representative office(s) in India) decided to have their representative office(s) after securing the first contract compared to only twenty five percent (25%) who had had their office(s) since before getting any contract.

While fifty percent (50%) of the unsuccessful contractors chose to have the representative office(s) before getting any contract, another fifty percent (50%) decided to have at least one after securing their first contract.

Although having representative office(s) before getting any project involves high costs to maintain, it had given the contractors early market presence and invaluable experience before actually getting involved in the market. However, a safer route would be to secure a contract prior to the opening of any representative office(s), which explained the answers gained from the respondents.

12) When tendering for projects in India, how would you rank or have ranked the following factors? (1= the most important.....4=the least important)

Fifty eight percent (58%) of the successful contractors confirmed that profit margin outweighed other factors as the most important factor for the successful contractors when tendering for projects in India. This is followed by the need for quality and speed, good relationship with clients and the importance of building a reputation in the Indian market with thirty three (33%), twenty five (25%) of responses respectively.

The factors which were viewed as important by the successful contractors were quality and speed (50%), good relationship (25%), profit margin (17%) and building reputation in the market (17%).

Meanwhile, only twenty five percent (25%) of the said contractors thought that building reputation in the market was less important compared to seventeen percent (17%) who selected all other factors. Thirty three percent (33%) chose having good relationship with the client and building a reputation in the Indian market as essential another eight percent (8%) replied that profit margin was the least important factor when tendering contracts in India.

Fifty percent (50%) of the unsuccessful contractors confirmed that building reputation in the market was considered as the most important factor. All confirmed that creating a good relationship with the client was important to the contractors when tendering in the Indian market.

The most significant difference was seen is the selection of most important factors by the successful and unsuccessful contractors. The successful contractors viewed profit margin as the most important factor when tendering compared to building reputation in the market as selected by the unsuccessful contractors.

13) What is the preparatory and early initiatives did your company undertaken before getting the contract?

Preparatory work for ventures is vital in order to ensure the success of the ventures into the Indian construction market. Thirty-two percent (32%) of the successful contractors had initiated self financed visits to India to really uncover the potentials and threats that forced them in the market. The second highest effort with twenty one percent (21%) was through acquisition and exhaustive study of reference materials. Other preparatory work done by the successful contractors included consultation with agencies (18%), participation in trade missions and exhibitions (15%),

subscription to bodies such as CIDB and/or MITI for notices of tendering opportunities (9%), information search using internet (3%) and referring to others' experiences (3%).

Sixty seven percent (67%) of the unsuccessful contractors prepared themselves by conducting self financed visits to India and thirty three (33%) decided to administer acquisition and exhaustive study of reference materials.

The similarities between the successful and unsuccessful contractors were the selection of self financed visits as well as acquisition and exhaustive study of reference materials as the second essential step of the preparatory work. Self financed visits gave the companies the necessary interaction with the Indian people who operated in the market and the ability to relate to the companies' visions. Although very costly, the importance of the visits was substantial for the success of the ventures. The abundance of reference materials made preparatory work relatively easy.

14) What are the factor(s) that might contribute to your success (defined as having won or managed to get involved in a contract)? (Strongly agreeStrongly disagree)

Fifty percent (50%) of the successful contractors strongly agreed to early and thorough groundwork or research, increase in tolerance and skills in negotiation, offer of attractive financial package and comprehensive services and good local partnership with local representatives to build a better relationship and accumulate better market information as the main factors to succeed in the Indian construction market. Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents agreed on low price over long term strategy and good relationship and contact with the Indian construction players in obtaining success in the construction market.

However, another forty two (42%) disagreed with the low price over long term strategy factor. Meanwhile, thirty-three (33%) of the successful respondents were undecided whether building culturally sensitive and effective marketing and promotion strategies and using less formal interaction patterns contributed to their success in the market.

Eight percent (8%) of the contractors strongly disagreed that using less formal interaction patterns and strategic alignment with the Malaysian Government helped to made them successful in India.

Fifty percent (50%) of the unsuccessful contractors strongly agreed that tolerance and skills in negotiation and good relationship and contact with Indian customers, partners, employees, authorities and businessmen contributed the most in order to succeed in India. Hundred percent (100%) of the said contractors agreed on conducting early and thorough groundwork research as well as having good local partners with local representative to build better relationship and effective marketing together with strategic alignment with Malaysian Government agencies. They disagreed with low price over long term strategy and using less formal interaction patterns to create a comfortable relationship with the Indians towards the contribution of their success in the market. Offers of attractive financial packages and comprehensive services were the only factor that the unsuccessful contractors strongly disagreed for helping them to succeed.

From the findings, it can be concluded that the most important factor to succeed in the Indian construction market from the views of both the successful and unsuccessful contractors was having better tolerance and increased skills in negotiation. .

15) Please indicate the extent of your agreement on the following difficulties of operation in India. (Strongly agreeStrongly disagree)

A majority of both the successful and unsuccessful contractors (50%) strongly agreed to Indian bureaucracy as being the greatest setback with regards to operation in India. Three difficult factors which were contradictive in response when received equal percentages of agreement and disagreement from the successful contractors: 1- Inadequate and inefficient infrastructure and facilities (33%), 2 – Different cultures and languages pose great problems with lower level management (33%), and, 3 - Lack of adequate information and difficulty to access and uncover potential partners, their capabilities and commitment (32%). Twenty-five percent (25%) of the successful contractors were undecided on the out-of-date and inefficient working techniques, management styles and values of local partners.

While half (50%) of the unsuccessful contractors were undecided regarding the inadequacy and loose interpretations of the laws and regulations, all of them (100%) decided to disagree with the differences in culture and language as posing difficulties to operate in the market. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the unsuccessful contractors strongly disagreed with the out-of-date and inefficient working techniques factors. No response was obtained towards the factor of unreliable local partner as being part of the setbacks when operating in India.

A strong agreement from both the successful and unsuccessful contractors on Indian bureaucracy confirmed the findings of the research done by Boston Consulting Group that listed this as the biggest drawback of difficulties of doing business in India (Planning Commission, Government of India, 2002). The wide range of responses towards other difficulties of operation in India might be due to different types of work involved by the Malaysian contractors, which exposed them to different sets of working groups and working environment.

Part C – Company's Perception of India

16) In your opinion, what are factors attract foreign contractors into India?

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the successful contractors and fifty percent (50%) of the unsuccessful contractors perceived India's massive infrastructure projects as the most important factor that attract foreign contractors into India. Fifty eight percent (58%) of the successful contractors and all of the unsuccessful contractors cited that rapid development in India was an important factor for securing contract.

All (100%) of the unsuccessful contractors selected the availability of many English speaking professionals as an important part in attracting foreign contractors into India. Thirty percent (30%) of successful contractors considered the factor as less important, and decided that a large pool of cheap labour was an important factor. Attractive FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) policies were viewed as being less important, accounting for forty percent (40%) and fifty percent (50%) of the responses from the successful and unsuccessful contractors respectively.

The main attraction of India to the international contractors ranges from the abundance of natural resources of India having a large pool of cheap as well as availability of English speaking professionals (MATRADE, 2005) to the liberalisation of the Indian economic which includes the rapid development of India by incorporating attractive FDI policies and massive infrastructure projects (Anandarajah & Granados in Tan *et al*, 1996).

17) How do the following situations influence the growth of the construction industry in India.

Only twenty seven percent (27%) of the successful contractors rated the change of ruling government as well as economic stability as the most important effects towards the prospects of India of becoming an emerging market in the field of construction. A significant response of seventy-three percent (73%) viewed economic instability as an important part in the matter. Thirty six percent (36%) of the contractors selected the change of ruling government as being less important and political crisis with neighbouring country as the least important aspect to consider.

Fifty percent (50%) of the unsuccessful contractors chose economic instability influence as being the most important. All the responses felt that change of investment portfolio by the Indian Government was of great influence. The contractors also viewed political crisis with neighbouring countries having little or least effect.

The most important factors that could affect the prospect of India as an emerging market for construction as selected by the successful (change of ruling government) and unsuccessful contractors (economic instability) are actually interrelated with one another. A strong government which supports the long term investment in the construction sector is seen as highly important to provide stability of growth for the country especially in competing with its rivals. Although the political crisis between the neighbouring countries namely China and Pakistan will remain to continuously pose problems to India, the impact is minimal.

4. Conclusion

The research has provided extensive views into the operation of Malaysian contractors in the Indian construction market. However, the findings have not been able to reflect the true level of success of Malaysian companies as compared to other foreign players in the Indian market. Therefore, it is recommended that further research be carried out on the comparison of market turnover between all foreign contractors that have managed to penetrate the Indian construction market.

The successful contractors viewed profit margin as the most important factor when tendering compared to building reputation in the Indian market. This should be done through the acquisition and exhaustive study of reference materials. The contractors need to conduct thorough groundwork or research and increase tolerance and skills in negotiation. An offer of attractive financial package and comprehensive services and good local partner with local representative to build better relationship and accumulate better market information as the main factors is important to succeed in the Indian construction market. Contractors also agree on low price over long term strategy and good relationship and contact with the Indian construction players.

The wide range of responses towards other difficulties of operation in India might be due to different types of work involved by the Malaysian contractors, which exposed them to different sets of working groups and environment. The findings will provide useful information for any contractors to pursue their intention in penetrating into the Indian construction market.

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When Fish Falls in Love with Elephant or Vice Versa: Sexual Representation in Mainland China's Lesbian Film

Jie Yang

School of Humanities, Yunnan Nationalities University, Kunming 650223, China

Tel: 86-871-502-7757 E-mail: angieyounger@yahoo.com.cn

Abstract

Taking the movie *Fish and Elephant* as a case, the thesis analyzes, through a close-reading of the case movie, the different-from-western-style sexual representations in Mainland China's lesbian film, with focus on sexuality desires, relationships, identities, as well as the cinematic narrative skills employed in the film.

Keywords: Sexual representation, Desire, Relationship, Sexual identity

I don't mean to offend anybody, particular those diligent filmmakers, but if you ask me about the status quo of Mainland China's lesbian films production, I would say out my opinion straight and put it *better than nothing*, it's not all the filmmakers fault though. But, meanwhile, there're some shining moments and sparkling ideas in these better-than-nothing films too.

In traditional Chinese painting, there is a commonly adopted technique named "space-leaving", which means to leave certain space, i.e. to keep it blank or empty in the picture for the spectator, rather than filling the whole canvas in like the western oil painting, so that to inspire the spectators imagination and let them fulfill the production through their own inner creation. Some critics interpret this kind of state as *moment before the climax*, which I think very appropriate but would be more vivid if we substitute climax for orgasm. If you watch Mainland China's lesbian films, you will find out no matter in the documentaries *The Box* (I haven't got the chance to watch it yet, but I did read and hear about it), *Girls That Way*, *The Happy Moments of Duoduo and Jing*, *Melancholy Flower*, in the digital video production *Lost in You*, or in the feature film *Fish and Elephant*, there is, with no exception, too much space-leaving with respect to the dimension of direct sexual representation. For instance, there are very few sequences or scenarios with direct sexual desire expressions, except a rather reserved kissing-love, not making-love, scene plus a masturbation sequence in *Fish and Elephant*. As I described above, space-leaving itself is an advisable, sometimes even necessary, technique in artistic creation, but here in the films, if there's too much space-leaving, which feels very much like de Lauretis' notion of *space-off* that refers to things exist off the screen but you cannot see on it, the spectator would no doubt feel emotionally frustrated and unsatisfied. Because what they have seen is too much lower than, and thus could not meet, their expectation horizon. Saying this of course doesn't mean that the filmmakers must put bunches of bed scenes in their films or make their films sort of porn to attract the spectator's eyeballs or feed their appetite for voyeurism, but they do need to figure out ways to express it.

But, if we reverse our perspective on this maybe-too-much-space-leaving, we probably couldn't deny that it does leave us enough potentialities to make our own cinematic imagination at the same time. Thus, in spite of the somehow space-leaving "discontent", I would rather talk more in this thesis about the non-hetero or pretty queer (in the meaning of queer theory) sexual representations in *Fish and Elephant*.

In the first place, there's no male drag, which de Lauretis referred to as "an old and venerable trope of lesbian subculture and self-representation" (Lauretis, 1994, p.102), in this film, on the contrary, the fairly neutral and more womanly way Xiao Qun (whom I would associate with elephant) and Xiao Ling (whom I would associate with fish) dress, even including Xiao Qun's ex girlfriend Jun Jun's behavior, as well as the very "natural" (or "queer") way Xiao Qun and Xiao Ling falls in love with each other, made the film distance itself from the western style and thus sort of Chinese manner. In this sense, *Fish and Elephant* is not a masquerade which is never successful, but rather a real sequence cut out from our daily life, with the plot of Jun Jun's killing her father a bit theatrical or cliché though. But even the most theatrical part of this film reflected in fact the real violence and oppression imposed upon female body or desire by the patriarchal and heterosexual society. Say, Jun Jun's father's constantly raping her since she was a kid and Jun Jun's mother's pretending not knowing anything even till she died of illness. And it is this strong wish to kill her father, or to resist this patriarchal heterosexual society, that made Jun Jun betray Xiao Qun and sleep with a man, a policeman, so that to steal his gun and use this man's tool or weapon to get rid of another man's harassment. We cannot tell hundred-percent from the film how much Jun Jun loves Xiao Qun and to what extent Jun Jun desires woman, but

we can see definitely the intimacy and trust Jun Jun puts in Xiao Qun as well as Jun Jun's need of a woman's, absolutely not a mother's, embrace. Moreover, when Jun Jun's hand touches Xiao Qun's hand as they were playing the rock-checkers in front of Sakuan, the female elephant Xiao Qun looks after, we couldn't deny this scene is so sexy and full of meaning. In addition, Jun Jun's masturbation in Xiao Qun's job-place bed in the zoo during that long and restless summer noon also implies more than a self-dependent female way to release her libido. Maybe, the autoeroticism here could be deemed as both a punishment and revenge. Who knows?

Anyway, the story told in *Fish and Elephant* is merely a story of three girly girls with no conspicuously dressing transgression, but of course with internal sexual transgression though, and it is this that makes the story itself very close to ordinary people's ordinary life.

Despite there is no male drag lesbian scenario, the lesbian and/or queer desires are still got across strongly and clearly indeed in *Fish and Elephant*. In the rest of this thesis, I'll focus mainly on the representation and expression of such desires by analyzing the two protagonists, Xiao Qun and Xiao Ling, in *Fish and Elephant*.

Xiao Qun's trouble, which derives from her desire, is highlighted in front of the spectators from the very beginning of the movie. She is thirty years old, but she doesn't want to get married which "naturally" means to marry a man to all those "straight minds" (Butler, 2006, p.47). This fact irritates her family members very much, particularly her mum and cousin. "...women should get married and have babies at your age. It's the proper thing to do...Look at you, you're a pretty girl, an absolutely normal person, how could you have no interest in men? What's the fuck going in you head?...It'll be a joke if it's known. You don't care, but you mother cares!" and "...How can I take it easy if you are still single...One should get married and have a baby!" are what repeatedly emphasized by Xiao Qun's cousin and mum. But (UN) fortunately, Xiao Qun doesn't give in. Instead of being talked in, she insists all along her personal "taste": she identifies herself as a woman who desires woman, and what she needs is not a traditional *spouse*, but rather a *lover*. Thus, the tension between individual "twisted" desire and large-scale heteronormative regime is spotlighted in the movie, with the latter always spares no effort to straighten out the former through discursive power (moral suasion, for example). What's worth mentioning here is such structural tension in the movie doesn't get solved by one party meeting the other one's expectation, but rather stay limbo there and get soften little by little through sort of negotiation in between. And this certainly implies some political tendency or potentiality.

Now, let's get down to the relationship between Xiao Quinn and Xiao Ling. When she first met Xiao Ling in Xiao Ling's boutique, her desire to get closer to Xiao Ling was barred by the showing up of Xiao Ling's boyfriend. The second time she wanted to invite Xiao Ling for dinner was interrupted by the phone call from Xiao Ling's boyfriend again, even though she did invite Xiao Ling to the zoo and have fun with her feeding Sakuan, the female elephant, together. But she got Xiao Ling's phone number written in her hand the second time, and it was definitely an enjoyable and sexy moment for Xiao Qun while Xiao Ling was writing in her hand. The third time, Xiao Qun invited, without further ado, Xiao Ling to the same teahouse, where she was meeting another man arranged by her go-between cousin, and sit at a table close by, so that the latter could hear clearly her telling the man that she had no interest in man and what she loved was woman. And when she and Xiao Ling finally got the chance to sit side by side in a sexually meaningful place, her bed at home, they talked about the fish she raised, sequent, while Xiao Ling was teasing her "I heard that those who like fish are horny", she said nothing but taking Xiao Ling's hand in her own after a little bit hesitation.

As far as Xiao Ling, her desire for woman was sort of *aroused* by Xiao Qun's turning up in her life. But this aroused desire in Xiao Ling is nothing but natural, pleasurable, and irresistible. Thus, once she got Xiao Qun's signification, she just said goodbye to her former state of life, leaving all the property to her boyfriend, and moved to Xiao Qun's place with no hesitation. So far, the representation of Xiao Ling's desire for woman is actually full of fluidity and instability. But what Xiao Ling did was just to take the change and follow the internal call of her factual feeling.

As we could see in the movie, the relationship between Xiao Qun and Xiao Ling is exactly what Giddens referred to as "pure relationship" (Giddens, 2001, Chapter 4), which means a relationship of sexual and emotional equality between the two parties. Even when Xiao Ling left Xiao Qun due to misunderstanding the intimacy between Xiao Qun and her former girlfriend Jun Jun, her turning back to her former boyfriend was clearly because of the hurt she got from a girl, but the stereotype, argued over seventy years ago by Havelock Ellis and still believed by many people now, that it was the emotional trauma from man that made a woman turn to desire same-sex love and thus become lesbian. And before Xiao Ling's (temporary) leaving, what she poisoned to death was not Xiao Qun's fish, but her painful and jealous self. Obviously, her love and/or desire for Xiao Qun at the moment were too exclusive to tolerate any other intruder.

One more thing I want to point out here is the sexual identity of Xiao Ling. You can not simply label her heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual here in the movie. She loves woman and enjoys sharing her life with a woman rather than a man, and that's it. To certain extent, maybe to name her, if you must do so, a queer is more suitable. And speaking of bisexual, in the documentary *Girls That Way*, the main story teller, Paddy, once said, "I accept homosexuals and I feel alright with heterosexuals, but as to bisexuals, I've to say I detest them." The reason Paddy explained for such a

comment was because of her girlfriend, who borrowed money and asked for help from Paddy just for cohabiting with her boyfriend. With such an emotional background, it's understandable that Paddy dislikes or even hates the way her so-called bisexual girlfriend practiced, but it's obviously arbitrary to slap such a label upon bisexuals as a category. Differently, the identification idea represented in *Fish and Elephant* is much maturer and queerer.

Another factor represented in *Fish and Elephant* that's worth mentioning is the change of desire styles within heteronormativity, say, the de-traditionalization of marriage and family, which suggests that there is underway a **shift** in heterosexual relationships. For instance, Xiao Qun's cousin was a divorced man, Xiao Qun's mother was a divorced woman who remarried the man that was introduced to Xiao Qun (Xiao Qun's Mother was persuading Xiao Qun to accept this man as her husband-to-be initially), and this man's frank attitude towards an ideal wife also reflected the change of the social and cultural valorizing upon sexuality. Furthermore, the policeman whom Xiao Qun was introduced to was also a single father with a son, this man seemed enjoyed his life, but his younger-than-teenage son was urging him to find a partner. And another boy Xiao Qun once met was someone who acknowledged his Oedipal Complex and even expressed to Xiao Qun his strange desire for some woman who would be tougher to him in contrast to his mother's tenderness. All these signs in the movie signify an important tendency of de-centralization and de-stabilization of the traditional mores of heterosexual relationships. And it is this tendency that opens up new possibilities and expectations of differences in interpersonal relationships.

To sum up, the sexual representations and narrative skills in *Fish and Elephant* are something less "modernist" than "post-modernist". According to Ken Plummer, the basic "modernist" plots in sexual stories consist of 1, "the journey"; 2, "enduring suffering"; 3, "engaging in a contest"; 4, "pursuing consummation"; 5, "establishing a home", and during the unfolding and folding of the story, i.e. the beginning, the middle, and the ending, "a voyage of discovery to be true to their inner self" (Plummer, 1995, pp.54-56) is the fundamental clue of the whole story. While in Mainland China's lesbian film productions, particularly in *Lost in You*, *Melancholy Flower*, as well as *Fish and Elephant*, you do not expect see such linear and somewhat unified narration but rather stories with more potentialities and, what's more important, a more open narrative structure. Often a little bit too pessimistic (what is closer to the social reality) though.

At last, I want to say something about the discursive paradox set in the title of the movie *Fish and Elephant*. In the light of Freud's theory, the fish living in water is no doubt a trope of vulvae, while the elephant with a proboscis is conspicuously a signifier of phallus. In addition, according to the *Yin and Yang* conception in Chinese philosophical and cultural tradition, those comparatively small-sized animals, such as fish, frog, rat and so on, belong to the category of *Yin*, which refers to feminine, while those comparatively large-sized animals, such as tiger, lion, bear (and elephant of course) and so on, belong to the category of *Yang*, which refers to masculine. Forasmuch, in respect of the "lingual prison" we are all confined in, the naming of this lesbian film got trapped again in the ubiquitous presence of heterosexual and patriarchal symbolic system which has already penetrated the whole process and practice of our daily life, as well as the media, language, art, science, literature, etc (Lauretis, 1994, p101). In other word, it encountered once again the inevitable "being captured in escape" (a notion coined by Chinese feminist scholar, and filmist, Jinhua Dai). But, again, let's reverse our perspective, who can allege that there's no sexual difference among fish or elephant (Sakuan is a very example of feminine elephant), let alone, what's more important, there could be more than sexual differences amongst them indeed. Therefore, fish can certainly falls in love with elephant and/or vice versa! Furthermore, either fish or elephant could absolutely jump out of the restriction of heterosexual norms.

Now, I'd like to end up this paper with a poem concerning a neo-psychoanalytic interpretation to the frequently seen image of cigarettes in Mainland China's lesbian films (*Lost in You*, for example).

Cigarettes
 Little tiny pillars
 Like building blocks
 They set up cozy nests
 Where you can always doze in

Whisper you what:
 If Freud were a woman
 Cigarettes would probably
 Not be associated with
 Penis
 But more with nipples

When two lips touch those butts
That's how you're kissing the fingertips or nipples
Of the woman you love
When two fingers
Hold the slender stick
That's the way you and your love are
Hand in hand
Harmoniously and softly

Take a deep inbreath
Breathe then out
Slowly
Taste the swirl scent with the tip of your tongue and
Feel the friction come-and-go
With your heart and soul

Someone once joked:
Save the anal to gay
Leave the genital to hetero
As far as the petal-like oral
That's lesbian's symbol

Don't let smoke get in your eyes
Amigo
To embrace her
Is to embrace your self
In that long-lost heaven

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The Role of Personality in Second Language Acquisition

Yan Zhang

Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao 266000, China

E-mail: tudoucoco@yahoo.com.cn

Abstract

Second language learners vary on a number of dimensions to do with personality, motivation, learning style, aptitude and age. The aim of this paper is to illustrate and summarize the relationship between personality and second language acquisition.

Keywords: Extrovert, Introvert, Second language acquisition

Introduction

Second language acquisition is defined as the learning and adopting of a language that is not your native language. Once you have acquired a foreign language, you have mastered that language. For second language learners to make maximum progress with their own learning styles, their individual differences must be recognized and attended to. A number of theories hold that personality factors significantly influence the degree of success that individuals achieve in learning a second language (Gass & Selinker, 1994) based on the assumption that some features of the learner's personality might encourage or inhibit second language learning (Cook, 1996) by enhancing certain facets of language learning while impeding others (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). We are going to illustrate it in detail.

1. Definitions of extroversion & introversion

Extrovert and introvert are two characterizations of how one relates to the outside world. Extrovert means a person more interested in what is happening around him than in his own thoughts and emotions. That is to say, the extrovert experiences the world more through contact with others and shared experience than through self examination or study. If the problem were to come about for an extrovert, they would more than just likely find someone to help. On the contrary, introvert is a person who is more interested in his own thoughts and feelings than in things outside himself, and is often shy and unwilling to speak or join in activities with others. In other words, an introvert tends to remain "in" oneself. If the same problem were to arise, that person might open a book or pace back and forth to come to a solution.

2. The relationship between extroversion & introversion and second language acquisition

Second language acquisition may be more difficult for some people due to certain social factors. One highly studied social factor impeding language development is the issue of extraverts versus introverts. Studies have shown that extraverts (or unreserved and outgoing people) acquire a second language better than introverts (or shy people). One particular study done by Naiman reflected this point. The subjects were 72 Canadian high school students from grades 8, 10 and 12 who were studying French as a second language. Naiman gave them all questionnaires to establish their psychological profiles, which also included a French listening test and imitation test. He found that approximately 70% of the students with the higher grades (B or higher) would consider themselves extraverts. Extraverts will be willing to try to communicate even if they are not sure they will succeed. Introversion has the greatest chance of negatively affecting SLA. Students that are afraid of embarrassing themselves by speaking incorrectly or by not being able to speak at all may try to avoid opportunities that would otherwise aid their learning.

Related to the extroversion/ distinction are the types of social skills involved in second language acquisition. Wesche (1977), studying thirty-seven Canadian civil servants in an intensive French course, found a correlation between "role playing" and proficiency in listening comprehension and speaking skills ($r = 0.60$). "Role-playing" referred to the willingness of the student to take the part of a character in a dialogue or role-playing situation, "with speech characterized by prosodic expressions of feeling appropriate to the context and by accompanying gestures and facial expressions" (p. 359). This could reflect extroversion, self-confidence, and/or satisfaction with the learning situation, as well as general anxiety level. Two scientists, Kinginger and Farrell, conducted interviews with U.S. students after their study abroad program in France in 2003. They found that many of the students would avoid interaction with the native speakers at all costs, while others jumped at the opportunity to speak the language. Those who avoided interaction were typically quiet, reserved people, (or introverts). Therefore, if teachers correct mistakes and further embarrass shy students, it may isolate students even more. Instead, repeating back the corrected statement allows feedback without a damaging student's ego. For example, if Marcia says "Yesterday I go to the store with my madre," the teacher would

respond, "You went to the store with your mother yesterday?" She has effectively provided corrected input while also continuing the conversation. If a student shuts down after an outright correction then opportunity for more input and practice has been lost.

3. The development of personality

Since Studies have shown that extroverts (or unreserved and outgoing people) acquire a second language better than introverts (or shy people), it seems also important for second language learners to develop personality. That is to say, try to be extrovert while study a second language. As everybody knows, individuality is one thing and personality is another. A soul is born an individual, but without a personality. Personality is built after one is born. What the soul has brought along is hands and legs and face, but not personality; this is made here on earth. Some hereditary factors that contribute to personality development do so but some potential environmental influences that help to shape personality. It is entirely commendable to devote some thought and effort to the improvement of your personality that can help you to learn second language better.

4. Implications for teaching second language

According to what I mentioned above, teachers' teaching methodology should be adapted to the individual differences in personality, in order to enhance the progress for the second language learners. However, complete individualization is not always possible in the classroom, for different learners respond differently to the same input as a function of the ways in which their personality affects their perception and interpretation of the world, but may be more easily realized in multimedia CALL. One advantage of multimedia CALL is its potential adaptability; when users control their learning environment, they can intuitively select the options best suited for their learning style preferences.

Conclusion

In a word, a number of theories and case studies tell that personality factors significantly influence the degree of success that individuals achieve in learning a second language. Especially, lots of studies have shown that extroverts (or unreserved and outgoing people) acquire a second language better than introverts (or shy people). That indicates a new light on the second language teaching methodology.

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Standardized Tests: Bellwether of Achievement?

Matt Deerman

Jacksonville State University

Cherith Fluker

Jacksonville State University

Elizabeth Panik

Jacksonville State University

Jimmy Powell

Jacksonville State University

Kathy Shelton

Jacksonville State University

Carol S. Uline

Jacksonville State University

Charles E. Notar

Jacksonville State University

700 Pelham Road N

Ramona Wood A3

Jacksonville, Alabama 36265-1602

Tel: 1-256-782-5959 E-mail: cnotar@jsu.edu

Abstract

This article constitutes the culmination in a review of 53 sources by a group of first year master's degree students in a problems and issues in secondary education course to determine "Standardized Tests: Bellwether of Achievement?" Standardized tests are used for deciding whether or not students are achieving academically in American schools. Is this the right mechanism? Are they fair for all students? Is there a better way? There are pros and cons to standardized testing, and these will be discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Academic achievement, Accountability Assessment, High stakes testing, Standardized tests, Standards, Test and measurement

Standardized testing is a popular method of measurement in modern American schools. High expectations raise the bar for student achievement. Tests can provide critical benchmarks of students' knowledge and they can provide validation for the quality of the nation's public schools.

Emphasis on standardized testing helps to answer the call for school reform. Standardized tests are among the most objective ways to measure student performance. Electronic scanning makes them easy to score. Standardized tests contain validity and reliability standards.

Strict standards for administration of standardized tests authenticate objectivity and reliability. They are administered with a standard set of instructions which are read aloud, word for word, to all test takers. Standardized tests have set time limits and are intended to be administered in similar testing conditions. Test results are compared to a sample group or norm. Statistical methods determine placement of the test scores on a normal curve, which when graphed, appears as a bell-shaped curve. Scores plotted on the bell-curve may be used to compare students with local, state, and

national levels of test takers (Moriarty, 2002). Favorable standardized test results from schools provide confidence to a nation in competition with other countries engaged in global economics.

1. Historical Background of Standardized Tests in American Schools

Standardized testing began in the United States as early as the 1900s to determine a student's individual intelligence quotient. Prior to 1965, standardized tests were not used in the early grades. These years were considered a time in a child's life for natural growth and development. However, with the Soviet Union's launching of Sputnik in 1957, American schools pushed for higher achievement in science and mathematics. With the federal government providing resources to help fund schools in the 1960s, evaluation demands grew. Standardized tests met the accountability requirements for federal funding. They were relatively inexpensive and easy to administer. In the 1970s, accountability for federal funding became more stringent. Eventually, standardized tests became the definers of standards in all subject areas. By the 1980s, testing of young children became commonplace. Today, standardized tests are used educationally from kindergarten through college.

2. Uses of Standardized Tests

When people think about the uses of standardized tests, they generally consider college admissions. Defenders of the use of standardized tests for college admissions assert that the tests "lend predictive power in the admissions process" (Calvin, 2000).

Of course, there are other reliable predictors of success in college, such as grades earned during the junior and senior years of high school. Notwithstanding, standardized tests continue to be used as an objective measure for college admittance as well as for many other purposes.

An entire battery of standardized testing is used to distinguish special needs students from regular students. As a diagnostic tool, educators, counselors, and other professionals plan Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for struggling students based on the results of the norm-referenced tests. Such a battery of tests can "point out specific misconceptions or problem areas that are hindering progress" for specific students who obviously learn differently from those students who succeed with the traditional methods of listening, reading, writing, and testing (Fremer & Wall, 2003).

Another use of standardized tests is for counseling services. Students exhibiting unusually high levels of stress or who engage in substance abuse may be recommended for testing. Test results may suggest counseling aimed at preventing harmful or dangerous behaviors (Fremer & Wall, 2003). Counselors may also use standardized tests for purposes of student self discovery. Results of attitude surveys and interest inventories help students choose careers.

For accountability purposes, standardized achievement tests are used to determine academic knowledge and skills. Such tests may be used to place students in remedial, regular, or advanced classes. High schools began using exit examinations in the late 1970s as a means of insuring that students meet minimum state requirements for graduation. This more exclusive use of standardized tests led educational institutions to the current practice of high-stakes testing.

Today's emphasis on high-stakes testing has been described as "the learning through standards and accountability era of American education" (Sloane & Kelly, 2003).

Testing definitely plays an important role in maintaining accountability in the school systems. Objective measures are necessary to determine if students are mastering the necessary skills and critical concepts needed to ensure future success. But the teacher and school accountability factor raises issues.

With the recent legislation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), more and more emphasis is placed on accountability and teacher evaluation. This legislation requires regular accountability testing as a prerequisite for receiving and continuing to receive federal funds (Fremer & Wall, 2003). As a result, teachers whose students fail to show adequate progress, must engage in professional development workshops to improve their teaching techniques. Administrators and subject matter experts work with teachers to help them become more successful in the classroom.

3. Pros and Cons of High-Stakes Testing

Questions continue to surface about the benefits of over reliance on standardized test results. Is standardized testing the most beneficial strategy for measuring success of both students and teachers? Should a single standardized instrument be used to determine promotion and/or graduation? Are standardized tests fair to all students?

In recent years, both teachers and students have been held accountable for results of standardized testing. Oftentimes, the quality of a school is based on how well students do on standardized tests. Both teachers and students feel the pressures of administrators, peers, and parents to perform well on standardized tests (Abrams, Pedulla, & Madaus, 2003). The pressure on teachers can lead to irregularities in the administering of tests which, of course, can skew the results (Gay, 1990). Many teachers have admitted to teaching to the test. They adjust their objectives to teach

specific content that the test covers. If test scores go up, can these improvements be trusted when teachers and administrators are held accountable for the test scores?

When teachers are evaluated solely on how well their students perform on a standardized test, they abandon creative, well-rounded, interdisciplinary teaching with accommodation for diverse learning styles. Teachers give up using strategies they consider most productive to academic achievement, such as hands-on projects, inquiry problem solving activities, and scenarios which engage critical thinking skills. Instead, they focus on rote memorization and rehearse students in the art of bubbling in answers on practice tests.

Not only does high-stakes standardized testing negatively affect the art of teaching, it negatively affects student learning and self esteem. The pressure on students to perform well on a quantitative measurement of learning at one specific point in time negates the qualitative progress a student makes over a period of time. All students learn differently and perform differently on different types of assessments. Writing samples, oral presentations, and research projects are examples of assessment not measured by standardized tests.

Standardized tests are unfair not only in terms of non-accommodation for diverse learning styles, but they do not take into account subgroups, such as racial and ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, students with limited language proficiency, and students from low socioeconomic groups (Bracey, 2001). Test content and testing conditions tend to ignore the issue of diversity. Some schools teach "testwiseness" to help bridge the diversity disparity. Students need to know how to take a standardized test. Awareness of certain cognitive, secondary cues, present in multiple-choice test items can help elevate test results. One strategy is to try to answer the question in one's head before reading the possible answers. This practice lessens confusion by the answer choices. Other strategies include "organization, planning, and time management" as vital skills in test taking (Loulou, 1995).

One of the goals of standardized testing is to compare schools on a national level. Every state has the same content covered on each of the tests, but the level of difficulty is different from state to state (Linn & Kiplinger, 1995). Since all state tests are not the same, and there is no national test in place, it is difficult to compare achievement among schools throughout the United States.

4. Alternatives to Standardized Testing

Alternative methods of assessment have shown to have some positive effects for students that may outweigh the advantages of standardized testing (Seeley, 1994). One alternative method is performance assessment where students demonstrate a skill, based on a specific behavioral objective. Another assessment alternative is maintaining portfolios where students select their own work samples. These student products plainly reveal learning progress to the student, the teacher, and the parents, who traditionally ask to see their children's work. Journals and interviews are helpful assessment tools. Attitude inventories and opinion surveys are other positive methods for alternative assessment (Travis, 1996).

Teachers like the versatility and creativity alternative methods allow. Teachers may use these assessment activities often, even daily if desired (Bol, Ross, Nunnery, & Alberg, 2002). Teachers may use these measures to grade all students, even those with exceptionalities. Creative teachers may customize alternative methods to adapt assessment activities to the specific needs of diverse learners.

Students tend to prefer alternative assessment. They feel more in control of their learning environment. Students crave change and flexibility in learning and assessment activities. Alternative assessment activities motivate students to rise to the challenge and try harder to excel (Allen & Flippo, 2002).

However, there are negative aspects of alternative assessment. The greatest drawback teachers find with alternatives is converting the assessment data into letter grades and percentages. Teachers also worry that alternative grading procedures may not accurately cover material in the mandated standardized tests. Certainly, alternative methods require more time and effort than standardized testing. For these reasons, teachers, especially less experienced teachers, may be reluctant to try alternatives for assessing student achievement.

Education cannot be a "laissez-faire" practice; accountability is necessary. Common sense suggests a combination of standardized testing and alternative assessment methods. Sole reliance on high-stakes testing tends to defeat students, demean teachers, and discredit schools. Testing is an extremely valuable part of educational assessment, but it is only part of the formula for quality learning. Additional research may help to delve more deeply into the intended and unintended consequences of standardized testing in educational decision making.

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An Innovative Research on the Cultivation Pattern of Human Resources Management Professionals

Xia Cui

Shandong University of Finance, Jinan 250014, China

E-mail: cuixiadd@126.com

Yang Lu

Shandong University of Finance, Jinan 250014, China

Abstract

With the approaching era of knowledge-based economy as well as the gradual universalization of China's higher education, the quantity issue in talent cultivation has given way to the quality one consequently. Setting out from some problems in the cultivation of human resources management professional in China, this article puts forward patterns for objectives, curriculum systems as well as teaching methods in innovative talent cultivation.

Keywords: Human resources management, Talent cultivation pattern, Innovation

Originating from labor economics in the 1950s, China's human resources management has experienced its initial development in the first period, its closing down during ten-year Cultural Revolution, its joint development with labor personnel management from 1977 to 1992 and finally its independent development since 1998.

China's human resources management has achieved rapid development in its forty-year tortuous development. This is mainly shown in four aspects: first, human resources management has been accepted as an undergraduate specialty. Second, human resources have become a new direction for universities' development with its importance and prospect realized by an increasing number of insightful people. Third, this specialty has stepped into a spontaneous development stage. For example, the first Seminar on Teaching and Practice of Human Resources Management was held in Shandong Institute of Business and Technology in August 2000, at which China's Research Association on Teaching and Practice of Human Resources Management was founded. Fourth, human resources management as an idea has been accepted by a larger number of entrepreneurs.

With the establishment of market economy and the fierce competition of labor force market, the man-oriented management idea has rooted in people's minds, hence making human resources management an indispensable part in enterprise management and higher-quality professionals in human resources management particularly important. However, due to China's laggard education and training in human resources management, it is lacking in professionals in this field, not to mention advanced ones with high comprehensive abilities.

1. Problems in the Cultivation of Human Resources Management Professionals in China

Through our quality analysis on human resources management majors in our university, we found that they suffer from defects in communicative, analytical as well as innovative abilities, teamwork, self-control abilities, expressive abilities and physical qualities and so on. In our opinion, these problems should be attributed to the following reasons:

1.1 Incorrect Specialty Orientation

(1) Human resources management suffers from a onefold orientation, hence lacking in its special features. In China, the specialty of human resources management is intended to cultivate advanced professionals equipped with knowledge and abilities in management, economics, law and enterprise management and so on as well as qualified for management, teaching and research in enterprises, government institutions and departments or to cultivate human resources management professionals and managers for all kinds of enterprises, government institutions, government departments, teaching and research units and so on. With many universities adopting the objectives set by the Ministry of Education and some well-known universities as theirs and copying those well-known universities in their teaching plans, they are unlikely to form their own features. Meanwhile, their practice fails to follow the law for specialty development under the current labor market system.

(2) The advantages of local areas are not manifested in specialty orientation. Disconnected from local industrial and commercial enterprises, China's human resources management education fails to adapt itself to the economic development, industrial features, cultural features and social structure of local areas, hence departing from the original

intention for localization. Due to this sightless cultivation pattern, university graduates majoring in human resources management finally end up with an embarrassing situation in which they cannot be retained in local areas due to their reluctance to stay there as well as their inadaptability to local enterprises.

1.2 Unclear Cultivation Objective and Specification

The setting of objective and specification for talent cultivation is actually that of graduates' future professional roles. Accordingly, unclear setting in this aspect will cause a series of negative influences on the subsequent teaching stages and result in graduates' inadaptability to market demands. As far as the specialty of human resources management is concerned, no clear and common answers have been given to some questions such as whether it is intended to cultivate professionals in human resources departments of enterprises or human resources managers in enterprises, whether the idea of human resources management or the techniques to conduct it should be emphasized and what the importance of satisfying enterprises' actual demands is and so on.

1.3 Unreasonable Curriculum System and Structure

At present, most universities set their curriculum systems and structures according to the functions and posts of human resources management in enterprises' actual operations (with quite different subjects in different universities) with the hope to prepare their students for a variety of tasks in their future career. In spite of their emphasis on students' practical skills, this instrumentalist curriculum system neglects two significant facts: first, the idea of human resources management should come first in any enterprise with its function to set, regulate and systemize policies of human resources management; second, not all skills should be taught for a long time, nor will it be achieved by being taught.

1.4 Immature Specialty Teaching Pattern

With the current researches on teaching methods mainly focused on different subjects instead of specialties, the teaching method for a certain specialty seems laggard in which teachers mainly use their lecture notes and chalk to input knowledge instead of practical skills to students. Therefore, the effect and level of specialty education has been restrained to a large extent.

1.5 A Lack of Qualified Teachers

The lack of qualified teachers is manifested not only in the small number of qualified teachers in human resources management but in the poor quality of teachers caused by their main focus on their individual subjects instead of the overall knowledge and development of the whole human resources management specialty. In addition, since human resources management is a new specialty itself, most teachers don't receive quite regular professional training in spite of their Master's Degrees or even above, hence having only limited knowledge accumulation about this specialty.

2. An Innovative Pattern for the Cultivation of Human Resources Management Professionals

2.1 Exactly Positioning the Objective Pattern for Cultivating Human Resources Management Professionals

According to the directional advise for the cultivation objectives and requests of human resources management professionals laid down in *the Undergraduate Specialty Catalogue and Introduction* issued by the Ministry of Education in 1998 as well as a comprehensive analysis on the current requests for the quality of human resources management professionals, we think the following objectives should be set for the cultivation of human resources management professionals: cultivating advanced professionals with favorable comprehensive quality, an overall development of morality, intelligence and physical fitness, solid theoretical knowledge in modern economics, management, behavioral science as well as labor law, a good command of a foreign language and the computer, proficiency in the modern theories, operation principles and techniques of human resources management and the ability to analyze problems in human resources management comprehensively and systematically.

2.2 Constantly Innovating the Curriculum Pattern for Cultivating Human Resources Management Professionals

(1) Employing "integrated pattern" and emphasizing high-level management. Instead of traditional administrative professionals conducting personnel management functions, our modern human resources management specialty is mainly intended for the cultivation of high-level management professionals who are capable of selecting, acquiring, maintaining, stimulating, controlling, regulating, training and developing human resources in a reasonable way and therefore to better achieve the goals of their enterprises by fully exerting their staff's potential and enthusiasm. Then, high-level comprehensive management instead of routine management should be emphasized in this specialty. Accordingly, "integrated pattern" should replace "function pattern" and "institution pattern", in which the general principles, disciplines, ideas and basic methods should be based on with particular emphasis on the planning, regulation, stimulation and development of human resources in order to display its high-level management characteristics.

(2) Strengthening humanity courses and emphasizing sense cultivation. The gradual course to classify human resources management as an independent specialty shows that the whole management world has got their knowledge deepened, ideas changed and methods perfected with economics development and the strategic conversion of enterprise

management focuses. That is to say, instead of treating human resources equally important as other production and operation elements as in our past practice, we are giving more importance to human resources now, especially how to encourage their enthusiasm as well as how to develop their potentials. When it comes to human resources management as a specialty, the research on human resources should take an important role in the whole curriculum system. Therefore, a variety of branches and fields involving culture, philosophy, society, psychology, religion and ethics should be included.

(3) Giving prominence to three mainlines including management and economics, behavioral science and law. Although human resources management is classified into management category, it displays multidisciplinary feature in knowledge system. In accordance with this feature, six modules including economics, management, physiology and psychology, social disciplines, law and disciplines on techniques and skills should be the basic ones with emphasis on the former two and with behavioral science and law as a supplement in order to cultivate practical professionals.

(4) Setting the curriculum system for human resources management specialty. According to the objective pattern for the cultivation of human resources management professionals, we divide the curriculum system of this specialty into basic knowledge, professional knowledge and relevant knowledge, which is shown in Figure 1:

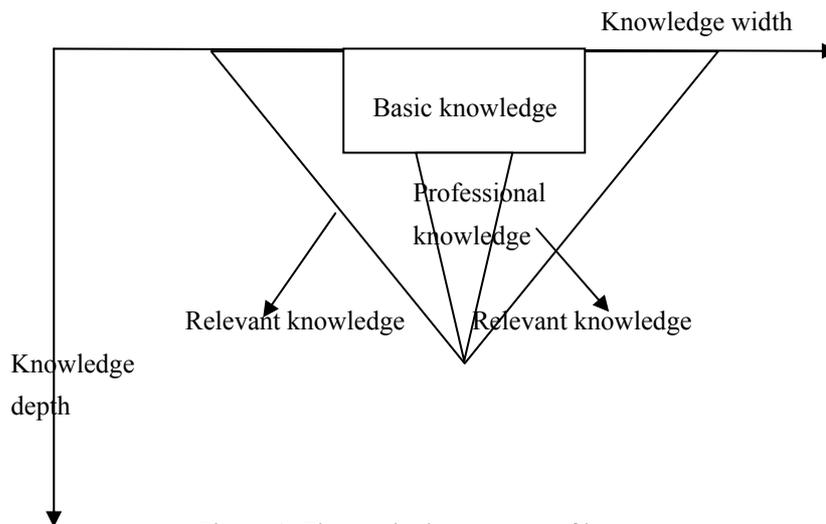


Figure 1. The curriculum system of human resources management specialty

In this curriculum system, basic knowledge provides bases for the construction of professional knowledge of human resources management as well as gives access to relevant knowledge. Therefore, this part must be solid with the inclusion of linguistic courses, courses about political theories, mathematical courses, computer courses and basic courses on economic theories.

Professional knowledge refers to the specialized knowledge indispensable for human resources management professionals, which includes compulsory courses, such as labor economics, organization behavioral science, human resources management, human resources strategies, social security and so on as well as optional courses, including human capital theory, career design and management, theories and methods of personnel quality assessment, training and development of human resources and so on. Students are expected to have a profound command of these professional knowledge.

Here, relevant knowledge refers to the extended knowledge based on basic knowledge and centered in professional knowledge, which includes economic management courses, humanity courses and courses about natural scientific technologies.

2.3 Actively Exploring the Teaching Pattern for Cultivating Human Resources Management Professionals

(1) Employing a variety of teaching methods flexibly. Teachers are expected to use different teaching methods, such as examples, questions, group discussions, simulations, role plays and multimedia teaching, to help students to establish a complete and systematic structure of professional knowledge, to encourage their enthusiasm and interest, as well as to develop their potentials.

(2) Reforming the traditional testing form of study results in the exam-oriented education system. Instead of their scores achieved by learning by rote, teachers are expected to give more prominence to students' performance in practical activities, such as designing questionnaires for social surveys, organizing the distribution, statistics and analysis of questionnaires and writing survey reports and so on. Actually, survey reports and course thesis are good ways to test students' performance in that they will reveal students' mastery of knowledge as well as their comprehensive ability of using them.

(4) Putting importance to the training of professional skills and strengthening practical teaching. On one hand, students should be given more opportunities and better conditions to practice with the simulation function of school labs fully exerted. On the other hand, due to the present practice activities running for a short period and poorly related to students' majors, more fixed practice bases should be established to offer students opportunities to practice what they have learnt at school. In addition, besides their professional studies, students' comprehensive quality should be fully developed, especially their abilities in interpersonal communication, verbal expression and psychological adaptability and so on in order to adapt themselves to the complicated and variable social environment.

2.4 Constantly Strengthening Teaching Staff Construction of Human Resources Management Specialty

Due to the nationwide shortage of human resources management teachers as well as their poor ability in teaching and research, it is impossible to solve this problem by just introducing professional teachers from other universities. Therefore, developing teaching force inside a university seems the only way to go. On one hand, teachers can be cultivated by teaching specialized courses and taking part in research projects; on the other hand, sending teachers to attend advanced courses and to attend academic conferences in their specialty is also a good way to cultivate professional teachers.

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Interpreting “Differences” on Return from Europe In Perspectives of Education and Culture

Dingchu Wu

Education Science Institute, Sichuan Normal University, Chengdu 610068, China

Tel: 86-28-8476-0357 E-mail: wudingchu@sina.com

Junhua Wu

Education Science Institute, Sichuan Normal University, Chengdu 610068, China

E-mail: wujunhuateresa@163.com

Abstract

Basing on “Chinese and foreign mutual knowledge”, this paper interprets the differences and gaps between China and some European countries on cultural heritage, environmental protection, public hygiene, personal relationship and freedom of others in perspectives of general education and social culture. It emphasizes that only accelerate educational development and cultural dissemination can we cultivate cultural confidence and cultural consciousness of the nation, and display characteristics of Chinese culture consciously in the trend of cultural globalization and educational internationalization.

Keywords: Differences and gaps, Educational and cultural perspectives, Cultural confidence and cultural consciousness

I visited Europe for the academic purpose not long ago. Despite the tight schedule, I got much from this trip. While appreciating the long historical culture, beautiful natural scenery and fascinating exotic atmosphere of European countries, it may help us think about the present educational reform in some perspectives which seems “particular”, if interpret what I have been seen and heard on “Chinese and foreign mutual knowledge” and in perspectives of general education and social culture.

1. Emphasis on “differences” displays characteristics better

What will we investigate European academe? Whether the modernization drive as it is or the direction of future as it ought to be, the wealthy material life or the beautiful natural scenery, they are no doubt worth of considering. According to the opinion of the writer, due to historical reasons, most European countries are small and with little population, even certain countries are called “pocketsize”. Besides their general characteristics—that Europeans are diligent and brave, full of intelligence, love peace, cherish life, and they created a wealthy and civilized Europe together, their “differences” should be taken more seriously. For example, the artistic leisure of Italians, the flirtatious romantic of Frenchmen, the mechanical conscientious of Germans, the gentle manner of Englishmen and the various acumen of Dutchmen make a sharp and strong impression on people; maybe the merger of these “differences” is their different characteristics, and the further display reveals their characteristics better. As Jiang Ze-ming said, the world is alive with all cultures as all sunshine is of seven colors (Jiang 1997). With the “modernization” of European countries, they made these differences or characteristics widely known consciously or unconsciously in order to make clear their localization and strengthen their national approval. Furthermore, on the basis of “his-his mutual knowledge” and the understanding of the differences, the writer thought, we should pay more attention to distinguish the differences on “his-my mutual knowledge”, that is to say, understand the differences between China and European countries as deeply as possible. As for these differences, each of them has advantages and disadvantages—sometimes, ours are better than theirs, and vice versa. But if analyze the “gaps” mainly, it will help us make clear the direction or point of strength of Chinese reform and development to some extent.

The past 20 years, especially the recently educational reform demonstrated that both universities and primary schools have been pursuing similar objectives, carrying out identical models, referring to resemble evaluation criteria. As to higher education, they focused on “first-class” construction, “scale” expanding, “uniform” teaching, scientific research “grade”; then for the foundational education, they emphasize the construction of “famous school”, the grade of “mechanical equipment”, show off “bilingual” teaching, ballyhoo the ranking of “proportion of students entering schools of a higher grade”. All these, it seems that the characteristics and advantages of different schools are neglected. In my

opinion, education, just like playing a piano, only the ten thumbs play their respective roles would a harmonious, magnificent resplendent gorgeous appear. If defend the same tone and timbre tenaciously, what it will be? Once, an American philosopher told his Chinese students, “the meaning of life” is maximizing the “difference” from others (Li 2007). It demonstrated that differences and characteristics were so important. However, a French sinologist F. Jullien said: “strictly speaking, only in China, there are ‘foreign lands’ different from European civilization” (Zhang 2007). If so, it illustrated that there are some innate characteristics in Chinese education. Hence, schools of different levels and types should place emphasis on differences and characteristics of their own.

2. Attach importance to the protection of cultural heritage

European countries, not only attach importance to the protection of material cultural heritage, but also the intangible cultural heritage. The former, like the momentum Basilica of St. Peter's, the sumptuous Santo Maria del Fiore, the fascinating Colosseum Rome's Arena of Death, the miraculous Leaning Tower of Pisa, the famous Notre-Dame de Paris, the majestic Eiffel Tower, the Louvre—an elegant artistic treasury, the Grand-Place Brussels which surrounded by Gothic ancient architectures, Venice and Amsterdam which are fusions of city and water, and other places of interest, which are acclaimed as the acme of perfection, are fascinating. They revealed their national tradition, long history, even spirit simultaneously. Especially in Italy, there is a “historical district” in the modern city Rome, which preserves many historical vestiges since ancient times. Furthermore, nearly nine hundred similar “historical districts” scatter everywhere to protect historical heritage, including foundations of building, destroyed walls, broken pillars, caves and trees from demolishing, removing and transforming. Here, modern architectures of 20th century and relics of ancient times co-exist. As for the latter, European countries pay attention to “integration”—co-operation in economy, culture, education and security strengthened continuously. However, their own national culture and customs are regarded as the symbols of identity and softpower of international competition (Joseph·Nye). For example, although English is dominant in Europe, other countries not only “pluralize” it to distinctive English, but also cherish their own language as “identification”. To spread French, France even provides free education for foreigners; again, only Euro is legal in European Union, but each of group members insists on different patterns in the coin design to show their national characteristics.

Review Chinese attitude toward cultural heritage, in the mind, some people hold this wrong idea: “the more cultural heritage, the heavier burden; the more Historical Monuments, the greater responsibility”. In practice, some streets, architectures and roads were reconstructed again and again; even farmhouses were reconstructed together in the same style. In order to pursue economic benefits, some cities and old towns with complete old architectures, fancy personal gardens or simple folk customs were transformed greatly into the nondescript. Then they became neither traditional nor modern. Hence, many well-known bridges, mansions just famous for a short time, since some leaders hoped to achieve remarkable “success”. Furthermore, various kinds of antique cities and towns, once are charming, now changed into “forest of cement”, “modern buildings” or “artificial countryside”. The eastern charm was terribly disturbed, the natural beauty disappeared completely and the nature is far away from human beings. Just as for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, China is a country with a long history and glorious culture, which languages are so colorful, not to mention the great influence of Confucianism abroad. However, it is hard to say that these important intangible cultural heritage were got necessary and sufficient protection. According to some investigations, now, in China, there are only three old men in their eighty's who really speak Manchu as their first language in daily life. Hence, a scholar named Zhao a-ping said, “about ten years” Manchu will die out, at that time, there will be no “living Manchu” (Li 2007). Then other examples, the music pursuing eight harmonious tunes, the tender and sincere poetry, the particular paintings, the beautiful calligraphy, the colorful dialects and proverbs and the traditional Chinese medicine full of humanities and so on, which brim over with harmonious beauty of traditional culture, they played an irreplaceable role in the international culture. But it seems that we lacked much attention on how to protect these heritage and the measures we took were not effective. Recently, for undeserved reputation or personal interests, some scholars even brought discredit on ancestors, “spoof” wantonly. These scholars not only lost their basic morality, but destroyed the “softpower” of our country. Moreover, they confused the criterion of excellent culture, and committed a crime to Chinese culture and international culture (Tang 2007).

Beginning with education to strengthen our country's cultural tradition education is one of the important ways. As for the education of cultural heritage protection, first of all, it should be understood deeply. As the carrier of history, the protection of cultural heritage is the delivery and continuity of national history, hence, protecting them is the duty of every citizen. It is not only based on the co-existence of multi-cultures and the demand for the protection of cultural ecology, but the responsibility for the development and prosperity of culture. To protect cultural heritage, just the attention on one building, one bridge or one antique, one skill is not enough, what's more, tap and remain their unique “cultural gene”; try our best to remain the integrity when manifesting their characteristics, melt several “individuals” which are full of historical features, national features and regional features into a “whole”; in the process of protecting cultural heritage, each of us is beneficiary, hence, we should not only protect one cultural memory, but also nourish these cultural heritage with modern civilization constantly, so that make them get beyond historical space-time, and continue to display the function of delivering civilization. Secondly, in the case that “English-Chinese education is imbalanced”, on

the one hand,we should improve students' English abilities in order to make them anticipate international cultural communication and development with stronger ability;on the other hand,we shouldn't put the cart before the horse,regard the tool as the aim,instead, rebuild up our national confidence,believe firmly that our own language is the most beautiful,then learn and use Chinese well at first(an official off Ministry of Education 2007). Thirdly, we should defend the spiritual wealth of our national culture conscientiously. At the period of emphasizing the reality and pursuing material life,it is difficult to defend those cultural heritage unfrequented in poor and lonesome life. However,the writer thought that the younger generation should at least understand traditional ideal image—the lonely smoke over the desert,the sunset lingering at the river,the moon that shone between the pines,the pine,bamboo and plum while tasting KFC or MacDonal,d,learning about Rock & Roll or NBA,abiding the Valentine's Day or Christmas Eve,indulging in Korean TV serials or Hollywood block bluster,which is necessary cultural inside information of Chinese in cultural globalization,and also represent keeping watch the national essence.

3. Attach importance to the environment protection and hygiene

Europeans—from the heads of government to the common people, place much importance on the environmental protection and public hygiene. For example, in Switzerland, almost every family has cars, but the government insists on “blue sky and white cloud is the most important”. It advocated “using motor vehicles rationally” and spread bicycles, tried its best to protect environment and save energy even 20 years ago. For another example, when the Prime Minister of Germany Merkel visited China not long ago, she hardly ever forgot advocating the great significance of cleaning environment, purifying air, renewing resources,reducing energy consumption for the development of human beings,and stating how to take the responsibility as developed and developing countries(Li 2007). When staying below the blue sky,drinking the running water all over the streets,walking on the twisty paths,looking at the broad and clear rivers excitedly,boating on the lakes cheerfully,even drinking the lake water,we not only had a strong feeling of the clear air,the clean water,the charming lakes,the beautiful mountains,but also the strong sense of environmental protection of Europeans. Mention the control of the Rhine specially: the Rhine flowing through several countries once was polluted seriously. The latest 20 years,after several countries acted in an concerted effort,for example,the preceding stage,to take overwhelming measures to ban activities which harm the environment such as emission of waste water and so on along the river,overwhelming measures that will be taken at later stage is to ban the water pollution by the chemical fertilizer along the river,now,the Rhine is not only vast and mighty,but also displays functions of serving economy and bringing benefits to human beings in full.

Review the worrying situation of Chinese environment and hygiene, not to mention the sandy-dust storms have been wreaking havoc for many years. Just in this year, the water areas of the Taihu Lake, the Chaohu Lake and the Dianchi Lake turned up large-scale blue algae in succession, so that seventy percent domestic rivers and lakes were polluted. There are protozoa, heavy metal and organic matter in water. The degree of water pollution is close to the critical point. Another piece of information shows,China is a country of lacking in water,now,where the drinking water of more than three billion people is unsafe,among them,about 1.9 billion people,the harmful contents in their drinking water exceed the provided standard;in twenty percent important cities,the quality of the water from the water source region,and almost one third of the total water is not up to the provided standard. The water pollution and drinking water became the most concerning problem in people's livelihood(Gao 2007),and the Huai River is almost becoming a river that “wherever there is water,there is pollution;wherever there is river,there is drought”(Liu 2007).Then,as for the usage of chemical fertilizer and agricultural chemicals,at present,each year,more than 47 million tons of chemical fertilizer were used,only about thirty five percent of them worked;and more than 1.4 million tons of agricultural chemicals were used,just about thirty percent of them worked. A scholar named Zhu li-zhi said, the data shows, agriculture pollution was more than one third of the whole pollution. Chemical fertilizer and agricultural chemicals “consume energy in the process of production and transportation, and the usage rate is very low, so they cause environmental pollution twice”(Li 2007). With the rapid development of Chinese GDP and improvement of people's living standard,air was polluted seriously,climate became unusual,rivers were limpid no longer... We have already paid for it;if no warnings about environment and health,human beings “are doomed to misfortune” eventually,which will not just be an alarmist talk of “pessimist of environmental protection”.

How to solve these problems? Education is absolutely necessary. Firstly, pay much attention to the basic theory research of environmental protection and health education. In the 1970's,in face of the continual deterioration of the environment,western scholars began to search for the ideological and cultural causes of it,and they happened to pay close attention to the cultural spirit that is friendly to nature in Chinese traditional culture. For example,Norwegian ecological philosopher A· Naess declared the ecological “social status of mine” that he said is the Chinese “Taoism”;British professor J·Clark even thought the natural idea of Chinese Taoists is affecting the shift of western ecological civilization. Actually,early in the 1930,in the light of environmental deterioration,Lu Xun made a statement in a popular science book seriously:These problems—“desert is moving towards south gradually,nutrition is hard to support,are important and practical to Chinese. If not be solved, all that will become extinct”,“trees cut down,riverbeds dried up,a drop of water will equal to blood in the future”(Lu 1930). The foresight of Mr.Lu carried conviction;in face

of the continual deterioration of environment, Chinese scholars speeded up the relevant researches and transformed them into the contents of popular science and education, maybe it is not too late! Secondly, learn and draw lessons from the experience of western countries, which is setting ENGO universally. These famous environmental protection organizations, such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, the World Wide Fund for Nature, the World Watch Institute, the Friends of the Earth, the Greenpeace International, the Club of Rome and so on, not only execute the measures of the governments, what's more, advance the nurturing and maturing of citizen's sense of environmental protection greatly, stretch the means of solving environmental crisis, play the role that the government is unable to substitute. We can learn the principle and experience of ENGO systematically at the beginning, then try out the ENGO patterns which fit in with the actual condition of our country, replenish and promote carrying out Chinese environmental measures through social power maximally (Zhang 2007).

4. Place importance on interpersonal relations and respect the freedom of others

Both Europeans and Chinese value interpersonal relations, but if we divide it into two types for further observation, it shows that Chinese place much more importance on longitudinal relations, for example, respecting leaders, superiors, parents, care about children; while Europeans on lateral relations, they coordinate with colleagues and neighbors, and live with each other in harmony. As to the freedom, Europeans place much importance on it, sometimes, it seems somewhat a little excessive, such as the allowance of freedom of sex in some countries; nevertheless, Europeans respect the freedom of other people while they enjoy their own freedom, just as, in public places or in restaurants, being always friendly and gentle, for fear of affecting others behavior, communication or relaxation.

In recent years, with the increasing development of Chinese economy and the improvement of people's living standard, it became frequently for more and more people to go abroad year by year. In European countries, Chinese people can be seen everywhere in the streets and lanes. However, we felt ashamed and worrisome after observed their words and deeds carefully. Just as the *Handbook of Chinese Consular protection and Assistance (2007)* announced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China before long, it reminded that citizens should behave politely, not speak loudly, avoid showing off themselves and quarrelling with others in public places, as well as they have weak sense of time, spit and litter here and there, and speak offensive remarks, and etc (Lin 2007). In addition, taking fruits and food from breakfast buffet without permission drawn attention of servants; jaywalking often got warnings from drivers; entering lounges exclusive to foreigners in some commercial centers casually so that there was special notice "the lounge for Chinese people is ahead". Such acts were always regarded as insults, and hurt the image of Chinese people seriously.

Ultimately, the root of these problems mentioned above is lacking in education of etiquette. The writer thought, "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs teaches people good manners" is quite necessary yet extremely insufficient. Tracing back to the school education, the contents of the education of etiquette were not specific, so it was hard to put them into effect. Seemingly, the practical effect should be strengthened. Then comes to the education of social customs, the traditional virtues of China—"hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil, do no evil" or "to advance or retreat on principle" should be expanded constantly. Then the pre-service education of travel agencies or relevant organizations were always neglected, and emphasis placed on the assertion of the national image was not enough! All that should be changed.

5. Conclusion

The "differences", especially the "gaps" mentioned above, can be interpreted variously. According to the respective of the writer in advance, many virtues of European countries is worth us learning, which mainly attributed to the development of education and dissemination of culture. As to the former, a majority of European countries have a complete system of education and high educational quality. For example, in France, everybody can receive free education, including post-graduate education; and in Switzerland, people always insist on equality and balance in education. There is no difference in grade in all primary and middle schools, both the wealthy and the poor's children receive free education together. Then the latter, there are bookstores everywhere throughout European countries, even in the small supermarket at gas stations. In addition, the price is so cheap that a nice-printed book only equals three to five local bread in selling price. Comparing with the increasing price of books in China, on the surface, it is beyond people's purse, in actually, perhaps it is the neglect of cultural dissemination and public education. Furthermore, according to the statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the per capita books borrowed in Denmark ranged the second in the world, the usage of ADSL per hundred people got the first place in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Liu & He 2007). However, in China, this is the present situation: the maintenance of many local libraries is difficult, and some museums run by non-government organizations or the local people are in a precarious state. The universal application of computers in rural area needs a long time. So the "gaps" are conspicuous.

It goes without saying that accelerate the development of education and the spreading of culture, especially reinforce the education of modern civilization and the spreading of traditional culture are the dual tasks we confronted, which seems contradict but melted. Because cultural confidence and cultural consciousness not only contain modernization oriented values, but also mean deep cognition and understanding for traditional culture. The soul of the nation is

nurtured by education;the spirit of the country is shaped by culture. Only do like this can we foster the cultural confidence and cultural consciousness of citizens, so that they can display the characteristics of Chinese culture voluntarily in the stream of cultural globalization and educational internationalization.

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Promising Approaches for the Analysis of Sentence-final Particles in Cantonese: the Case of [aa3]

Wai-Mun Leung

Department of Chinese, the Hong Kong Institute of Education

10 Lo Ping Road, Taipo, Hong Kong

Tel: 852-2948-7223 E-mail: waimun@ied.edu.hk

Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to analyze the meanings and moods of the most frequently used particle [aa3] in various types of modern Cantonese sentences. Promising and feasible approaches of ‘Minimal Pair’ and ‘Maximal Common Induction’ are introduced to depict the pattern of the use of Cantonese particles microscopically and macroscopically so as to establish a better grammatical description of the language. The possibilities that may occur when a sentence ends with a final particle are also discussed in this work.

Keywords: Syntax, Sentence-final Particles, Cantonese

1. Introduction

1.1 Sentence-final particles

Chinese has a number of communication-oriented particles to clarify a speaker’s intention. They are called ‘Sentence-final particles’, which are morphemes that occur at the end of a sentence. Chinese sentence-final particles are a peculiar form in spoken language. In syntax, semantics and language usage, it has a large influence on a sentence. In English, the mood or meaning of a sentence is usually modified by uttering it in a different tone. However, since Chinese is a tonal language, where changing the tone of a word may actually change the meaning of the word. This is where the sentence-final particles come in. These particles are often used to modify the mood or sometimes even the meaning of a sentence.

Sentence-final particles are bound linguistic forms that are suffixed to units higher in rank than words. They are traditionally referred to as ‘tone-of-voice words’ which are usually used to express moods, attitudes, feelings and emotions. In this study, they will be referred to as sentence-final particles, for the obvious reason that these words mainly appear at the end of sentences, as well as clauses or phrases. To express moods, attitudes, feelings and emotions, other than sentence-final particles a number of means can also be employed in Cantonese and some other languages. For example, they can be expressed by full words, adverbs, conjunctions, inflections, interjections or intonations. In Cantonese however sentence-final particles are one of the most well developed means to express such moods.

1.2 Cantonese sentence-final particles

It is said that sentence particles are commonly used in Cantonese. Luke (1990:11) remarks that:

It is no exaggeration to say that they constitute one of the hallmarks of natural conversation in Cantonese.

This suggests the irreplaceable role that they must be playing in spoken interaction. In recent years, more works have been published that are devoted specifically to sentence-final particles. Such studies include Cheung (1972), Gibbons (1980), Yau (1980), Kwok (1984), Bourgeries (1987), Luke (1990), Leung (1992), Matthews (1994) and Fung (2000). Being a pioneering work in the study of Cantonese sentence-final particles, Cheung (1972:172-192) pointed out that there are as many as fifteen particles commonly found in everyday conversation (note 1), and they are often used in clusters of two to four to express different moods. For instance, with reference to the examples he cited from a radio play, there are as many as twenty-four particle-clusters formed with [ge3] (consonant + vowel + tone) being the main particle used in combination with others (note 2). People are easily thrown into confusion by the varieties of their combinations and their complicated meaning. Before going further I would like to quote Cheung (1972:195), who says:

Non-native speakers may have difficulties learning Cantonese, one of the main reasons being the fact that using the wrong particles can disrupt the original meanings of the sentences. We, therefore, ought to be aware of the particles whether one is to learn or do research on Cantonese.

One may have an impression that there are very few rules to follow with respect to the use of particles and that one

seems to have a great deal of freedom using them. However, it is very difficult for foreigners to learn Cantonese because the sentence-final particles (and their lexical tones), the meanings of which being very complex, are not easy to be mastered. As we know, the usage of particles is not exactly related to syntactic structure but often relies on pragmatic factors and the speaker's intuition and knowledge. When people take part in conversations, the utterance is tightly related to the context giving full play to the communicative function. Syntax studies, therefore, cannot be figured out without the conversational context. In this connection, the meanings of particles should not only be constructed at the lexical and grammatical levels, but also confirmed both semantically and syntactically. Accordingly, this paper attempts to introduce promising and practical approaches to analyze Cantonese particles, by taking the most frequently used particle [aa3], a syllable in mid-level tone (tone 3) without a consonant onset, as an example.

2. A close look at sentences and final-particles

A collection of examples is adopted here to make this study more objective. The book *How celebrities learn languages – interview series (1999)* 名人學語文訪問系列 edited by the Hong Kong Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) is chosen for the study. The corpus consists of about 3 hours of recorded materials which reveal that the use of [aa3] accounts for 34% in everyday Cantonese. This is followed by the use of [ne1] and [lo1], the percentages use of which are 23% and 19%, respectively. Some examples in this paper also come from the author's intuition as a native speaker. The abbreviations used and their meanings are listed at the end of the paper.

A number of examples will be discussed in the rest of this paper and the properties of [aa3] will be noted based on the ways it is used. The following discussion is neither conclusive nor definitive, but should give us some insight into how the approaches can be adopted to elucidate the meanings of Cantonese particles.

2.1 Differences between sentences with and without final particles

As a matter of fact, the tone of a sentence is a reflection of wishes, aspiration and feelings. During conversations, the mood of a sentence is determined by the interactions of intonation, word order, sentence structure, verbal context, particles and so on. In addition, Jin (1992) pointed out that the mood of a sentence is based on a number of factors such as intonation, particles, some of the adverbs and grammatical forms, etc. The fact would be more complicated than one could expect. Semantic criteria may therefore also be taken into consideration. Thus, the meaning of a particle does not necessarily confer its meaning to the original sentence. For example, the sentence 'ngo5 jam2 zo2 tong1 laa3' (I drink PERF soup PT -- I have had the soup) indicates the perfection of the activity performed at the time. However, it is inappropriate to say that the final particle [laa3] is a perfective particle. In the discussion that follows, the meanings of particles will be verified in the context of grammatical form.

Generally, in order to distinguish various possible meanings of a particle, we can compare two sentences that are exactly the same except for the presence or absence of that particle. In other words, if a sentence (S) carries a meaning (M1) and is changed to another meaning (M2) by adding the final particle (P), we can find out what P exactly means by comparing M1 and M2. On the other hand, if M1 and M2 are the same, it implies that S possesses that meaning originally and P does not carry the meaning of either M1 or M2. For example,

(1a) Ting1 ziu1 go3 talk nei2 heoi3 m4 heoi3?

Tomorrow morning DET talk you go NEG go

"Are you attending the talk tomorrow morning?"

(1b) Ting1 ziu1 go3 talk nei2 heoi3 m4 heoi3 aa3?

Tomorrow morning DET talk you go NEG go PT

"Are you attending the talk tomorrow morning?"

(2a) Jat7 zan6 heoi3 bin1 dou6 sik6?

Later go where eat

"Where are you going to eat?"

(2b) Jat7 zan6 heoi3 bin1 dou6 sik6 aa3?

Later go where eat PT

"Where are you going to eat?"

Examples (1a) to (2b) are interrogative sentences. Particle [aa3] does not modify the meaning of these sentences. The grammatical form 'X-not-X' in the affirmative-negative question already tells the hearer that (1a) & (1b) are interrogative with or without a particle. To reply to an affirmative-negative question, one picks the positive predicate for a positive answer and the negative predicate for a negative answer. In this case, the answer should be restricted to 'go'

or 'not go'. In (2a) & (2b), the interrogative expression is shown by the interrogative word 'bin1 dou6' (where); hence, the final particle [aa3] cannot be considered as an expression of the interrogative mood.

On the contrary, a final particle that makes a marked difference between M1 and M2 is equivalent to M2 because the meaning has been changed after adding the particle.

(3a) Keoi3 m4 heoi3 tai2 hei3

He NEG go see movie

"He is not going to see the movie"

(3b) Keoi3 m4 heoi3 tai2 hei3 me1?

He NEG go see movie PT

"He is not going to see the movie, isn't he?"

(4a) Lau4 haa6 gaan1 zaap6 fo3 pou2 zap1 zo2 lap1

downstairs DET store close PERF

"The store downstairs was closed down"

(4b) Lau4 haa6 gaan1 zaap6 fo3 pou2 zap1 zo2 lap1 aa4 ?

downstairs DET store close PERF PT

"Was the store downstairs closed down?"

(3a) is a determinative which has been changed to an interrogative sentence (3b) after adding a final particle [me1], which is therefore considered as an interrogative particle. The same applies to (4a) & (4b). The determinative sentence (4a) is changed to a question as (4b) after the particle [aa4] is attached to the end of the sentence. This method appears reasonable and feasible, but in view of the complicated meanings of particles and the variety of effects the particles can impart to a sentence, a more sophisticated way to analyze various meanings of particles is needed.

Let us then look into the moods of sentences. According to systemic functional grammar, moods are closely related to a complicated, multi-leveled semantic system, which can be divided into a few main categories that are classified into smaller groups based on the different roles of a speaker in conversation. For instance, Chinese grammarians always classify the various moods into 'declarative', 'interrogative', 'exclamatory' and 'optative'. The last one may be further subdivided into such lower levels as 'order', 'urge', 'appeal', 'seriousness' and so forth. With this in mind, the comparison of 'S+P' and S is on the basis of different levels. After adding a particle, the meaning, M2 (S+P), of a sentence can be totally different from that of its original sentence, M1 (S), in terms of the categories of mood at the first level.

(5a) Gaau2 dim6

Do well

"Done!"

(5b) Gaau2 dim6 laa4?

Do well PT

"Has it been done?"

Example (5a) is a declarative sentence, while (5b) is apparently an interrogative. Thus, the sentence-final particle [laa4] is apparently conclusive in determining the sentence type.

The other case is when a particle follows a sentence, the meanings of M1 and M2 may be similar in mood at higher levels, but carry a difference when one goes further down the various levels of mood categories.

(6a) Nei2 sik6 m4 sik6?

You eat NEG eat?

"Would you like to eat?"

(6b) Nei2 sik6 m4 sik6 aa3?

You eat NEG eat PT?

"Would you like to eat?"

Both (6a) & (6b) are interrogatives, which require the hearer to give an answer to 'X-not-X'. The difference between the two sentences is that (6a) is more straightforward than (6b); nevertheless, the latter confers a softer tone than the former does. The final particle [aa3] is used together with an interrogative sentence to form a question.

As a result, one cannot simply look superficially when examining the differences between 'S' and 'S + P'. Instead, the

underlying levels of mood should be investigated to elucidate the differences. To compare the possible differences between ‘S’ and ‘S+P’, the distinctive mood morpheme should be found out in the test used later. Only in this way can the meanings of the particles be found out. We hereby put forward the concept of ‘mood morphemes’ to differentiate between the attitudes different sentences carry as well as to look closer at the meanings of particles.

2.2 The relationships between sentences and final particles

From the concepts introduced in the last section, there is no doubt that P can change the whole mood of a sentence in different ways. The situation is, however, more complicated than one would expect. Let us look more closely at the relationship between S and P. The final particle [aa3] is used as an example to illustrate that the relationships between a sentence and a particle in Cantonese are of four types as follows.

2.2.1 The whole sentence has changed its meaning with a particle

Firstly, S originally does not have the meaning of P, but P confers the new meaning to the whole sentence.

(7a) Saam1 fan6 bat1 gei3 dou1 jing2 saai3
 Three CL notes all copy complete
 “All three sets of notes have been photocopied.”

(7b) Saam1 fan6 bat1 gei3 dou1 jing2 saai3 laa4
 Three CL notes all copy complete PT
 “All three sets of notes have been photocopied”

Here, (7b) is an interrogative. There is neither interrogative pronoun nor interrogative form in the sentence and the intonation is no different from that in the declarative (7a). Supposedly, it is the particle [laa4], appearing at the end of the interrogation, that transforms the sentence into an interrogative. It now expresses a distinctly different meaning compared with (7b). In the absence of [laa4], both (7a) & (7b) will become declaratives with no differences in meaning between them.

2.2.2 A new meaning is produced by the combination of S+P

Secondly, S and P can combine to form S+P to produce a new meaning, which neither S nor P alone carries. The difference between S and S+P may be seen from the following:

(8a) A: nei3 jiu3 ping4 gwo2 ding6 sai1 gwaa1?
 You want apple or watermelon
 “Would you prefer an apple or a watermelon?”
 B: sai1 gwaa1.
 Watermelon.
 “Watermelon, please.”

(8b) A: Syut3 gwai6 ting4 zo2 din6 wo3! Syut3 gou1 tung4 bou3 din1 dou1 bin3 wai6...
 Refrigerator stop PERF electricity PT ice-cream and pudding also change bad.
 “The refrigerator is not working. The ice creams and puddings have gone bad.”
 B: sai1 gwaa1 ne1?
 Watermelon PT
 “What about the watermelon?”

Let us compare the above pairs of examples. In (8a) B is a declarative while in (8b) the sentence ‘watermelon’ has been changed to a question by adding the particle [ne1] that does not represent the interrogative mood itself (note 3). The interrogative is a product of the combination of ‘watermelon’ and particle [ne1] in the context (note 4). The particle [ne1] in the high tone is associated closely with the interrogative mood.

2.2.3 The particle strengthens the whole meaning

Thirdly, S originally has a similar meaning as P. Under this circumstance, the particle attached to the sentence strengthens the whole meaning.

(9a) Saan1 zo2 pou3

Close PERF shop

“Has the shop door been locked?”

(9b) Saan1 zo2 pou3 me1

Close PERF shop PT

“Has the shop door been locked?”

Both the above examples illustrate the interrogative mood and require confirmation from the other party. Without the particle [me1], (9a) with rising tone is still an interrogative sentence but (9b) implies to us a sense of ‘surprise’.

2.2.4 The meanings of the sentence and the particle have no interactions

Fourthly, S has a certain meaning and remains the same even after a final particle has been added. There is no direct relationship between the sentence and the particle. They do not appear to be related to each other in the following examples:

(10a) Haang4 hoil

Walk away

“Get away!”

(10b) Haang4 hoil laa1

Walk away PT

“Get away!”

It is seen that the [laa1]-suffixed utterance (10b) sounds softer in tone while (10a) sounds harsher and more abrupt. Both sentences are imperatives. The particle [laa1] itself does not have the meaning and is not related to the imperative mood in (20).

To summarize, the above are the four possibilities that may occur when a sentence ends with a final particle. The relationships can be illustrated as follows:

Table 1. Possible relationships when P attaches to S

| Relationships | Sentence | Particle | Results |
|---------------|----------|----------|--|
| First | ✗ | ✓ | The whole sentence changes its meaning. |
| Second | ✗ | ✗ | A new meaning is produced by the combination of S+P. |
| Third | ✓ | ✓ | The particle strengthens the whole meaning. |
| Fourth | ✓ | ✗ | The sentence and the particle have no direct relationship. |

2.3 Further approaches for analyzing sentence-final particles

It is agreed that the meaning of a final particle can be distinguished by comparing M1 and M2. The prerequisite for finding out the meaning of a particle is to identify the semantic relationship of P and M1. This approach for comparing S and ‘S+P’ is termed ‘Minimal Pair’. It has long been realized that differences in meanings exist between a sentence that ends with a particle and another which does not. ‘Minimal Pair’ is a tool and basic procedure to elucidate the meanings of the final particles and the various possible interactions between the particles and the mood in the original sentences by examining only one phoneme.

Another tool, ‘Maximal Common Induction’, is in contrast to the method of Minimal Pair. One ought to first identify the possible sentences to which a particle P can be attached. The meaning of P in each sentence can then be elucidated by applying Minimal Pair, comparing P-bearing and non-P-bearing twin sentences. The meanings of P in various sentences can then be pooled together for comparison. The actual meaning of P can be determined if that meaning is commonly found in all the sentences (S+P); otherwise, that meaning of P ought to be excluded.

Essentially, Minimal Pair assists *microscopically* to reveal the various possible meanings of P in one single sentence; whereas Maximal Common Induction *macroscopically* compares and contrasts all the sentences, thus serves to deduce the typical meanings of P and exclude those that are not commonly used. In this respect, Maximal Common Induction must precede Minimal Pair in particle studies.

3. The analysis of [aa3]

3.1 Minimal Pair

In this section, I would like to discuss the use of [aa3], which is the most frequently used particle in modern Cantonese. The particle [aa3] can appear at the end of different types of sentences and sometimes even in the middle (note 5). Here I will discuss examples of the use of [aa3] in the various types of sentences, using the approaches of ‘Minimal Pair’ and ‘Maximal Common Induction’.

(11a) Hai2 di1 ci4 wui6 fong1 min6 jau5 me1 lai6 zi2 ho2 yi5 dang2 ngo5 dei6 caam1

In DET vocabulary aspect have what example can let I PL refer to

haau2 haa5 aa3

DEL PT

“Could you show us some examples of vocabulary?”

(11b) Hai2 di1 ci4 wui6 fong1 min6 jau5 me1 lai6 zi2 ho2 yi5 dang2 ngo5 dei6 caam1 haau2

In DET vocabulary aspect have what example can let I PL refer to

haa5

DEL

“Could you show us some examples of vocabulary?”

The above pair is an interrogative which the interrogative pronoun implies a stronger interrogative mood. Therefore it works even if there is no particle at the end of the sentence. In (11a), the sentence sounds neutral and moderate after adding [aa3], whereas (11b) is more direct.

(12a) Nei3 ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 jung6 jing1 man2 kau1 tung1 dak1 dou2 aa3 ? dak1 m4 dak1 aa3 ?

You can NEG can use English communicate CM done PT? Can NEG can PT?

“Are you able to communicate in English? Yes or no?”

(12b) Nei3 ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 jung6 jing1 man2 kau1 tung1 dak1 dou2? dak1 m4 dak1?

You can NEG can use English communicate CM done? Can NEG can?

“Are you able to communicate in English? Yes or no?”

In these two affirmative-negative questions, the one with [aa3] sounds more moderate and the one without appears more direct.

(13a) Zan1 hai6 sei1 jiu3 zung6 daai6 ge3 goi2 gaak3 aa3

Really need significant GEN reformation PT

“A significant reformation is definitely necessary.”

(13b) Zan1 hai6 sei1 jiu3 zung6 daai6 ge3 goi2 gaak3

Really need significant GEN reformation

“A significant reformation is definitely necessary.”

(13b) is to give objective comments. (13a), with [aa3], carries a sense of urge, thus adding personal opinion and expressing wish.

(14a) Nei2 duk6 jat1 geoi3 je5 ge3 si4 hau6, hai2 gam2 cing4 ge3 cyu2 lei5 aa3, bin1 go3
 You read one CL thing GEN time, in emotion GEN solve PT, which CL
 zi6 jing1 goi1 duk1 cung3 jam1 aa3, heng1 jam1 aa3, dim2 joeng2 duk6 jat1 go3 ming6
 word should read stress PT, light tone PT, how read one CL order
 ling6 sik1 ge3 geoi3 aa3, pou2 tung1 waa2 tung4 gwong2 dung1 waa2 gan1 bun2
 type GEN sentence PT, Mandarin and Cantonese absolutely
 m4 jat1 joeng6
 NEG same

“When you read out a Cantonese sentence, you will realize that the ways you handle the emotions, position the stressed and unstressed syllables in a sentence, as well as read an imperative, are totally different from Mandarin when one reads a sentence.”

(14b) Nei2 duk6 jat1 geoi3 je5 ge3 si4 hau6, hai2 gam2 cing4 ge3 cyu2 lei5 , bin1 go3
 You read one CL thing GEN time, in emotion GEN solve , which CL
 zi6 jing1 goi1 duk1 cung3 jam1, heng1 jam1, dim2 joeng2 duk6 jat1 go3 ming6 ling6
 word should read stress light tone how read one CL order
 sik1 ge3 geoi3 , pou2 tung1 waa2 tung4 gwong2 dung1 waa2 gan1 bun2 m4
 type GEN sentence, Mandarin and Cantonese absolutely NEG
 jat1 joeng6.
 same

“When you read out a Cantonese sentence, you will realize that the ways you handle the emotions, position the stressed and unstressed syllables in a sentence, as well as read an imperative, are totally different from Mandarin when one reads a sentence.”

(14b) consists of several items with short pauses in between. Without [aa3] at the end of each item, the utterance sounds more hurrying and formal. With the use of [aa3] in (14a), it sounds more relaxing and casual.

(15a) Co1 zung1 go2 zan6 si4 ne1 ngo5 uk1 kei2 hou2 kung4 gaa3, jat1 gaa1 ng5 go3
 Secondary school DET time PT I home very poor PT, one family five CL
 jan4, zyu6 hai2 jat1 gaan1 fong2 dou6, lin4 so2 wai6 ci3 so2 aa3, dou1 hai6 hai2 go3
 people live in one CL room place even so-called toilet PT also in CL
 gwai6 ge3 hau6 min6 zai1 go3 maa5 tung2 hai2 dou6.
 cabinet GEN back put CL chamber pot at place

“My family was very poor when I was in secondary school. Five of us lived in a small room where the so-called toilet was just a chamber pot placed at the back of the cabinet.”

(15b) Co1 zung1 go2 zan6 si4 ne1 ngo5 uk1 kei2 hou2 kung4 gaa3, jat1 gaa1 ng5 go3
 Secondary school DET time PT I home very poor PT, one family five CL
 jan4, zyu6 hai2 jat1 gaan1 fong2 dou6, lin4 so2 wai6 ci3 so2, dou1 hai6 hai2 go3 gwai6
 people live in one CL room place even so-called toilet also in CL cabinet
 ge3 hau6 min6 zai1 go3 maa5 tung2 hai2 dou6.
 GEN back put CL chamber pot at place

“My family was very poor when I was in secondary school. Five of us lived in a small room where the so-called toilet was just a chamber pot placed at the back of the cabinet.”

(15a) is a declarative sentence. With the use of [aa3], the speaker intends to emphasize the poverty by stating that they did not even have a toilet at home when he was in secondary school. [aa3] is therefore an emphasis-carrier here. It helps to indicate emphatic affirmation.

(16a) Gaa1 zoeng2 aa3, dou1 hou2 daam1 sam1

Parents PT all very concerned

“All the parents are very anxious”

(16b)Gaa1 zoeng2 dou1 hou2 daam1 sam1

Parents all very concerned

“All the parents are very anxious”

There is a pause after [aa3] in (16a) with which the speaker either intends to direct the attention of the hearer to another point, or plan what to say afterwards; whereas (16b) gives one a sense of hurry.

(17a)Hai6 aa3, si6 sat6 soeng6 zing3 fu2 hai6 gam2 joeng2 gong2 gwo3 aa3

Yes PT, in fact government be ADV say EXP PT

“Yes, in fact, the government did have promised.”

(17b)Hai6 aa3, si6 sat7soeng6 zing3 fu2 hai6 gam3 joeng2 gong2 gwo3

Yes PT, in fact government be ADV say EXP

“Yes, in fact, the government did have promised.”

There is a sense of certainty in (17a) & (17b), so that it is very likely that the speaker is correct. (17a) sounds more moderate whereas (17b) more awkward.

The previous seven pairs of examples, with and without [aa3], illustrate the fascinating ways final particles of different meanings can be used in sentences. In the following, another criterion termed ‘Maximal Common Induction’ will be set up, as mentioned before, to investigate the meanings of [aa3]. It is necessary here to emphasize again that the analysis should be conducted with ‘Minimal Pair’ as the primary tool.

3.2 Maximal Common Induction

It is obvious that the moods carried by [aa3] in the above sentences are not commonly found in all the examples. These include expressing doubt and hope, giving examples, emphasizing, pausing and offering guarantee. According to the principles of Maximal Common Induction, moods that are not commonly found are to be excluded. Therefore, the above moods cannot be interpreted as the meaning of the particle [aa3]. In other words, the particle [aa3] fails to represent those moods.

On the other hand, the common characteristics shared by the seven examples with [aa3] are that, they all make the sentences sound more neutral. In contrast, those without [aa3] sound more direct, rushing and straightforward. That is to say, all the sentences with [aa3], compared to those without, carry a common attitude – ‘moderate’. If the common attitude shared by all types of sentences with a P is the meaning of P, ‘making a sentence sound moderate’ is more likely to be the core function of the particle [aa3]. When [aa3] is said to make the sentence sound more moderate, we are only comparing with respect to those without [aa3], but not suggesting that all sentences with [aa3] sound more moderate in general. When [aa3] is attached to a sentence, its function is to make the original sentence sound more moderate, no matter what kind of attitude the sentence originally carries. For example, if the original sentence is a question, the particle attached brings a sense of doubt. This implies that the speaker knows something about the question he asks and has an expectation on the answer, but he is just doubtful and asking for confirmation. In this respect, the speaker does not seem to be too direct and abrupt and the atmosphere is more neutral. Besides, it also appears that the speaker is not so confident if the other side is willing to co-operate and therefore it leaves room for possible rejection.

3.3 meanings of [aa3]

After discussing the accurate meaning of [aa3], let us look back and see how the attitude is produced in the above sentences with [aa3]. The four possible relations of P and S in ‘S + P’ sentences are pointed out in the previous section: (i) adding a new meaning to S; (ii) combining S and P to develop a new meaning; (iii) P strengthening the attitude in S; and (iv) P and S not having any direct relations. It can be noted from those sentences with [aa3] in examples (11a)-(17b) that only the fourth relationship can be found. That is to say, [aa3] adds to S the attitude of ‘moderate’, which does not exist in S originally. The original attitude in S co-exists with the attitude carried by [aa3]. There are no obvious interactions between [aa3] and S. In the above examples, whether or not [aa3] appears at the end of the sentences does not affect the original attitudes, namely expressing doubt in (11b) and (12b), expressing hope in (13b), giving examples in (14b), emphasizing in (15b), pausing in (16b) and offering guarantee in (17b) in the original sentences. Questions remain as questions and optatives remain as optatives. However, the sentences with [aa3] carry the sense of ‘moderate’, and this attitude is brought to S by [aa3].

4. Conclusion

The main objective of this paper is to depict the pattern of use of Cantonese particles and to establish a better grammatical description of the language. It must be noted that the analysis performed in this paper does not mean to be comprehensive, and only the general outlines of the particle studies have been presented. Essentially, there are many other approaches to analyze the meanings of particles. In order to come to a more accurate conclusion, an appropriate research process must be carried out in the further analysis of particle use in Cantonese. [aa3] is used as an example to suggest a more strict examination device. That is to say, 'Minimal Pair' is proposed as the basis, together with 'Maximal Common Induction' to argue against the possibility of the lack of a general meaning in a particle and to explore its actual meaning. In addition, in order to examine the functions of particles in day-to-day conversations, the investigation of pragmatics is of paramount importance. For example, in a conversation, whether a particle can appear at the end of a sentence depends on the mapping between the function of the particle and the speaker's attitude. Therefore, the study of particles is worth profound investigation. In modern Cantonese, particles are crucial to the fluency of a conversation and the listener's understanding of the utterance. I do hope that this paper has served its objectives and that the discussion will be of some value to other researchers in the field of Cantonese linguistics.

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Notes

Note 1. They are [lo1], [bo3], [aa3], [wo2], [tim1], [gwaa3], [me1], [je1], [maa3], [ne1], [ge2], [lai4], [sin1], [zyu6] and [faat8].

Note 2. The Romanization scheme promoted by the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong is used in this paper.

Note 3. Concerning the particle [ne1], Shao (1989) has this to say: "ne1 does not have an interrogative expression in any grammatical form..... its basic grammatical function is to remind, or go into a matter of fact seriously in an interrogative as a derivative function....."

Note 4. Shao (1989) claimed that the interrogative mood is expressed by the conversational context itself.

Note 5. According to Cheung (1972) there are seven classes of sentences ended with [aa3] that can be found syntactically; they are interrogative, optative, emphasis, guarantee, address, enumeration and pause.

List of abbreviations

| | |
|------|----------------------------|
| ADV | Adverb |
| CL | Classifier |
| CM | Complement marker |
| DEL | Delimitative aspect marker |
| DET | Determiner |
| EXP | Experiential aspect marker |
| GEN | Genitive |
| NEG | Negative |
| PERF | Perfective aspect marker |
| PL | Plural |
| PT | Particle |



The Functions of Visual Identification System in the Construction of Campus Culture

Yansheng Zhu

College of Art and Appareluages, Tianjin Polytechnic University

Tianjin 300160, China

Tel: 86-22-2452-8145 E-mail: jsycdzys@sina.com

Hu Chen

Library of Tianjin Polytechnic University

Tianjin 300160, China

Abstract

Campus is not only an education place, but also is the carrier of campus culture. Every visual object at the campus can also effect the function of teaching. A beautiful and ordered campus environment will bring you the sense of beauty. A well-designed visual identification system is an indispensable part of modernized campus.

Keywords: Campus culture, Visual identification system, Visual culture

What is campus culture? What is visual identification system of schools? If we materialize these two concepts into real objects, they refer to everything that we see when entering a campus. As education place and the carrier of culture, a beautiful campus is established with careful design. The campus is definitely not of pure natural state. The ingenuity of designers is incorporated into every detail, endeavoring to keep the original taste of the campus, a pure place on the earth, and to provide educators and the educated with a Xanadu.

1. The significant functions of campus culture

It is defined in a dictionary that “culture” is the sum of material fortune and spiritual fortune created in the process of historical development of the society and specially refers to spiritual fortune, such as literature, art, education and science. Campus culture takes value views of teachers and students as the core and includes the material styles and activity forms of these value views, such as the education aim of schools, campus environment, campus thoughts, campus study style, cultural life, traditional customs and systems and norms of schools, and the management of people, capital and objects. To put it in short, campus culture refers to the common value tendency of a school formed in the long term teaching process. Campus culture is the sole of a school and is the cohesion force and energy source of a school. If a school does not have culture, strictly speaking, such a school cannot become a real school and is only an education unit. Campus culture exerts subtle influence on the thinking and actions of each member. If a school cannot form her own active and upward campus culture, such a school cannot maintain lasting life force and core competition force. When we conducted survey on world famous universities, such as Tsinghua University, Beijing University, Harvard University and Cambridge University, we found that all the afore mentioned schools had formed their distinctive campus culture through long term teaching accumulation. It is these distinctive campus culture that enables these internationally famous universities to stand erect in the woods of international education like evergreen trees.

2. The significant functions of visual system in education

Visual culture is the spiritual and material fortune of human beings with image symbols as composing elements. Image symbols is symbolizing symbols and is direct vision symbols where configuration structure resembles real objects. To examine from the token characteristics of symbols, the “reference” and “signifiant” of image symbols reach high accordance and basically reach “clear at one glance” and “what is seen is what is obtained”. Image reading can directly activate the sensitivity experience and visual and feeling thinking of readers. Therefore, image reading capacity is the common capacity of human beings (Poster, 2000). Microsoft Company changed computer operation system from the text operation of DOS into the Windows icon operations and advanced the rapid application and popularization of PC machines in the world. Afterwards, computer culture developed from the original somewhat mysterious elite culture into globally popular culture. This is an active and powerful example that shows the advantage of visual spreading. Image language is a direct language, easy to read and to understand, which can break through the limitation of regional language and national language and becomes the commonly used visual language. Therefore, image language is the best spreading language to popularize common culture education (Languages that wither away, 2001)

The value of visual spreading is also shown in the spreading effect: visual spreading cannot only enable readers to obtain information, but can also enable readers to imagine, even enables readers to take actions; hence, the “see and will not forget” spreading effect and general social effect are achieved. There are a lot of such examples. For one example, the *Volga Boatmen* by Repin endowed the images of Volga River and boatmen with extensive and profound Russian character and history source; this image is profound and moving and affords for deep thoughts. For another, a news picture named *Big Eye* taken by a Chinese photographer that expresses a countryside girl’s thirst for being educated triggers thousands of people of China to engage in the initiation and construction of “Hope Project”. Facts prove that visual spreading is a powerful culture spreading style of comprehensive functions. The visual spreading, with its presentation force, humanity and diversification characters, brings infinite energy for the construction of campus culture.

“Education is life”. Education aims at teaching human beings to act correctly, to live true life, to cooperate with others and to survive in the society. At the present stage where making education is advocated, the educational functions of the “latent education”, campus environment and campus culture, and the functions they exert are drawing more and more emphasis and have become important composing parts of education and teaching of schools. The campus latent education can be roughly divided into 9 types, politics, thoughts, culture, refinement, norms, standards, slogans and environment, of which culture, slogan and environment belong to visual identification system.

3. The construction of campus culture with visual identification as feature

The visual identification system of schools plays an important role in the construction of campus culture. What a good sigh delivers is not only its direct connotation, but also transfers the soul of the campus culture. Good identification system is of direct and visual feature and can be directly touched by the sense organs of the people; it contains the values views and aesthetic views of the constructors and users and is long lasting; actually, it is the design of campus environment. Identification system includes the geographical location of the school, the civil community environment as well as various architectures and facilities designed according to the exterior environment. It also refers to the reasonable overall arrangement of the gardens, roads, decorations, and sights. The good campus construction with special personality can beautify the environment and decorate the campus and can also exert influence students with its special material culture, education students’ sentiments and purify feelings, which is what we called environment educates people (We, 2001). Just as what the educator Сухомлинский said, “Our education shall teach every wall to speak.”

The essentials of campus visual identification system include the name and mark of a school, the environment and main architectures of a school, and the propaganda products of a school. The main architectures and buildings of a school will usually be under objective influence, such as planning, design, architecture materials, capital budget, technology and era tide, which will not change greatly. Others are more under the influence of subjective elements. Therefore, to construct a uniform and harmonious visual identification system within a campus mainly includes:

Fundamental essential system, including various pictures and the design of font of the school signs, such as the name of the school, the school badge, the school mark, and the school motto, etc.

Environmental sign system, including the exterior decorations of architectures on campus, various direction plates, sigh plates, green space, garden parergon, special regional sign planning, and culture sculpture design, and etc.

Office articles for use series, such as various papers, letter papers, greeting cards, certificates, credentials and campus cards.

Propaganda series, such as campus introduction, website design and manufacturing, the propaganda advertisement of the school towards outside world, and flags.

Clothes series, such as various work clothes and campus clothes.

By the visual identification system established according to the afore said aspects, uniform signs can be formed on campus, which relies on the images to express a state of culture, a impact on vision and an acknowledgement of psychology. At the same time, it can fully exert the functions of campus culture, guidance, restriction, cohesion, and radiance, in the development of campus so as to be recognized by the whole teaching staff, students and the society. Once campus culture is formed, people will feel positive, active, vigorous, and promising sense. This kind of atmosphere is a comprehensive reflection of the overall spiritual outlook and education level of a school and is also a comprehensive reflection of the teaching level of a school.

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Light and Dark Symbols in *Heart of Darkness*

Caie Qu (Corresponding author)

School of Foreign Languages, Yan'an University

Shaanxi, Yan'an 716000, China

E-mail: qucaie@yahoo.com.cn

Xiaoxi Li

School of Foreign Languages, Yan'an University

Shaanxi, Yan'an 716000, China

E-mail: lixiaoxi@yahoo.com.cn

Abstract

In *Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad employs a lot of symbols to develop this short novel. This paper focuses on symbols of light and darkness and their symbolic meanings to reveal how the author overthrows people's common understanding of those symbols.

Keywords: Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, Symbol, Light, Darkness

Heart of Darkness is a novella written by Joseph Conrad. He utilizes several important literary techniques throughout the story. One predominant method of his storytelling is his use of light and dark symbolism. Generally, throughout the story, the narrator, Marlow, describes Europe and Europeans in terms of light and white, equating them with knowledge and civility, but he defines Africa and Africans in terms of darkness and blackness, equating them with mystery and savagery. However, as he proceeds deeper into the Inner Station, those light and darkness symbols are infused with special meanings which are contradictory to what they usually mean to readers. This paper, through analyzing the light symbols, the "Whited Sepulchre", and two darkness symbols, the African jungle and fog, endeavors to reveal how the author overthrows people's common understanding of those symbols.

A sepulcher implies death and confinement. The phrase "Whited Sepulchre" comes from the biblical Book of Matthew, "For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." (Matthew 23:27-28). In the passage, Matthew describes "Whited Sepulchre" as something beautiful on the outside but containing horrors inside. In "Heart of Darkness", the "Whited sepulchre" is probably Brussels where the company's headquarters are located. The company labels its mission as one of civilizing and enlightening the native peoples, while, in reality, the work along the Congo River is profit-driven. The company's methods are savage and dehumanizing, resulting in decay and death to both white men and their colonial subjects. The map that Marlow sees in the company offices shows the continent overlaid with "blotches of color, a lot of blue, a little green, smears of orange, a purple patch, to show where the jolly pioneers of progress drink the jolly lager-beer. However, I wasn't going into any of these," continues Marlow, "I was going into the yellow. Dead in the centre. And the river was there-fascinating-deadly-like a snake" (Conrad, 1999, p.38). Although the map with different colors representing various imperial presences in Africa is a neutral object, Marlow's comments about the map reveal that imperial powers were not all the same. The yellow, dead in the centre covers the site of some of the most disturbing atrocities committed in the name of empire-building. Referring to the river as a snake brings to mind Satan and evil. The Congo River, then, is seen by Marlow as the center of evil.

The strongest colonial power in the Congo was that of Belgium. Historically However, Belgians had the reputation of being far and away the most cruel and rapacious of the colonial powers. In the novella the Belgian monarch speaks rhetorically about the civilizing benefits of colonialism, an idea which has been espoused by Marlow's aunt. Marlow obtains a job with the Belgian company that trades on the Congo River through the influence of his aunt who has friends in the company's administration. With all formalities completed, Marlow stops off to say goodbye to his aunt, who expresses her hope that he will aid in the civilizing of savages during his service to the company. She talks about "weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways" (Conrad, 1999, p.40). Marlow feels quite uncomfortable because he is well aware that the company operates for profit and not for the good of humanity.

Similarly, the heads of the company justify what they are doing up the Congo River as being a mission of civilization. In fact, the Belgian presence there was marked by blood-shed inhumanity. It is obvious, as Held has stated, that imperialism has acquired a new form as formal empires have been replaced by new mechanisms of multilateral control and surveillance” (Held et al, 2002, p.5). So underneath the veneer of a noble mission associated with the color of pure light, there is the blackness of decay and corruption. As Marlow travels from the Outer Station to the Central Station and finally up the river to the Inner Station, he encounters examples of torture, cruelty, and near-slavery. He sees piles of decaying machinery and a group of black prisoners walking along in chains under the guard of another black man. He remarks, “I’ve seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but by all the stars! There were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils, that swayed and drove men - men, I tell you. But as I stood on this hillside, I foresaw that in the blinding sunshine of that land I would become acquainted with a flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil of a rapacious and pitiless folly” (Conrad, 1999, p.44). These devils symbolize the evils of imperialism in Marlow’s opinion. At the Central Station, Marlow sees a native be bitterly beaten because of his supposed crime of causing a fire. “Serve him right. Transgression-punishment-bang! Pitiless, pitiless. That’s the only way’ said the indefatigable man with the moustaches” (Conrad, 1999, p.53). Conrad emphasizes the colonist’s ill-treatment of native Africans as a part of the benevolent project of “civilization”.

The narrative of the novella builds toward the Marlow’s meeting with Kurtz, who is described as “a universal genius” (Conrad, 1999, p.55), a most important first-class agent who is reputed to be a great humanitarian, and who embodies the ideals and fine sentiments with which Europeans justify imperialism. As Watt states “Kurtz was presumably representing colonialism as enlightenment through the two values with which the symbol of a lighted torch is conventionally associated – education and hope for the future” (Watt, 1980, p.229). However, Kurtz has become ruthless and rapacious. Marlow says of him, “He begins with his argument that ‘we whites, from the point of development we had arrived at, must necessarily appear to them [savages] in the nature of supernatural beings - we approach them with the might as of a deity.’” (Conrad, 1999, p.78). But Kurtz’s supposed desire to “civilize” the natives is strikingly contradicted by his postscript, “Exterminate all the Brutes” (Conrad, 1999, p.78).

In contrast to the white symbols, the African jungle is one of the symbols for darkness. To white Europeans, the grove is a symbol for primitiveness and savagery. And most readers connect the jungle with darkness. “The Jungle is the opposite of a moral symbol—it stands for the savage in man, for his utter isolation and his moral collapse” (Gillon, 1982, p.24). However, as Marlow proceeds deeper into the heart of the African jungle, he realizes that savagery is a primitive form of civilization. “What thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity - like yours - the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar.” (Conrad, 1999, p.64).

With his first step into the grove at the Outer Station, Marlow has a feeling that he has stepped into “the gloomy circle of some Inferno”; “rushing noises filled the mournful stillness of the grove.” (Conrad, 1999, p.44). Marlow’s horror at the grove suggests that the true evils of this colonial enterprise are dehumanization and death. “Black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees, leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, I all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair” (Conrad, 1999, p.44). These natives are not enemies or madly insane as the whites in the station described, but they are sick, starving, dying, helpless and weak. In sharp contrast to these starved, deprived, wretched, shabby natives, the company’s chief accountant is luxuriously dressed. “I saw a high starched collar, white cuffs, a light alpaca jacket, snowy trousers, clear necktie, and vanished boots” (Conrad, 1999, p.45). He teaches one of the native women to take care of his linen, though she dislikes the work. In effect, he has made a slave of the woman, which indicates the hypocrisy of the imperialism and the inhumane and brutal treatment of the natives by the whites.

Furthermore, through his contact with Kurtz, Marlow realizes what evil lies in the heart of human nature. When Marlow first learns of Kurtz’s activities in the jungle, he attributes Kurtz’s moral downfall or madness to his lack of connectedness with civilization. Marlow blames the dark, mysterious force of the jungle for Kurtz’s actions.

At this point in the narrative, Marlow regards savagery as a vice having absconded with nature. “Never, never before, did this land, this river, this jungle, the very arch of this blazing sky, appear to me so hopeless and so dark, so impenetrable to human thought, so pitiless to human weakness” (Conrad, 1999, p.83). Finally, he becomes aware that the African jungle is not to be blame for the making of brutal and mad Kurtz, but “all Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz” (Conrad, 1999, p.77). Kurtz’s engagement with his fiancé has been disapproved by her people for he is not rich enough. His colleagues, envying his talents, conspire against him. The unfair treatment in the civilized world fuels the evil hidden in his heart which overwhelms him once he gets away from the constraints of civilization.

Gradually, Marlow comes to understand that Kurtz’s madness and brutality is a reflection of the evil that resides in the hearts of all men. The temptation of the grove, the dark side of human nature, has so strong a power over Kurtz that he would rather stay in primitive and savage Africa, free from virtual and legal boundaries of civilization than to return to civilization. Marlow says of Kurtz, “For the wilderness had patted him on the head, and behold, it was like a ball- an ivory ball; it had caressed him, and -lo!-he had withered; it had taken him, loved him, embraced him, got into his veins,

consumed his flesh, and sealed his soul to its own by the inconceivable ceremonies of some devilish initiation" (Conrad, 1999, p.76). To Marlow, Kurtz is his inner id. On his way to Kurtz's station, he finds himself "lumped along with Kurtz as a partisan of methods for which the time was not ripe: I was unsound!" (Conrad, 1999, p.90). To some extent, Marlow's persistence in seeking Kurtz despite all hardships indicates that the real human nature displayed by Kurtz is very tempting to him. Even Kurtz's brutal actions are not shocking to Marlow. He remarks "I seemed at one bound to have been transported into some lightless region of subtle horrors, where pure, uncomplicated savagery was a positive relief, being something that had a right to exist-Obviously in the sunshine." (Conrad, 1999, p.86). He slowly realizes that he has something in common with Kurtz.

Fog, as it is described in the novella, is another symbol of darkness. It suggests not only obscurity but also distortion: it gives one just enough information to begin with a decision but no way to judge the accuracy of that information, which often ends up being wrong. "When the sun rose there was a white fog, very warm and clammy, and more blinding than the night- a cry, a very loud cry, as of infinite desolation, soared slowly in the opaque air...to me it seemed as though the mist itself had screamed, so suddenly, and apparently from all sides at once, did this tumultuous and mournful uproar arise" (Conrad, 1999, p.67). Literarily, the fog obscures Marlow's vision and leaves him with no idea of where he is going and knowing not whether open water lies ahead. He can only make a judgment based on voices and words which, however, seems to be from "all sides". He does not think the natives will attack, for their cries have sounded more sorrowful than warlike. All his judgments turn out to be wrong.

Metaphorically, this has been Marlow's situation for the most part of the story. He has had to formulate a notion of Kurtz based only on secondhand accounts of the man's exploits and personality. This has been both enriching and dangerous for Marlow. On the one hand, having the figure of Kurtz as an object for meditation has provided a distraction from his unpleasant surroundings. "It seemed to me I had never breathed an atmosphere so vile, and I turned mentally to Kurtz for relief- positively for relief. "I think Mr. Kurtz is a remarkable man", I said with emphasis" (Conrad, 1999, p.90). Kurtz gives Marlow a sense of possibility. At the same time, Marlow's fantasizing about Kurtz has its hazards. By becoming intrigued with Kurtz, Marlow becomes dangerously alienated from and disliked by the Company's representatives. "He started... turned his back on me. My hour of favor was over." (Conrad, 1999, p.90). "I offered him the report on the "Suppression of Savage Customs" with the postscriptum torn off. He took it up eagerly, but ended by sniffing at it with an air of contempt. "This is not what we had a right to expect", he remarked... He withdrew upon some threat of legal proceedings" (Conrad, 1999, p.100).

In short, through the experience of going deep into the Congo River, Marlow not only discovers the evil and brutality of imperialism but also finds the id, the evil side of human nature. The whites goes to Africa in the name of civilizing the savage people there. However, once they themselves break away from the constraints of civilization, they give in to the evil side of human nature. Kurtz's cannibalistic brutality exists in the sunshine. But what is more horrible is the intangible evil inside those civilized pilgrims. The "Whited sepulcher", Brussels, which represents the civilized world, is beautiful and splendid only on the outside, but inside it is full of hypocrisy and evil. The dark grove, on the one hand, suggests the primitiveness and savagery of Africans. On the other, it stands for a human nature whose corruption is shown clearly once it is unbound by the standards of white society. The fog symbolizes the ambiguity in which people who journey into the African jungle are plunged. Through these symbols, Conrad develops the themes of the story: the hypocrisy of imperialism, and the evil side of human nature which is brought out when men are less influenced by societal controls.

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Developing Chinese Managers – Reasons for Enrolling on a Postgraduate Management Programme in the UK

Zhaofeng Jiang

College English Department

Guangxi Teachers Education University

175 Mingxiu Road, Nanning, China

E-mail: mariajiang@gmail.com

Carl Evans

University of Worcester Business School

Henwick Road, Worcester, WR2 6AJ England

Tel: 01905 855358 E-mail: c.evans@worc.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper examines the reasons why Chinese Managers come to the UK to study a postgraduate management qualification. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 27 managers from the Guangxi province in China, who were studying a Master of Arts award in Management Studies at the University of Worcester. The research indicates that managers were motivated by increased knowledge of Western management practices, improved business English skills and personal reasons such as travel opportunities and culture experiences. Nonetheless, without financial support from employers, it is doubtful whether these individuals would have committed to study in the UK. The paper concludes by suggesting actions that universities could make in order to maximize the learning experience of Chinese students in the UK.

Keywords: Management Development, Chinese Managers, Culture, English language skills

1. Introduction

The 1999 Blair Initiative on International Education gave impetus to universities' international recruitment programmes, and consequently resulted in a dramatic rise in overseas students at UK universities (MacLeod, 2006). With the enlargement of the EU, the number of learners from ascension states is expected to increase the number of students from outside the UK studying at British institutions

(Andalo, 2006). Nonetheless, Chinese students comprise the largest group of international learners studying at UK universities, making up nearly 17% of the 318,000 international students studying in the UK in 2004/05 (UKCOSA, 2007). Yet little is known of the reasons why Chinese students would choose to study in the UK. With fears of increased global competition for international learners (MacLeod, 2006), the reasons influencing the decision of learners to study in the UK are of paramount importance, especially as income from international business is deemed vital for the survival of universities. The underlying reasons for managers from China studying in the UK are perhaps even more important to determine, since they already have status, and authority to influence further learners from that country.

However, research to date has focused on learning and teaching differences between the two countries (Chan, 1999, Nield, 2004), rather than reasons for studying in the UK. Similarly, the development of Chinese managers has focused on the need for adoption of more creative and experiential learning approaches in China, rather than persist with traditional Chinese learning systems (Ituma et al, 2007; Liu, 2006; Martinsons and Martinsons, 1996,). Consequently, little is known on the factors influencing individuals, especially managers from China, to study in the UK.

Economic reforms in 1979 triggered economic growth in China, with official statistics indicating a current average annual growth of approximately 10% (Xinhua, 2006). Nonetheless, the change from a planned, to a more market driven economy brought with it increased performance pressures on public administration and increased the need for more informed managers (Ituma, 2007). As a result, China established civil service training systems in 1993. Concurrently, the Chinese government established offices to design specific training courses for managers of government

organizations and state owned enterprises. As a result, the number of Chinese academic institutions offering MBA programmes has now increased to over 80 (China Business Review, 2007), serving an increasing demand for management development in the country.

Nonetheless, in October 2006, a cohort of 27 managers from the Guangxi province commenced the MA in Management Studies at the University of Worcester, England. Yet, the underlying reasons as to what motivated those individuals to come to the UK to study a postgraduate management, rather than study in China are largely unknown. Consequently, the aim of this paper is to explore the reasons why Chinese managers come to the UK to study a postgraduate management qualification. Whilst the findings are specific to this cohort and institution, they will be enlightening to other UK institutions who are recruiting management students from China.

2. Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the delegation of 27 managers studying the MA in Management Studies programme at University of Worcester. This group comprised 18 male and 9 female managers, working in a range of government bodies, academic institutions or state-owned-enterprises (Table 1). The interviews were conducted by the leader of the delegation in Chinese, to overcome language barriers, and recorded to support the noting of quotations. The semi-structured interviews were based around five key questions related to: reasons for studying in the UK, support from employer, social reasons, difficulties experienced during the time of study, and advice to international students. However, the flexible nature of semi-structured interviews, allowed for further elaboration of responses during the interview, if required. The findings of the interviews were analysed thematically and drawn together into the factors that influenced the decision to study in the UK, and problems relating to the study. These were then tabulated to facilitate quantitative analysis.

3. Findings

Individuals confessed to a pressure to develop as managers and thereby improve their professional status, with all of the delegation members citing professional development as a key factor in influencing their decision to study in the UK (Table 2). There was a feeling among delegates that their managerial skills were currently underdeveloped, leaving them particularly vulnerable to “poor organizational performance, underutilization of resources and the cost impact of unresolved conflict”. One male manager said, “I really want to learn more theories and practical management here. The training programmes at the university offer a range of skills development to equip managers with the basics of the management toolkit, and to enhance, polish and fine-tune the skillsets of the more experienced, otherwise, I wouldn’t be here”.

Moreover, there was a perceived knowledge gap possessed by Chinese managers compared to Western managers. This had become more obvious to delegation members as trading between China and the West had increased. Consequently, all delegation members quoted a need to widen their international business awareness (Table 2). Moreover, several members mentioned the growth in joint venture companies or subsidiaries of large corporations being established in China, and emphasized the need for awareness of their type of operations and business practices.

Additionally, it emerged in the interviews, that several known individuals from previous delegations who had studied at Masters level in the UK, had subsequently been promoted to Board level in their respective organizations. It was this prospect of rapid promotion that had provided motivation for these individuals to enroll on the programme. One of the younger delegation members said, “I come because my employer promises to give a promotion and pay increase after I came back to China”. The lure of promotion must therefore have been a key factor, since all members will have relinquished their existing post for the 12 months course duration, which always poses the risk of someone else moving into their role during the absence, and the delegation member subsequently sidelined on their return.

However, dreams of promotion would seemingly remain just that if it was not for financial support from the employer. One female manager commented, “230,000RMB (approximately £15,000) a year for studying in the UK is a large amount of money for me; I would not come if the personnel didn’t pay for me, and it would be stupid if you do not come when you have the time and money paid for you”. Given the level of financial support (i.e. tuition fees, accommodation and living expenses) required to study in the UK, none of the delegation members would have enrolled on the programme without employer funding.

Nonetheless, 15 of the delegates saw their English language skills as one of the crucial factors in their overseas study. One manager felt this especially important, “I just want to come to the place where the English language originates and improve my English language skills, especially speaking and listening skills”. Similarly, another manager commented, “I have attended management courses in a university in China, and have a better understanding of the theories and its practice. So I came for language improvement because I find it hard for me to communicate with the staff working in foreign companies”. Other delegates commented that international business is usually conducted in English, and so to be able to read international business newspapers and magazines, and attend international conferences require English language skills. The importance of English language training was reiterated by 12 of the delegation, who admitted to

paying the University Language Unit for further lessons. Cross cultural aspects also appealed to the delegates, with several commenting that mixing with local students at Worcester University helped to enrich their experience in the UK and helped them to develop different perspectives and new ways of thinking. Several commented on their appreciation of the difference in learning styles between the UK and China, with a desire to engage in a different educational approach compelling 5 delegates to quote academic reasons as an influencing factor (Table 2).

The immersion in a different culture was seen as a positive influence to study in the UK, with one manager stating, "It is good to have 12 months in the UK, to travel and experience life". This was endorsed by 12 of the delegation, who saw travel to the UK as a positive experience (Table 2). There was a sense among the delegation of wanting to experience a "culture shock" now, so any future encounters with Western businesses would not be such a daunting experience. Furthermore, the study at Masters level in the UK by Chinese citizens, is highly valued in China, and successful individuals who return, are held in high esteem by colleagues, family and friends and affectionately known by the term "Hai Gui". This designation confers almost celebrity status on those individuals, which again supports career aspirations.

While language and cultural aspects were viewed as positive reasons to register on the programme, most difficulties experienced by delegation members during their studies in the UK centred on these issues, which ultimately created pressure on deadlines for assignments (Table 3). Despite passing English language tests in China, the delegation members felt that language difficulties hindered their learning experience, with most complaining that it took them longer than expected to read texts, write assignments and comprehend lecture notes. As one delegate commented, "I want to spend more time on learning English language, knowledge of British culture, especially business culture. That is why I choose to take overseas training". There was also a difficulty in understanding how practices could be transferred transnationally, with one manager stating, "We are not only interested in learning the theory, but also interested in how the theory can be applied in China".

4. Conclusion

The increase in global activity has encouraged international investment in China, and this in turn has resulted in a perceived need by Chinese Managers to enhance their managerial capabilities and embrace international business practices. A feeling of wanting to be a part of the international business community and to possess equivalent business acumen as Western management counterparts has provided the motivation for managers to enroll onto a postgraduate management qualification at a UK university. Hence the desire to immerse themselves in English language and culture, to learn what is perceived to be a universal business language, and to study Western management practices with a view to adopting them into their Chinese businesses. Yet the support for overseas study from government agencies in China is not be underestimated, since without financial backing, none of the students would have enrolled on the programme. In a way, this makes the delegation a unique grouping, especially different to the number of Chinese students who come to the UK to study who are self funded. Consequently, the research on the reasons why Chinese managers enroll on a postgraduate award at a UK university now needs to be expanded to incorporate those individuals not supported by employers, or sponsoring agencies.

There is clearly a demanded product, given the numbers of Chinese students enrolling on UK postgraduate programmes. However, Rammell (2006) warns UK universities that improvements in the experience of international students are required in order to remain competitive in the world's education market. In some way this is confirmed by this delegation, who seemed to be looking for one-step further from their development activity - the prescription of how to integrate English language, culture and management practices into their own organizations. The merging of these aspects into the MA award would have resulted in maximum utility for the delegation, and so points the way for universities to enhance their international offering.

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Table 1. The background of the 27 Chinese Managers from Guangxi 2006-2007

| No. | M/F | Employing Organisation |
|-----|-----|---|
| 1 | F | Chinese Youth League of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region |
| 2 | M | Publicity Department of Guangxi Province, the CCPC |
| 3 | M | Investment-promotion Bureau, Gui Lin city, Guangxi Province |
| 4 | M | General office of Guangxi Municipal Government |
| 5 | M | Investment-recruitment Bureau, Guangxi province |
| 6 | M | Commerce & Trade Bureau, Guangxi Province |
| 7 | M | Audit Bureau, Guangxi Province |
| 8 | F | Technology Bureau, Guangxi Province |
| 9 | F | Judicatory Bureau, Guangxi Province |
| 10 | F | Institute of Product Quality Inspection, Guangxi Province |
| 11 | F | Developing & Research Center of Guilin City, Guangxi Province |
| 12 | F | Commerce Bank of Guilin City, Guangxi Province |
| 13 | F | Quality & Technology Inspection Bureau, Guangxi province |
| 14 | M | Personnel Bureau, Guangxi Province |
| 15 | M | Animal-Medicine Inspection Station, Guangxi Province |
| 16 | M | Xi Jiang Shipping Co. Guangxi Province |
| 17 | M | Xi Jiang Shipping Co. Guangxi Province |
| 18 | M | Security Bureau, Qin Zhou city, Guangxi Province |
| 19 | M | Policy research office of CCPC, Guangxi Province |
| 20 | M | Guangxi School |
| 21 | M | Ying Tong Auto Sales & Service Co. Ltd, Liu Zhou city, Guangxi Province |
| 22 | M | Transport-Management Bureau, Guangxi Province |
| 23 | F | Shipping-checking Department, Naning city of Guangxi Province |
| 24 | F | Guangxi University |
| 25 | M | Import & export Company, Guangxi Province |
| 26 | M | Hospital, Guangxi Province |
| 27 | M | Environment-protection Bureau, Guilin city, Guangxi Province |

Table 2. Factors influencing Chinese Managers from Guangxi to study a postgraduate management course in the UK

| List of Factors | Number of people referring to the factor |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Professional development | 27 |
| Widen business awareness | 27 |
| Encouraged or supported by employer | 27 |
| English language development | 15 |
| Reputation of UK universities | 12 |
| Travel and cultural experience | 12 |
| Academic reasons | 5 |
| Establish international network | 3 |
| Other | 2 |

Table 3. Difficulties experienced by the Delegation during studies at the University of Worcester

| Difficulties | Number of people (out of 27 members) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Language problems | 22 | 81.5% |
| Pressure of assignments | 16 | 59.3% |
| Culture shock | 11 | 40.7% |
| Other | 4 | 14.8% |



Some Reflections about the Construction of College English Teaching System

Jie Wang

Shandong University of Technology, Zibo 255049, China

E-mail: wangjie560703@sina.com

Abstract

The paper analyses and researches the problems of constructing college English teaching system, the fostering of students' abilities in language learning and language communication, the teaching according to students differences, the scientificness, the practicability and the rationality of compiling textbooks. It also puts forward a few tentative ideas of the constructions of the college English teaching system in order to promote the scientificness and rationality of constructions of the college English teaching system.

Keywords: The construction of college English teaching system, Teaching according to students' differences, The combination of teaching, Learning and applying, Lcientificness and rationality

1. Current situation of college English teaching

Since the policy of opening and reform formulated in China, college English has undergone three phases: recovery, development and increase, and it have formed its own series of teaching system (Yan Zhijian et al. 2002). Some experts thought that the English education process should be divided into these three phrases: recovery, development and stability (Liu Runqing, 2002). Pleasant achievement as well as great improvement has been reached in college English teaching. In order to keep up with the new trend of higher education, we should deepen the teaching reform; improve the teaching quality to meet the need of qualified graduates for our country and society in the new time. So in our country the outline of English teaching is revised and "College English Teaching Requirements" is set up as the main English teaching guidelines for non-English-majors in colleges and universities. However with the width and depth of English teaching, some problems are exposed to us. For instance, the students are incapable of speech communication (Cao Xia 2003), and they are inept at practical application for listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating (Zhu Wang 2002). "English is like a kettle of water that never boils." (Jing Shenghua, 1999). College English is the most time-consuming and painstaking compulsory course. Most students have to spend over two hours a day in learning English besides English classes (Wang Qimin 2002), while the result of study is disappointing. Furthermore, that teaching only aims for examination is very severe. It is despairing that some universities link CET-4 and CET-6 with the graduation credit (Cen Jianjun, 1999). A group of essays, published in China Youth on April 7th, drew full-public attention as the author put forward concepts of "Mute English" and "Deaf English". Indeed, there is no denying that some unreasonable factors do exist in college English teaching when we ponder over the current situations as well as the scientificness, rationality and optimization of college English teaching construction. Although everybody does utmost effort; the practical teaching result is far from our expectation. The students who have passed CET-4 or CET-6 are inept at putting their knowledge of English into practical use. Therefore, we should not only reconsider the problems in college English, but also look for the fundamental reason for these phenomena. We are pondering over the construction of college English teaching system. If we find it unreasonable, the improper aspects should be optimized to be more scientific and more reasonable. We should check up which aspects in college English teaching need reforming to improve the teaching quality and to satisfy the need of our country for qualified graduates in the new time.

The paper analyses and researches the problems of constructing college English teaching system according to scientificness and reasonableness. It also presents a few ideas sharing with colleagues to discuss together. There may be some improper viewpoints. Your criticism and suggestion are most welcome in order to promote college English development and reform.

2. Analysis of constructions of the teaching system of college English

2.1 Problems to be solved in the construction of college English teaching system

What is college English? Who are the targets of college English teaching? Why do they learn English? What skills of English language will they use after their graduation from university? What differences exist between college English and major English? How could we arrange the teaching system of college English aiming at different targets so as to

reflect the scientific teaching theory, systematic teaching process, purposeful teaching performance and the obvious effect of teaching? What teaching methods and patterns should we take to improve the interest, flexibility and variety of teachers' lecture, to inspire students' enthusiasm and active thinking in learning, to cultivate students' ability to use knowledge in a flexible and accurate way? How could teachers faster and improve students' ability to independently learn and characteristically use knowledge with self-help and in multiple ways? What evaluative standards are in favor of the development of college English teaching and the improvement of teaching quality? How could we design and compile English textbooks to help students master and digest and then accurately apply what they learn? The above problems must be analyzed and resolved. Otherwise the teaching reform of college English will be impractical and superficial. Thus the construction of teaching system may lack scientificness and rationality, and the arrangement of curricula is also inaccurate.

2.2 Analysis of the nature of college English

Apart from English majors, college English is a compulsory course for full-time university students. At this point it is the same as any other university compulsory courses. The difference is that it is a course with more class hours. It covers a large span of school teaching time (4 semesters throughout the whole university studying), and is more practical.

2.3 Analysis of the targets of college English teaching

College English is delivered to full-time university students exclusive of English majors. The goal for undergraduate education is to cultivate them into advanced professional intellectuals who should not only love the cause of science and have consciousness of innovation but also are adapt at self study and have fine ability to practice. Thereupon, university students must mainly pay their attentions to their specialties, and college English is only a tool for them to expand their knowledge. Each semester, they have 4-6 subjects. With the selective courses, there are nearly a total of 30 class hours each week. In the spare time, in order to widen the scope of their specialty knowledge, students have to look up a great many books and then get data in the libraries or on the Internet for the acquirement of their specialty knowledge. In order to well prepare for the exhibition of their specialty performance in the near future, they also need a lot of time to carry out experiments about their special theory so as to further understand what they have learned, and to cultivate their accomplishment and experimental capability in their specialties, and to improve their ability to think and act, to stir up their consciousness of innovation and then well prepare for their specialty performance.

2.4 Analysis of the difference between college English and English major

The fundamental difference between college English and English major lies in that English major is directed at students who are majoring in English, thus the construction of the teaching system is centered on English. The arrangement of curricula, school teaching, student learning and their pattern of thinking are all around the core of English. Students of English majors will be engaged in English research, teaching, translation and so on. They make English as the orientation of their career development, so they spend all their energy on English learning. While students studying college English are different. They just use English as an instrument to improve themselves and they cannot devote all their time and all their energy to their English studying. The construction of college English teaching system is multi-level, complicated and interdisciplinary, and therefore the arrangement of curricula is multi-disciplinary and juxtaposed of art and science. They may learn math in the first and second classes and then English in the third and fourth classes. Because of the difference and mixture of different courses, students have to switch their thinking according to the change of classes, which results in student' discontinuous thinking of English learning. Thereupon, according to different fostered aims, we should scientifically and rationally construct the teaching system of college English.

2.5 Analysis of the purpose of college English teaching

When students who study college English graduate from university, they need, by way of practical language communication, to learn foreign advanced science and technology and different culture to comprehend foreign customs and traditions, humanistic knowledge and pattern of thinking. At the same time they should introduce our science, technology and culture abroad, and do their best to reduce the misunderstanding caused by language barrier when they communicate in the respects of academy, technology, culture, trade and so on. The purpose of college English teaching is to enable students to possess the skills of listening, speaking, reading and translating English and the proper ability to use the five skills. The school teaching of college English must give prominence to the combination of teaching, learning and applying.

2.6 Analysis of the arrangement of college English class hours

College English is designed for 240 class hours, which can be said comparatively rational and scientific. Beside the 240 class hours of English teaching in their spare time, students must do a great amount of self-study so as digest what they have learned in class. Furthermore, they have to spend much more time in exercising on listening, speaking, reading, writing, reciting and translating. And if the students want to master English proficiently, they need even more time. All

the time we mentioned above is not included in the 240 class hours. If the 240 class hours are added, it will be a great number. Therefore we should have a reasonable calculation of the class hour for college English teaching system.

2.7 Analysis of college English teachers' teaching concept

English teachers in colleges, most of them having been majored in English, have bias in college English teaching to a certain extent. In their English teaching they always require students to learn English as they did, even require students to spend as much energy and time as they can. Apparently, this kind of teaching method is not appropriate and breaches the genuine rule of college English, and at the same time diverts from the teaching principle of teaching according to students' differences.

2.8 Analysis of college English evaluation system

Presently, the only standard for college English teaching are CET-4 and CET-6, and they are not very rational. A few scholars such as Dai Manchun (1993), Niu Qiang (2001) and Li Huiying (2002) have criticized CET-4 directly or indirectly for its obvious disadvantages. They pointed out that CET-4 cannot wholly and efficiently estimate student's language ability. Some questions of CET-4, breach the test purpose, lack evaluation index, violate the language input rules in foreign language learning, and thus bring teachers and students severe anxiety about the test and impure learning motivation. Another example, Wang Chuming (2001b) argues that the existing English test system and method should be the causes of "high investment and poor reward" in English teaching. He points out that some questions in our existing exams have misled student's learning. Reform is necessary and the test should be centered on improving the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing even if we lose certain reliability and discrimination. In some colleges CET-4 or CET-6 are related to graduate certificates and diplomas, which aggravates English teaching for test. Students just seek for the pass of CET and result in poor English application.

2.9 Analysis of college English teaching materials

Teaching materials are guiding literature of a course, main instruments in English learning and main sources for language input. That the quality and design of teaching materials as well as the scientificness and rationality play a decisive role in the teaching of a course. Because of the difference of individuals and purposes in English learning, the teaching materials should possess scientificness, rationality and practicability. Meanwhile they should be designed and arranged with the principle of being easy gradually to difficult and advancing gradually in due order. They should stress culture, interest and readability. But in recent years, emphasis placed on the importance of reading comprehension has caused too rapid changes in teaching materials, particularly apparent in the increasing difficulty of the text and vocabulary. Compared with former materials, texts in the present teaching materials are too long with too many new words; sub-texts in every unit are obviously increasing and the same is the after-text exercises. There is nearly no difference in the degree of difficulty from textbook volume 1 to 4. The teaching materials are rather weak in practicability culture, interest and readability. Listening materials emphasize too much on reading and writing. The design and arrangement of textbook lacks scientificness and rationality and the combination of teaching, learning and applying are not solid integrated, which has caused difficulty in teachers' and students' application.

2.10 Analysis of college English vocabulary

In college English teaching, to learn, to master, to activate and to use English words is a puzzling problem. From a great many published papers we know that teachers have taken many measures in teaching and students have racked their brains in English learning. But the progress is not obvious. Why?

According to the requirements of the teaching outlines, students generally begin to learn English in their secondary school (in some regions students begin to learn English in primary school) with a total number of 430-540 hour classes, and they should master 800-1000 English words. In high school, with a total number of 384 class hours, students should grasp 1200 words and a considerable number of idiomatic phrases and fixed collocations. They are also required to understand the connotation of 750 more or less words, idiomatic phrases and fixed collocations in certain context. In these six or seven years of secondary and high school education, time spent on English learning is 800 to 1000 class hours and students should grasp 1800 to 2000 words. While in college, there are totally 240 English class hours and students should memorize at least 4500 words and 700 phrases (including 2000 words learned in high school).

From the above figures, we can find that there is a great distance between the class hours and the required vocabulary. Because students spend so limited time in practicing English, they cannot be much familiar with the language. Thus many students have this kind of feeling: they got a sense of achievement about their English in high school for they could use English freely; While after two years' college study, their English becomes very inflexible and the usage is not as free as before, so they are not very confident about their English study.

3. The idea on the construction of college English teaching system

3.1 The construction of college English teaching system must emphasize on the combination of teaching, learning and applying.

English teaching in China, both in secondary and high school and college, should follow the rules of Language acquisition and rules of education. We should construct a scientific and rational English teaching system with a complete and orderly content. The construction should be a coherent, optimized learning framework with reasonable distribution of vocabulary quantity and requirement of the acquisition quality in different learning phrases.

According to the features of college English teaching, including the different target learners, the various teaching requirements, the learning purposes as well as the flexibility of thinking to the teaching forms, the construction should pay more attention to the teaching according to students' differences and the combination of teaching, learning and applying. The core of the construction of college English is to teach Basic English Language. The teaching goal is to train students in flexible application of basic daily communicative language and the purpose is to cultivate students' practical ability to use English and to communicate in English.

Adopting the pragmatic teaching approach and resorting to the habits and rules in the acquisition of mother language, we can teach students to learn a foreign language directly from the expression meaning and to pay attention to the external expression of the language, so as to cultivate the ability to communicate in the language (He Ziran, 2004). College English teaching should emphasize the teaching in practical aspects like listening, speaking and writing, etc. Especially it should further strengthen efficient usage of English. And with the effective language input, college English teaching should increase the quality and quantity of the language output and quicken the converting speed from language learning to language use so as to train the students in sound language learning style and represent the teaching according to different students with the combination of teaching, learning and applying.

3.2 The construction of college English teaching materials must highlight the scientificness, rationality, practicability, culture and interest.

To learn a foreign language well, we should choose materials in native language. We should not only learn the liberal language but also the practical language as well as dialects and slang. Meanwhile, we should get familiar with their culture and their way of thinking. Consequently, we will master the expressing ways, conventions and regulations of their language. So the design and compilation of the teaching materials should be on the basis of not only being rational and scientific but also being cultural and interesting, not only being practical and available but being innovative and creative, not only being focusing on basis and development but being easy to speak and memorize. The design and compilation of texts and sub-texts should be gradable in vocabulary and difficulty. The vocabulary of every text should be scientific and rationale. Moreover, it should be easy to memorize and recite. Concerning the degree of repetition and difficulty of the vocabulary, the design and compilation should take a scientific attitude to advance step by step. The content of the college English materials is not necessarily like an encyclopedia, but it should aim to foster students' basic language knowledge and to improve their ability to use English. The revision of teaching materials should keep the merits and get rid of the demerits and preserve those selected articles throughout the years. The design and compilation of listening materials should provide an atmosphere to make students feel that they were in that scene. Thus will be of help to students studying college English in their practical language communication and the extension of their specialty study.

3.3 The teaching concept of college English teachers must be in line with the aim and task of college English teaching.

Famous educator Mr. Tao Xingzhi once pointed out in China Education Reform (1996): "Teaching, learning and acting is one thing instead of three. We should do to teach and act to learn. The ones who act to teach are teachers; the ones who act to learn are students. From the teacher's perspective, to act is to teach, while from the student's perspective, to act is to learn. A teacher who takes acting in teaching is real teaching. A student who takes acting in learning is real learning. If acting is not taken seriously, teaching is not teaching and learning is not learning either." "The way to teach depends on the way to learn, while the way to learn depends on the way to act. The three ways should be joined together." Teacher is the core of teaching as well as the ideal that students admire. He or she directly imparts knowledge to students, so his or her teaching level, virtue and performance have instant influence upon students. College English teachers should establish the concept that teaching should be advanced according to different students. And they should consider how to improve their English level and quality in modern means. A qualified teacher imparts knowledge in the most precise words, inspires students' desire to learn and cultivates their sound learning attitudes. Then he or she can improve students' activities and interests in English learning, and strengthen their ability to use the language flexibly, efficiently and accurately, and improve the quality of combination of learning, teaching and applying according to the characteristics of college English.

3.4 The vocabulary construction of college English should expand the practical and common ones on the active usage of the basic 2000 English words.

First, the vocabulary construction of college English teaching system should set up a precise, scientific and rational quantity, and it should also have an accurate orientation of the appropriate application of the English words that students have learned. How many words should be mastered after all the stages of college study? We should make a thorough

analysis of the class hour arrangement, teaching material content, teaching effect, vocabulary quantity in the English teaching outlines of secondary and high school. Then we can make a scientific judgment and establish a reasonable standard on this basis. On our part, the vocabulary construction of college English teaching system should be set up on the basis of the activation of 2000 basic English words learned in secondary and high school. Then 1500 to 2000 more common and practical words are enlarged, of which 1000 words are required to be free use. College English teaching should stress the quality of vocabulary. As to special term in English, students can self study and expand them according to their different situations in their respective specialties.

4. Conclusion

In short, with China's opening to foreign countries, more and more people will use English and the applying range of English will be widened. The whole society pays more and more attention to college English teaching and the requirements for it are higher and higher. Therefore, speeding up the teaching reform of college English is in urgent need. We should adhere to the principle of being practical and realistic, take scientific attitude, follow the rules of language acquisition and use any successful experience. With the efforts of all sides, we improve and reform the construction of college English teaching system, teaching concept, materials and examination form. We believe that college English will be improved and teachers, students and the society will be satisfied with it.

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Crisis Sense Is the Original Driving Power For Enterprise's Sustainable Development

Xiaoshui Yu

Shandong University of Finance, Jinan 250014, China

E-mail: yxiaoshui@163.com

Abstract

In ancient Chinese philosophical thought, there is a saying: "Thrive in calamity and perish in soft living", which is helpful and instructive to modern enterprise management. Strong crisis sense can be changed into strong competitive and innovative ability. If one enterprise wants to remain invincible all the time in market competition, it has to have strong crisis senses, considering the possible threat and crisis in safe places and take precaution before anything happens. Consistent innovation is the guarantee for the enterprise's sustainable development.

Keywords: Crisis sense, Sustainable development, Innovative ability

With rapid development of global economy and fast changes in science and technology, enterprises are facing more fierce market competition than ever. One small mistake might lead to great failure. Two thousands years ago, Mencius brought out a philosophical thought that "Thrive in calamity and perish in soft living". The ancients also had sayings such as "crisis sense leads to prosperity, coziness leads to perdition." and "if there is no wise people to manage the country, and there is no pressure outside, the country will come to end", and etc.. Therefore, it is a common understanding for entrepreneurs that we should keep in our minds a strong crisis sense, which is the driving power of society, and the original motivation for enterprises' development.

"Thrive in calamity and perish in soft living." If one person or an enterprise doesn't have crisis sense in a fairly cozy atmosphere, sooner or later, he or it will be destroyed by the fierce competition. We all know the story about frog. It is said that if you put a frog into a pot of boiling water, it will leap out right away to escape the danger. But, if you put a frog in a kettle that is filled with water that is cool and pleasant, and then you gradually heat the kettle until it starts boiling, the frog will not become aware of the threat until it is too late. The frog's survival instincts are geared towards detecting sudden changes. This parable is often used to illustrate how humans have to be careful to watch slowly changing trends in the environment, not just the sudden changes. It's a warning to keep us paying attention not just to obvious threats but to more slowly developing ones. It is very similar to enterprises.

Crisis sense can be changed into that of responsibility and competition. Bill Gates, the board chairman of Microsoft, required his employees to keep in mind that "the company can only survive for 18 months". Just because of that, Microsoft has been challenging themselves and created new products all the time so that other competitors could not catch up with them. This has helped Microsoft in the leading position of the industry for the past years. This developing model can be called "super-competition development", which means that in an industry, even though there are no strong competitors in the market, the company regards itself as the strongest rival and tries to exceed itself again and again, so that no other competitors can surpass it.

China's famous company, Haier, has a strong crisis sense, which is the driving power of innovation. In Mr. Zhang's opinion, an entrepreneur without crisis sense means that he is not qualified to be a leader. He said challenge is the motivation for Haier's sustainable development. As an enterprise leader, you must have strong crisis sense. Otherwise, you can not lead the company to success.

The existence of crisis sense can give enterprises great pressures for innovation, which can be changed into strong strive leading the company to consistent innovation and creation in technology, marketing and management system, and therefore helping the company reach its final aim of rapid development. This process can be called a cycle of "crisis-pressure-motivation-creation-development". Haier's strong crisis sense has become a great strive for its innovation and creation. In the intensive market competition, on one hand, Haier has been competing with various competitors, and on the other hand, it has been challenging itself. In the past 20 years, Haier has been the No.1 with largest number of patents. In 1998, Haier averagely applied for 1.8 patents every day. And now the number reached 3. Strong crisis sense has made Haier achieve a great deal in technical innovation, system creation and concept invention, which has led Haier from a small collective enterprise to world-famous company. Just as Mr. Zhang Ruimin said,

“Innovation and creation are the inexhaustible power for Haier’s development.”

Little Duck company is a good negative example. In the middle of 1980’s, the company introduced China’s first producing line of fully-automatic roller washing machine with advanced technology from Italy. As soon as the products were introduced to market, they received warmly welcome from consumers. The company became one of the three washing machine companies with largest market share. However, any advanced technology can not be leading in the market all the time. As others keep innovating their technology, Little Duck Company did little on technical innovation. They were satisfied with what they had achieved in the market, lack of crisis sense. Finally, Little Duck Company was defeated in the fierce competition and was merged by others.

Crisis sense is conflicted with the thought of being content with little achievement, which can not be in accordance with the need of market competition. In China, many once successful entrepreneurs were satisfied with what they had temporally achieved and took it for granted that their companies were on the right track of healthy development. Just because they were lack of crisis sense, their companies were prosperous just for a very short period and then were defeated in market competition, disappearing all of a sudden. Therefore, any company should keep a strong crisis sense in minds and persist in innovation and creation so that the enterprise can have a sustainable development.

Many famous entrepreneurs have realized the importance of crisis sense and put it into practice in management. Mr. Ren Zhengfei, president of Huawei Company, has very thorough explanation in his article “The Winter of Huawei”, which attracted resonance among other entrepreneurs. Facing great success and honor, Mr. Ren can “be happy for only three minutes”. He said: “I have been considering possible failure everyday for ten years, turning a blind eye to success and honor. I have not had any sense of honor or pride, but that of crisis.” From the idea of “being prepared for danger in times of safety”, Japanese deduced a management theory “with a bomb in arms”, which helped Aiwa Company become world famous with yearly sales of US\$3 billion from a nearly bankrupted enterprise. “Last-day management theory” was also deduced from crisis sense. This theory points out that any company would come to end with aging products and intensive market competition. However, if the enterprises realize it and have suitable adjustment in their system and ideas with necessary innovation, they would regain power for future development.

Lenovo is a very good example in putting crisis sense into their practical management system. Years ago, Mr. Liu Chuanzhi, board chairman of Lenovo Company, realized that it was a guarantee for the company’s sustainable development with a smooth change of leadership and he paid much attention in training future leaders for the company. Now, young leaders have taken over the responsibility of the managing the company in a very successful way. Lenovo has a steady touch in dealing with challenges from various competitors, including Dell. In order to enforce its competing power, Lenovo purchased IBM’s PC business in 2004, hoping to enlarge its global market share while holding the first position in domestic market.

One successful foreign businessman once pointed out that “the only unchangeable thing in the market is that the market is always changing.” Any company has to consider about possible crisis while it is developing rapidly and smoothly because it can not keep a rapid development all the time without any crisis, for market competition is always fierce. Neglecting this market law means that crisis is approaching. We should be prepared for possible danger in times of safety.

In the rapidly changing age, any nation, organization or individual will be washed out if it or he is satisfied with what has just been achieved without efforts for innovation and creation. Only consistent innovation and creation can win you a place for survive. A company has to have the ambition to plunder market share from others, and meanwhile to have a strong crisis sense that your market be taken by competitors. Strong crisis sense is the inexhaustible driving power for enterprises’ sustainable development.

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Thinking Creatively; Thinking Critically

Julie C. FORRESTER

English Department, Chu Hai College of Higher Education

Riviera Gardens, Tsuen Wan, New Territories, Hong Kong SAR, China

Tel: 852-2482-6880 E-mail: jforrester@chuhai.edu.hk

Abstract

The development of creative and critical thinking is seen as an encouragement to independent and student-centred learning. But what exactly do we mean when we talk about creative and critical thinking? When and why did these terms come into prominence in modern education? This paper will compare and consider some of the diverse but not universally agreed definitions of these widely used terms. The language and literature classroom will be offered as an example in order to demonstrate ways of putting these approaches into practice. Finally the paper will close with a discussion of the application of critical and creative thinking in the Hong Kong context.

Introduction: Creative and Critical Thinking

The developments of creative and critical thinking are complementary, and both encourage independent and student-centred learning (Fisher, 1990). But what exactly do we mean when we talk about creative and critical thinking? When and why did these terms come into prominence in modern education, and how can we encourage these types of thinking?

'Critical thinking' is defined in many different ways, with no universally agreed definition (Brookfield, 1987; Cassel & Congleton, 1993) and in the same way, the term 'creativity' is so widely used that there are diverse definitions (Lucas, 2001; Cropley, 2001) – which may in part be because researchers admit that we cannot yet fully explain the creative power of the brain (Sternberg, 1999). This paper will compare and consider some of the diverse but not universally agreed definitions of these widely used terms. The language and literature classroom will be offered as an example in order to demonstrate ways of putting these approaches into practice. Finally the paper will close with a discussion of the application of critical and creative thinking in the Hong Kong context.

1. Creativity and Creative Thinking

America in the 1950's was a time of great competition to be the first in space, and this competitiveness sparked a greater interest in creativity. If the early successes of the Russians could be explained in terms of their greater creative abilities, then American politicians could at least save face by investing money into creativity research, thereby demonstrating that American education was being changed to produce students who would be more 'creative' (Smith, 1959; Vernon, 1970). A second impulse towards creative thinking in the West was the move towards a 'student-centred' approach and away from a focus on 'testing' and 'rote-learning'; this development was encouraged by business interests seeing the value of a move away from expectations of life-long employment and towards 'flexible employment' and 'life-long learning', creating cultures of innovation and change (Ekval, 1996).

Creativity involves being able to generate new, varied and unique ideas. Gardner (1993) defines creativity as 'the ability to solve problems and fashion new products and to raise new questions'. But it may not be enough merely to generate ideas: creativity is often defined in terms of its importance to others. Thus Gruber & Wallace (1999) say that a creative idea 'must be new and must be given value by some external criteria'; Robinson (2001) describes creativity as 'imaginative processes with outcomes that are original and of value'; Fisher (2002) reminds us that creativity is of value in education because it adds to human knowledge, even if the value of the new ideas is not recognized at the time.

Are humans naturally creative thinkers? The question of how natural creative thinking is to us will be reconsidered in the Hong Kong context later in this paper, but for now let it be enough to point out that young children have not yet learned how the world is 'supposed' to be, and so they are less constrained by judgment, will accept far more divergent and open-ended possibilities and are perhaps more willing to think laterally than young adults; so for example young children would probably not find the idea of their parents flying round the room to be as surprising as we might, (unless we are Harry Potter fans) because they have not been taught 'how (or 'how not') to think'. Children may also use the right side of their brains more, whereas maturity encourages the cognitive links in the brain to develop in such a way as to encourage critical, left-brain thinking.

2. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is defined in the Delphi Report of Critical Thinking (American Philosophical Association, 1990) as 'purposeful self-regulatory judgement', which manifests itself in giving reasoned consideration to the evidence, methods and conceptual structures within which a decision is made about what to believe or what to do. Thus, the key characteristics of critical thinking are both inductive and deductive reasoning, problem-solving, and 'reflective skepticism' (Tiwari, Chan, Sullivan, Dixon & Tang, 1999.) A successful critical thinker should be able to analyse and evaluate major alternative points of view, to explain assumptions and reasons and to identify salient arguments (Facione & Facione, 1994).

Critical thinking supports as well as follows creative thinking because once the focus has been widened by creative thinking, then critical thinking serves to evaluate ideas, which can be accomplished by narrowing the focus again to catalogue ideas and identify the most reasonable ones, or those most likely to succeed (Ruggiero, 1999).

Encouraging students to think critically involves, among other things, helping them to distinguish opinions from facts, to evaluate evidence, and to avoid shallow and illogical thinking. This approach is very important in helping to avoid (by recognizing) manipulation, which in turn can allow intellectual independence and creativity to flourish (Browne & Keely, 1993; Mayfield, 1997; Paul, 1995).

For a learning environment to encourage the development of critical thinking, Meyers (1986) considers that four elements need to be present: a) the stimulation of students' interest, b) the creation of meaningful discussion, c) the exposure to the thoughts and views of others, and d) the fostering of a supportive and trusting atmosphere. Meyers feels that obtaining and holding the students' interest is the first, vital element, because once their interest is aroused, students can be guided into thinking critically and this will develop their confidence in their analytical and problem-solving abilities. The second stage of meaningful discussion, debate and questioning, allows students to develop the mental structures necessary for critical thinking, and the third stage of exposure to contrasting viewpoints clarifies their own attitudes as well as helping students move on to reasoning from multiple perspectives. The fourth stage, an atmosphere of trust and support, is essential before students will dare to let go of biases and try out new ways of thinking.

3. Summary of the Differences between Critical and Creative Thinking

This chart follows Fisher (2002).

| Creative Thinking | Critical Thinking |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Right-brain | Left-brain |
| An answer | The answer |
| Open-ended | Closed |
| Associative | Linear |
| Speculating | Reasoning |
| Intuition | Logic |
| Yes and | Yes but |
| Generative | Analytic |
| Divergent | Convergent |
| Lateral | Vertical |
| Possibility | Probability |
| Suspended judgement | Judgement |
| Hypothesis forming | Hypothesis testing |
| Subjective | Objective |
| Primary schooling? | Secondary Schooling? |

While it is possible to differentiate critical and creative thinking, as does Fisher (2000), it is the argument of this paper that such a distinction is not necessarily helpful in the classroom, because students need to think in both creative and critical ways and therefore to teach or encourage one style of thinking only may be counter-productive. Instead, an approach is needed which can combine critical and creative thinking.

4. An attempt to combine creative and critical thinking

The challenge in education, if we are to help students cope with a changing world, is to develop people who can think in different ways from those of the past. At all levels in education, creative thinking should be encouraged, for, as Fisher points out (1987), problem solving and personal intelligence both depend on creativity. Sternberg & Lubart (1999) have

shown that students' academic performance improves when they are assessed in ways that value and recognize their creative abilities. Critical thinking too is equally important in education in the modern world, not least to help students evaluate the mass of information now available via sources such as the Internet and the mass media. If students are to be able to rise above the mere reproduction of others' ideas to the level where they can contribute new ideas of their own, they need to be able to draw on both critical and creative thinking.

An approach which combines both creative and critical thinking can encourage students to take the time to produce many ideas and arguments, to ask penetrating questions, to recognize the validity of arguments – even if those arguments might mean challenging even previously held viewpoints. While it is common to separate analytical or critical thinking from intuitive or creative thinking, both creative and critical approaches are essential for our thinking to be effective, and in an economy where people are expected to be both skilled and adaptable in the workplace, it is a duty of education to help students prepare for this necessary flexibility of thinking.

In order to show the relationship, and inter-change between different types of thinking and learning, the next section will briefly discuss research on levels of learning and how these levels of learning appear in the classroom.

5. Levels of learning

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) divided the way people learn into three overlapping domains of affective (feelings, preferences and values), psychomotor (physical and perceptual activities and skills) and cognitive (thinking, evaluating and synthesizing information). It is the cognitive domain which emphasizes intellectual outcomes, and as such, this is the domain which is of most concern in language learning. Bloom divided the cognitive domain into six categories or levels, which he represented in a triangle, with the largest section at the base. This section he called knowledge, recall or recognition of facts. Bloom found that over 95% of test questions that students encounter require them to think only at this basic level. The second level is comprehension or understanding, which involves interpretation and classification of ideas, and the beginning of critical thinking. Then comes application, or using learned material in new situations, which involves problem-solving. The fourth level is analysis, the ability to separate material into component parts and show the relationships between those parts. Level five, according to Bloom, is synthesis (the ability to put ideas together in new ways, to innovate and think creatively). Level six, at the apex of the triangle, since in Bloom's opinion it is the most difficult, is evaluation or judgement (the ability to judge the worth of ideas against stated criteria by reviewing and asserting evidence, then making appropriate judgements: another aspect of critical thinking.)

Since Bloom's work first appeared, research has confirmed this taxonomy of learning levels as a hierarchy, with the exception of the two highest levels. It is presently unclear if synthesis and evaluation should be reversed, (that would mean that evaluation is less difficult to accomplish than synthesis) or whether synthesis and evaluation are at the same level of difficulty but use different cognitive processes. Both evaluation and synthesis depend on analysis – evaluation requires a comparison while synthesis requires re-arranging. This is similar to the distinction between critical and creative thinking – both are valuable while neither is superior. Students can 'know' about a topic or subject at different levels. While Bloom showed that most exams test (and many classroom teachers operate at) the lower levels of the taxonomy, research has shown that students remember more when they have learnt the topic at the higher levels of the taxonomy: in other words, within the human brain, more connections have been made.

Across the curriculum, it is possible to make use of the ideas behind Bloom's taxonomy by encouraging a much broader focus than on only lower level thinking skills. To demonstrate this in a classroom setting, a question focusing on knowledge (Bloom's lowest level) might be as basic as 'what is the definition of ...?' and a level two (comprehension) question, common in multiple-choice exams, might ask 'which is the best answer...?'. However, reading comprehension at this level can also be assessed by a different question, such as 'how would you compare or contrast...?' which already opens up more possibilities of demonstrating understanding of facts and ideas by organizing the data, and may well also lead to discussion between students which is leading into a level three (application) question such as 'how would you show your understanding of...?' Class discussions may make use of questions such as 'what inference can you make from...?', which illustrate Bloom's fourth level, analysis. Synthesis and evaluation (Bloom's top two levels) could be developed through questions such as 'can you predict the outcome if...?' or 'can you elaborate on the reason...?' (synthesis questions) and 'do you agree with the actions/outcomes?', or 'what choice would you have made?' (evaluation questions).

In summary, while lower level questions (knowledge comprehension and simple application levels) are useful and appropriate for reviewing or summarizing content, evaluating students' preparation and comprehension, and diagnosing their strengths and weaknesses, it is the higher level skills (analysis, synthesis and evaluation) which require complex application and which are therefore most appropriate for encouraging students to think more deeply, for encouraging discussions and stimulating students to seek information on their own. In addition, lower-level skills tend to be demonstrated by asking and answering closed questions (that is, where there are a limited number of acceptable answers). However, open questions (where there are many acceptable answers, some of which may not even be anticipated by the instructor) are more frequent when the higher-level skills are being used. Sometimes there is no one,

right answer – sometimes many reasons, solutions and possibilities can co-exist; and discussion can encourage this tolerance of ambiguity. In literature, for example, a word or phrase in a poem may not just mean one thing but could draw upon and include many possible meanings, and therefore, have more than one possible interpretation.

6. An Example of Developing Critical and Creative Thinking: the Language and Literature Classroom

One method to encourage both critical and creative processes in the language and/ or literature classroom (which can also be used in other disciplines) is to use a ‘process writing’ approach; that is, not to insist that any piece of writing is completed in one go, without involving a drafting process to modify, re-organise and develop the writing (Watkins-Goffman, 1993; Goffman & Velazquez, 1993). This allows time for creative thinking, (using techniques such as brain-storming or free writing to provide a new ‘way in’ to a topic; providing gestation time for ideas to emerge; using group-work as an active support for students doing things as individuals) and a period of critical thinking (which can be self-analysis but also, if students are involved in giving feedback on each other’s writing, allows greater opportunities for comparison, analysis and evaluation). Process writing can help the flow of ideas (through techniques such as brainstorming) and develop communication skills (as students comment on, justify, re-organise and re-write their pieces).

Developing out of the technique of process writing is a complementary approach, that of dialogues or process journaling, in which students write to the teacher, and/or to each other. The journals are typically used to record students’ feelings about a piece of writing, task or course being studied, and they are an effective tool in encouraging students to reflect on what they are learning. Because journal writing often acts as an accompanying but independent writing project throughout a course, it can encourage students to let go of the ‘product’ approach and so supports process writing. Journals can also encourage a new element in communication which can allow more personal comments or questions that students might be reluctant to voice in a class. Students have multiple learning styles and multiple writing styles (Elbow, 1973) and journaling allows a more diverse approach and perhaps a more varied repertoire which can also encourage them into different thinking styles, and so again allow both creativity and critical thinking to flourish.

Communication skills are not only developed through writing, but also by speaking and listening practice. These ‘life-skills’ have been encouraged as a possible method to curb the current high suicide rate among young people in Hong Kong (South China Morning Post, 23 March 2002), as being activities which can promote students’ self confidence and positive outlook and also perhaps (through more effective listening skills), help to detect despair in others. In addition, group work encouraging creative solutions to problems may help students to ‘open-up’ to each other, while a critical thinking approach can offer alternative viewpoints and attitudes.

Literature can also offer a different viewpoint on life, because it can raise awareness of, and encourage discussion of (and hopefully, research into) different lifestyles, different ways of thinking and acting, different attitudes and beliefs. In this way, literature can be used to encourage critical thinking, and can even form the basis of a challenge to prejudices or previously held viewpoints, because it allows the reader to dip into other people’s lives in different cultures and periods of history, showing that even if the society we live in imposes certain expectations about behavior, other roles may be possible. In this way, reading can offer a ‘time-out’ to a different world – perhaps not such a bad thing when so many of Hong Kong’s young people have so many stresses to cope with.

Using literature in the classroom does not necessarily mean reading an entire novel. Poetry and short stories are an extremely valuable for the development of language, and to encourage critical and creative thinking. Different stories and poems can present different challenges, so that while some may be linguistically demanding and can therefore be used to extend students’ vocabulary, (which could then be re-cycled in a creative writing class, for example) others may be conceptually more demanding, perhaps requiring a leap of the imagination or an appreciation of how many ideas or images can be compressed into a small space. With this type of story or poem, re-reading is likely to bring deeper understanding and new insights, and the possibilities of fruitful discussion as students evaluate and analyse alternative points of view. With all stories, poems and all pieces of writing, the activity that precedes the reading is crucial to encourage interest, as well to encourage thinking ‘around’ the topic in creative and critical ways.

Any and all reading helps to develop vocabulary, brings a greater awareness of grammar and possible ways of expressing ideas, and hones the sub-skills of reading (such as prediction, guessing from context, skimming and scanning for information) which are essential in our daily lives, in and out of the classroom. Reading longer works (whether fictional or factual) can also encourage greater reading speed (an extremely useful skill in the age of mass information) as long as students are encouraged to realize that they can gain a great deal from any text even if they cannot understand every single word. Without some form of language it is almost impossible to express complex ideas, but language feeds those ideas so that our communication skills can go on developing along with our critical and creative faculties.

7. The Hong Kong context

In Hong Kong, non-core academic subjects are being merged into liberal studies, which emphasises interdisciplinary critical thinking in preparation for higher education. The current education reforms also emphasise classroom-based

creativity, which the Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council (CDC) in its comprehensive view of creativity describes as “the ability to generate original ideas and solve problems appropriate to the contexts” (CDC, 2001). Teachers’ curriculum guides (CDC, 2002a) for the five key-learning areas of Chinese and English Language, Arts, Mathematics and Science, provide detailed and extensive suggestions of how students’ ‘learning capacity’ is strengthened where teachers’ give class-time to developing students’ specific creative abilities.

However such detailed and explicit guidance also carries several implicit assumptions: first that Hong Kong classroom teachers require such guidance; second, that Hong Kong students are not innately ‘creative’ and require to be ‘taught’ to be so, and third, that such education reforms are attained ‘top-down’ through monitoring the implementation of a detailed and controlled centralized curriculum. Forrester’s 2006 research into this issue shows that in fact teachers do display creativity-enhancing techniques. His findings show that “students’ verbal creativity correlated significantly and positively with teachers’ teaching technique of motivation in mastery of knowledge. Moderately positive correlations were found between teachers’ creative personality and their creativity teaching techniques, in particular promoting flexibility in thinking, using students’ ideas, suspended judgment, promoting motivation in mastery of knowledge, promoting independent learning, and providing opportunities for trial. Results further showed that two factors among the creativity fostering teaching techniques were significant predictors of students’ verbal creativity: these factors included promoting motivation in mastery of knowledge, and promoting student self-evaluation.”

Forrester’s findings of a moderately strong association between students’ verbal creativity scores and teachers’ creativity fostering teaching techniques indicates that - as predicted in the system theory of Csikszentmihalyi (1996) - teachers are significant gatekeepers in the development of their students’ creative potential. Forrester also points out that the same findings also support Amabile’s (1996) componential theory of creativity, for these teachers appear able to motivate students to work towards mastery of knowledge, encourage students to devote more time and effort to study and thus increase their intrinsic motivation.

Conclusion

Education should focus not only on core skills and knowledge but also on teaching and practicing creative and critical thinking skills, because these are the skills that will encourage life-long learning and personal development. As Fisher (2002) comments, creative and critical thinking are both important because we need instruction as well as reason in our thinking: critical thinking is necessary to judge those new ideas, processes and products which have been generated by creative thinking.

If the educational community is to encourage both creative and critical thinking, then students must be given the motivation to think, the time to develop ideas, and the collaboration and support of a learning community that provides information, feedback and encouragement. Creative teachers will encourage creative learners, but those teachers also need to employ critical thinking to assess their own teaching methods and their students’ learning styles. Education needs teachers and students who can connect ideas, see similarities and differences, and above all, be flexible and curious in their thinking. Creative and critical thinking skills involve and affect both teachers and learners: they are brought together into sharing the responsibility for effective learning.

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Achievement of Total Quality Is Impossibility

Xiaohang Wu & Yafei Wang

School of Economics and Management, Chongqing Normal University

Chongqing 400047, China

Abstract

In the manufacturing industry, product quality has become a key factor in determining a firm's success or failure in the global marketplace. Advanced, highly reliable manufacturing methods have made it possible to achieve very high standards of product quality. As a result, more and more firms are making product quality a keystone of their competitive strategy. However, the improvement of production quality is a long-term commitment to continuous improvement in every aspect of the production process. To achieve the total quality, it needs the total quality control and the total quality management. Whether the organisation can realize the total quality, it depends on the success of these two aspects.

Keywords: Quality, Total quality control, The total quality management, Impossibility

Introduction

Quality is the "totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs." (Naylor, 1999) and the total quality as holistic concept involving everything an organization does in the pursuit of quality which include the customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, the importance of internal customers and an all-embracing approach demanding the involvement of all. During this time, however, the meaning of quality has changed. The fact that the quality revolution commenced in manufacturing meant that the natural evolution of total quality began with a focus on producing quality products. This involved considering what the problems with the product were and then assessing how related processes could be improved (Fred Palumb, 1994). To achieve the total quality, we need use the total quality control and the total quality management. Whether we can realize the total quality, it depends on the success of these two aspects. This paper will focus on these two points to critically analyse the achievement of total quality is possible or impossible.

1. Total quality control

To achieve the total quality, the organisation should do the total quality control firstly. In most of the organisation, the most popular current forms of total quality control is by use of the Zero-defects programmes.

Crosby stressed the role of worker attitude as being critical to a quality effort. As such, he suggested workers be given quality targets of zero-defects. He defined quality as conformity to certain specifications set forth by management and not some vague concept of "goodness". These specifications are not arbitrary either; they must be set according to customer needs and wants. According to Crosby's theory, when the organisation achieves the target of zero-defects, the total quality is achieved at the same time (Sinclair, 2001).

Juran proposed a curve of the cost of quality, he though when the quality improves to a certain degree, even if increased and improved a large amount of resources, the results are not obvious (Francois, 2003). The so called Zero-defects was an impractical ideal.

However, some people who disagree with Juran's idea hold the opinion that the mistakes are caused by two factors: lack of knowledge and lack of attention. Knowledge can be measured and deficiencies corrected through tried and tested means. Lack of attention must be corrected by the person himself or herself through an acute reappraisal of his or her moral values. This is an attitude problem. The person who commits himself or herself to watch each detail and carefully avoid error takes the giant step toward setting a goal of zero-defects in all things, and the total quality will be achieved at the same time.

Another point is that because of the scientific and technological progress, many instruments can replace our hands to work. The chance of the substandard product presents is totally reduced. Taguchi, an economist of Japan proposed that if we increase more resources and pay more attention on preventing and assaying the products, and he implies that design of production line has a vital quality function, the zero-defects can be reached (Francois, 2003).

The new design of production line, though it makes the factories produce amount of production with high speed and the individual is only responsible for a small part of the production process. The quality control is mainly through the

professional checks one by one. But with the vast number of the products and the increasing of diversification of the types, the professionals are unable to check the products one by one. They only rely on a few as the samples to check, therefore, there must be some substandard products flow into the market, and the total quality can not be achieved.

In fact, the zero-defects is not something that originates on the assembly line. To create a manufacturing process that has zero-defects management must set the tone and atmosphere for employees to follow. If management does not create a system by which zero-defects are clearly the objective then employees are not to blame when things go astray and defects occur. The benefit for companies of such a system is a dramatic decrease in wasted resources and time spent producing goods that consumers do not want and the total quality control will be failed and the total quality will be never achieved.

2. The total quality management

Total quality management is an overall business quality improvement system. It is as brand or system to guarantee the aspiration of total quality. It encourages participation amongst shop floor workers and managers. There is no single theoretical formalization of total quality, but Deming, Juran and Ishikawa provide the core assumptions, as a "...discipline and philosophy of management which institutionalises planned and continuous... improvement ... and assumes that quality is the outcome of all activities that take place within an organization; that all functions and all employees have to participate in the improvement process; that organizations need both quality systems and a quality culture." (John Peter, 1994) Generally speaking, the success of total quality not only is reliant on an understanding of the strategic objectives of organizations but also is dependent on the interworkings of these areas.

Deming believed that poor worker attitudes are symptoms of supervisor inability to lead. He stressed again and again that it is the system, which produces errors, not people. As such, it isn't the work force that needs attention; it's the controllers of the system, management. That means the organizations need the total quality management to realize their objective of total quality. However, how to do the total quality management is a big problem to many firms. Many managers thought they can use the theories of total quality management such as the quality circles, the quality control, giving some training to the employees and asking them to fully participate to achieve the total quality. Through the efforts of more than ten years, except the example of Xerox reached obvious success, the achievement of others are not remarkable (Francois, 2003). The reason just as Peter S. Pande puts some notes in his book "The Six Sigma Way" is that the concepts of total quality management lacks experienced administration and supervision authorities to pursue from top to bottom. Most of the managers can not get clear idea of their goals to pursue, and they do not know how to achieve the goals. So most of the time, the organisations are waste the resources and time. Due to this situation, the leadership for the total quality management has problems in many companies. Though the total quality is a difficult, comprehensive, and long-term process, leaders will need to maintain their commitment, keep the process visible, provide necessary support, and hold people accountable for results. Use input from stakeholder (clients, referring agencies, funding sources, etc.) as possible; and, of course, maximize employee involvement in design of the system. The top management and the middle management should focus on the vital few goals, aligning of activities, maintaining constancy of purpose, and creating an environment where employees are not fearful of exposing weaknesses. This may be the only way for leading the commitment and the organization's total effort to ensure that the total quality be achieved.

Second, the cost of quality should be measured in terms both of conformance and of non-conformance when doing the total quality management.

To use Six-Sigma is one of the success ways, for it defines a clear road map to achieve total quality. Motorola is known worldwide as a quality leader. To accomplish its quality and total customer satisfaction goals, Motorola concentrates on several key operational initiatives. At the top of the list is "Six Sigma Quality," a statistical measure of variation from a desired result. In concrete terms, Six Sigma translates into a target of no more than 3.4 defects per million products, customer services included. At the manufacturing end, this requires "robust designs" that accommodate reasonable variation in component parts while providing consistently uniform final products. Motorola employees record the defects found in every function of the business, and statistical technologies are made a part of each and every employee's job. To achieve the company's objectives, Motorola spent in excess of \$ 170 million on worker education between 1983 and 1987 (Tomas Pyzdek, 1999).

However, how many companies can have as much financial support as Motorola? To pursue the quality is a kind of investment and needs amount of fees. "Quality is free", but "the total costs of prevention are less than the costs of failure." (Naylor, 1999) In fact, the quality programmes would eventually pay for themselves. Organisations are managed and face the challenge of the violent competitions of the liberalization, globalization in 21st century. The customer apt to change and the brand operator must cost more on their quality investment. They spend such limited budget and only to pursue the uncertain results and want to achieve the endless goals. We can not imagine what will happen in the firm once it has cut its costs of failure. It will become more difficult to achieve and may be difficult to justify in financial terms (Naylor, 1999). Unless the substantial benefits can be achieved very quickly, the firm with a shortage of financial resources may prefer to invest in other areas of business development, though they know how the

importance of improving the quality of their products.

Furthermore, the quality management becomes a kind of professional technique, and needs specialized professionals to do it. The organisations should invest a large amount of training funds to do the relevant technical training to the staff and to achieve their planning. This is very hard for the small organisations for they could not bear so much money on training and the total quality of theirs may never be reached.

Third, the long-term continuous improvement is the ultimate aim of a quality initiative. Total quality management is mainly concerned with continuous improvement in all work, from high level strategic planning and decision-making, to detailed execution of work elements on the shop floor. It has a strong belief that mistakes can be avoided and defects can be prevented. It leads to continuously improving results, in all aspects of work, as a result of continuously improving capabilities, people, processes, technology and machine capabilities (Rodney Macdam, 1998).

Continuous improvement must deal not only with improving results, but more importantly with improving capabilities to produce better results in the future. "As its core, total quality management is a simple idea. The research for competitive advantage through quality is best sustained by applying basic ideas right across the organisation. Yet, in spite of strong arguments for quality programmes, many companies have not carried out change successfully." (Naylor, 1999)

The continuous improvement is an on-going process, and it is changing. During the process of change, it may be desirous to remove non-value-added activities, shorten cycle times and improve other organizational performance measures. However, this often results in large-scale disruption to the change project and often its ultimate failure. That is because most of the employees who, "because of pre-existing problems, find it impossible to join in will not support the change. The TQM development may, therefore, make current social tensions worse." (Naylor, 1999) Thus, while total quality philosophy is built on improving business performance measures and changing roles and systems to suit, it has not integrated the personal ambitions and desires of the individual who perform these roles and are affected by these systems.

Changing culture, attitudes and behaviours is another related issue. It is assumed that mechanistic changes brought about by a change project will ultimately result in the fundamental change in these factors. However, as Peter and Waterman point out, employees only respond quickly to change when the new culture proclaimed is one to which they can relate to, share and ultimately shape. The total quality assumptions concerning cultural change are at best shallow and ignore the enormous complexity of organization culture and its historical roots. These themes are echoed by Towers (1993), who points out that "cultural change is not easy, not only does it involve structural re-arrangements but demands personal commitment".

Kotler(1995) states that a key reason for failure in change initiatives is "not anchoring changes in the corporation's culture", he states that change only sticks when it becomes "the way we do things around here ...when it seeps into the bloodstream of the corporate body". Thus, unless desired behaviours are rooted in social norms and shared values, they are subject to degradation as soon as the pressure for change is removed. A purely mechanistic approach cannot adequately address this issue. Collins (1994) talks of the lack of balance between control and quality of working life in total quality and points out that total quality management has made simplistic assumptions regarding the cultural side of total quality, so it is hard to realize the total quality.

Conclusion

Total quality is very important to the organisation. It is the insurance of the quality of their products that is for the quality is the life of every organisation. Though every organisation is eager to reach the total quality, it is very difficult and sometimes it seems impossible. To achieve the total quality, should be supported by the total quality control system and the total quality management. If neither of them can be worked well or has some problem, the achievement of total quality will not be realized. According to the above discussion, in the aspect of total quality control, no matter how advanced the system or the production line is, it still exists the inevitable personal mistake. This makes the total quality is hard to achieve. In the field of total quality management, the investment of training, the changing culture, the costs of quality, the long-term continuous improvement and so on are the limitation of the total quality management. People can not solve these kinds of problems and these are the reasons about why the achievement of total quality is regarded as an impossibility.

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Reader Education in Libraries of Universities

Chunlan Qiu

Jiangxi University of Science and Technology

Ganzhou, Jiangxi 341000, China

E-mail: jxust@126.com

Yan Liu

Zhejiang Business Technology Institute

Ningbo, Zhejiang 315012, China

E-mail: jxust@163.com

Abstract

This paper, starting from the signification, the importance and the meaning of reader education, discusses how libraries of schools of higher education can, under the new situation, carry out researches on readers in depth, understand the demands of readers, do a good job in reader education in libraries, and help students to fully make use of various literature materials of libraries.

Keywords: Libraries of schools of higher education, Reader work, Reader education

Library of school of higher education, as the information resource and the technology compositive place and with their rich literature information resources stored in libraries and elegance and comfortable learning environment, becomes an indispensable learning place for students. Teachers and students have increasingly acknowledged the importance of information gaining, information reading and assessing and capacity education.

As is well known, the level of library readers, especially the level of capacity in searching and making use of literature information resources of libraries, influences the using rate of the literature information stored in the libraries to great extent. That is to say, if readers are all good at making use of literature information of libraries, the circulation degree of literature resources stored in libraries will be higher and more sufficient. With the enlargement of the teaching scale of schools of higher education and the increase of the popularization degree of university education, the function of the library education of schools of higher education becomes increasingly important. Library, as one of the three backbones in schools of higher education, shall of course be the "second class". Libraries will exert better functions by way of carrying out reader education.

1. The signification of reader education

Mews, British library scholar, defined reader education in her book, *Reader Education*, as "a kind of education that helps readers to use libraries the best". Li Xikong pointed out in *Generality of Library Reader Study* that "reader education is an education that libraries and other information organs carry out to cultivate and raise the capacities of readers to make use of literature information." To put it in detail, reader education refers to by activities, such as planning with pertinence, propaganda promotion of various modes, and special trainings, and by introducing the gaining methods or search strategies of information resources of various types and carriers, and by library service, to cultivate and improve information consciousness and library using capacity of readers. In addition, to actively cultivate readers' feelings towards libraries is also a task of reader education. Anyway, reader education is one of the important items in reader work of libraries.

2. The importance of reader education

The educational function of libraries becomes increasingly important in higher education. One of the social functions of libraries is educational function; therefore, whether from objective or subjective aspect, library education is responsible for raising the information makings of readers. Once the information makings of readers are improved, readers will be able to make use of libraries better, which will advance libraries to take initiative to explore and develop more actively and comprehensively.

In the process of using libraries, readers will consciously or unconsciously place their hopes on libraries, hoping that libraries can help them to raise information makings. Through common efforts of libraries and readers, the information

makings of readers will be improved; therefore, the capacity of readers to obtain and use information and the innovation capacity of readers will also be improved, which shows that the development of libraries and the improvement of the information makings of readers supplement each other.

3. The meanings of reader education

3.1 To help to enhance the library consciousness of readers and increase the using rate of information stored in the libraries.

The meanings of reader education lie in that it carries out library knowledge education to readers, popularizes literature search methods, helps readers fully understand libraries, stimulates the potential reading demands of readers and the enthusiasm of readers in using libraries, which can put the information stored being left unused into use and can decrease the waste of literature resources.

3.2 To help to improve the information makings and self-study capacity of readers and help readers to build up successful personality

In information society, with the quickening of the speed of the change of knowledge and information, the capacity of readers to personally make use of and process information becomes an important element in determining the development of readers. Personal development capacity of readers will to great extent depend on the capacity of readers in continuously making use of new information to carry out self-study and self-education rather than the original knowledge level of the readers. Obviously, a person who is emerged in an information ocean but knows nothing to do will not succeed in this information error. Descartes, a famous scientist once said, "The most useful knowledge is knowledge about methods". The authors of this paper have been engaged in book lending work for years. In the work, the authors found that many readers did not have express book borrowing aim, were not clear about reading selection standard and did not know how to find literatures they actually needed. Libraries can carry out guidance education to them so as to improve their capacity in reaching, recognizing, evaluating and selecting various literature information, by which way readers can be able to select the books that are most suitable, to form good reading habits, to improve self-study capacity, to cultivate culture, and to build up successful personality.

3.3 To provide readers with the key to the knowledge treasures so as to save the precious time of readers.

Now the world is at information explosion era and the literature information is immense. To teach readers to use various search tools and to master ways and techniques of searching literature can equip readers with the awareness of information and information capacity. Besides, readers are familiar with their own specialties, which will help readers to recognize the use value of information resources. The key for readers to open knowledge treasures will save a lot of time for readers when searching reference materials and can utmost realize the use values of information.

3.4 To enable information to exert social and economical benefit.

The purpose of obtaining information is to generate new information growth points and realize the use value of information. Libraries teach readers the ways and steps to use various literature information so as to help readers to make use of the effective information collected and selected and theoretical knowledge to solve problems in work, study, life and science and technology, which can realize the ultimate aim of knowledge information in serving the society and economy.

4. The exertion of the educational functions of libraries

In the 21st century, new educational concept emphasizes more on making education of people. The cultivation of college students gradually changes from single type education to integrative type education. The reading inclination of college readers has undergone obvious changes and development. In the past, after school reading contents of college readers were basically limited to public courses, specialty fundamental courses and specialty courses. Due to the reform of teaching and education, schools of higher education continuously renew teaching contents, compress or abrogate old and repetitive specialty contents, adjust course set-up, re-organize course system, mutually penetrate human science and natural science, reduce compulsory courses, and increase selective courses so as to enlarge students' vision and cultivate integrative making of students. Hence, college readers not only need to read books on their specialty and teaching reference literatures, but also need to reader cross discipline and cross specialty literatures. Students of human science borrow books on mathematics, physics, chemistry, industrial technology (mainly computer science); students of natural science borrow books on languages, literature, economics, and philosophy, religion, politics and history, which is a new trend in diligent college students. College students undergo several study stage from the time they enter school to their graduation, therefore, we need to provide them with pertinent literature information materials according to their study tasks and aims in different study stages so as to exert the educational functions of libraries.

4.1 Freshman stage

When freshmen first enter their universities, they feel confused about how to choose books from various books in libraries. They lack knowledge about the feature, status and functions of university libraries and know little about

catalog searching, contents stored in the library and service set-up of libraries, which results in that freshmen do not know how to make use of libraries in a rather long time since their entrance to universities. Besides, freshmen are shy when first contacting librarians and are not willing to inquire librarians about the use methods of libraries. Therefore, blind and random borrowing and reading appear in freshmen. They read whatever they get to borrow or they read what others read, which not only wastes their own time but also causes unnecessary troubles for library workers. With regards to those problems, libraries shall take initiative to carry out entrance education to readers about "how to make use of libraries", where libraries can take the chance to introduce to freshmen the nature, tasks and development history of libraries, the set-up and functions of service organs in libraries, and the technical methods, such as classification system and research methods. In addition, libraries shall introduce to readers the problems that should be noted when using reading rooms, shall introduce the use methods of tool books by ways of personal answering and word explanation, shall provide students with teaching reference books according to the teaching, and can introduce to readers or directly provide readers with the literature materials by way of catalog, brief introduction and book comments. Libraries can through active and vivid reading activities carry out various reading leading work to cultivate the study interests of freshmen and help freshmen to set up correct life view. After school, libraries can organize students to pay visit to libraries and introduce library to them according to their class contents. By this direct impression, readers can get to know the substantiality of library and the research methods for literature information, which can help to reduce the blindness in reading and borrowing, increase the correctness, and cultivate the most basic information obtaining capacity and information accepting awareness. By this way, readers will learn how to find books for themselves and how to independently and reasonably make use of library; will continuously enlarge and enrich their knowledge. Hence, the self-study capacity and thinking capacity of students are built up.

In addition, personnel of library circulation service department can inform students of the problems that the personnel are unusually confronted with in daily work and that students need to pay attention to so as to arouse the attention of students; therefore, students can assist and help advance the smooth development of the work of library.

Library shall also need to open Literature Search and Use course for college students of human science and natural science, which will teach students methods on searching literature and guide students in searching literatures. Libraries of schools of higher education and public libraries all need to open literature search course in scheduled period to pertinently introduce how to search knowledge, aiming at help readers to master relevant search tools, improve the capacity of knowledge search, analysis, integration and evaluation of reader, and lay a solid foundation for knowledge renewal and technology innovation. Libraries can also edit the teaching plan for literature search course that suitable for their own schools and incorporate the plan into the teaching plan of their schools, which will greatly improve the learning making of college students.

4.2 Specialty course study stage

After students enter into the specialty course study stage, students will from various study attitudes because of different acknowledgement of their specialty courses; therefore, libraries shall take various ways to carry out reading guidance. For example, some students have great interests toward their specialty, while facing the enormous book ocean, they are eager to find a shortcut. For this kind of situation, library can adopt the combination of common reading guidance and key reading guidance, which means that library can commonly recommend specialty reference books and edit relevant recommendation catalog and at the same time, focus on the difficulties that students are encountered with in study and help students to resolve the difficulties with germane book information materials. For another example, some students may have strong interests in knowledge beyond their specialties and want to spend more time on learning the knowledge they are interested in. The reading scale of this kind of students is extensive. Knowledge on ancient history, foreign cultures, chronometer and geography are all what they want to get to absorb. With regards to this kind of situation, libraries should direct them to master their specialty courses and meanwhile, direct them to learn other knowledge selectively and with emphasis so as to avoid sciolistic phenomenon. Some students are of the view that after entering colleges, they can relax. Therefore, they are just in pursuit of entertainment and choose to reader romance and martial art books. Some even read unhealthy, colorful and reactionism books. To deal with these problems, libraries shall be good at making use of the literature resources stored and combine social hot issues, focus issues, and the situation home and abroad to hold various exhibition activities to carry out political and idealism education on students. Through fact educations, libraries can help students to improve their mortal actions, value concepts and specialty knowledge, to cultivate their noble sentiment and courtlike reading interests, and improve their acknowledgement of specialty study.

4.3 Graduation practice stage

The main task of students in this stage is to finish graduation practice and graduation design (graduation thesis paper). Students at this stage have mastered fundamental discipline knowledge and certain specialty knowledge. This stage is a preparation stage for them to enter into society and a formation stage of their integrative capacity and innovation capacity. After entering this stage, the study consciousness of students is rather strong. Class study cannot meet their

demands. Besides, they are near graduation. Some students need to prepare materials for their graduation design and thesis paper writing. Some students need to search materials for their further education after graduation. Therefore, libraries shall take active and effective measures to help students to finish this key study stage. The reference books needed in graduation practices and thesis paper writing are comparatively centralized. Libraries shall prepare in advance the books students need and shall recommend to students the relevant reference books of the same type but of different names when the supply and demand contradicts appear. Periodical reading rooms can make use of the short publishing period and huge information amount of periodicals as well as the centralized discipline knowledge to edit article indexes for graduates. Libraries, who are able to, can take advantage of network to provide graduates with internet information resources to cultivate graduates' capacity in using computers to search electric literatures and to gain internet information. By this way, graduates' capacity in information gaining and analysis are improved, which can help graduates to enter into society and serve the society.

In addition, with regard to various problems and difficulties that readers meet in using libraries and various information search tools, libraries can provide timely personal consultation education, such as to set up consultation posts inside libraries to carry out face to face consultation or telephone consultation. In a word, reader making education can be carried out in various and flexible ways.

5. Conclusion

No matter it is in the past or in the future, reader education has always been an eternal subject in reader work of libraries, the basic function of library work, the basic demand of reader work, and the important constitute of reader service work. With the continuous development of library career, the function of reader education becomes more and more important. The reader education of libraries advances the exploration and the use of literature resources, cultivates the capacities of readers, and pushes the continuous development and improvement of libraries in meeting the demands of readers, which in turn pushes the development of the entire library career.

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The Most Effective Approaches to Increasing Parental Involvement

Erin K. Butler

Jacksonville State University

Carol Uline

Jacksonville State University

Charles E. Notar (Corresponding author)

College of Education and Professional Studies, Jacksonville State University

700 Pelham Road North

Romona Wood A3

Jacksonville, Alabama 36265, USA

Tel: 1-256-782-5832 E-mail: cnotar@jsu.edu

Abstract

The paper is by a first year master's student in the introductory educational research class. Her problem was "What is the most effective approach to increasing parental involvement with positive student achievement outcomes in grades K-8 She found educators must use a variety of methods to obtain and sustain parental involvement. Schools must be proactive by explicitly inviting parents to be their partners Interactive homework (student notebooks, checklists, quick notes, and reminders) has powerful potential for promoting family-school partnerships which increase constructive learning outcomes. Using technology can help make home-school links more effective. When parents and the educational system join together, positive benefits abound. Attendance, test scores, and high-school graduation rates improve. Teachers have higher expectations for parents and students and they develop more positive feelings about teaching. Extensive parental involvement promotes healthy neighborhoods and good schools.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Positive Student Outcomes, Family-School Partnership, Parent-Teacher Relationships, Parent-Teacher Cooperation

Introduction

Across the nation, school systems recognize the need to engage families and communities as active partners in the shared responsibility for educating young people. With much national concern and debate over the No Child Left Behind Act, accountability drives administrators and teachers to investigate more effective approaches to collaborate with parents for increasing student learning.

Many researchers have investigated the impact that parental support in school activities has on students. Parental involvement positively affects student achievement outcomes. Children who enjoy support of their parents exhibit more positive attitudes and higher academic achievement than children who do not enjoy consistent parental interest and help with their school activities. Children who receive the same education as their peers, but who do not get support at home, do not perform as well in class or on standardized tests as children who enjoy the benefits of "involved" parents. An old adage states: "It takes a village to raise a child." Children benefit significantly when adults take a strong interest in their education; plus, the entire community benefits proportionately.

Parental involvement in early education (K-3) is easier to solicit than in the later elementary years when parental interest tends to diminish. The change to poorer grades and negative attitudes toward school as a child gets older, may in part, be due to the waning interest of parents. Perhaps if parents were provided with knowledge of the importance of continued parental involvement and were reinforced with some strategies for maintaining parental involvement throughout their children's formal education, both students and parents would benefit from the collaborative experience.

Related Literature

One way for parents to maintain involvement with their children's school activities is to supervise and help with homework. Parents who monitor and assist with homework, limit TV viewing, and read to young children set the stage for higher long-term student achievement. Hoover-Dempsey, Battiato, Walker, Reed, DeJong, and Jones (2001)

found that parents who regularly help their children with their homework model higher expectations for their children's academic achievement. In addition to such modeling, children profit from parental reinforcement and parental feedback about their academic performance. The authors stress the importance for principals and teachers to explicitly and specifically *invite* parents to show interest and to offer guidance in their children's homework activity.

Schools may take specific steps to enhance parental involvement motivations. For example, they may communicate directly and specifically why and how it is important to children's learning. They may offer other specific suggestions that they do indeed have a role to play in their children's success and that their activities make a difference (Hoover-Dempsey, Battiato, Walker, Reed, DeJong, and Jones, 2001).

The authors of the study used data from a variety of action-research projects. The literature base includes studies incorporating explicit attention to parents' involvement with homework as well as related sources helpful in understanding parents' involvement decisions, the content of their involvement and its outcomes. The research indicates that parents involve themselves in their children's homework for a number of reasons. These parents believe that they *should be involved*; they believe that their involvement will make a *positive difference*; and they perceive *school invitations* for involvement. Parents who provide positive feedback and encouragement influence their children's self perceptions and build their self confidence. Parents provide reinforcement and they engage in instructional interactions related not only to the homework but also to the entire learning process.

Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, Reed, and Jones, (2000) examined the links between children's invitations for help with homework and parents' levels of involvement in children's homework activities. This study is grounded in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model of the parent involvement process (Appendix A). The authors concluded that there were four child attributes in inviting parents to become involved with their child's homework. The four attributes include (1) the child's general level of performance, (2) the child's experience of difficulty with daily homework, (3) the child's developing desire for independence, and (4) the child's valuing of the parents' involvement activities.

Twenty public school fourth graders and their parents (one per child) individually responded to questionnaires. Two questionnaires were designed for this study. Thinking About My Homework (TAMH) was a questionnaire designed for *children*. Thinking About My Child's Homework (TAMCH) was a questionnaire designed for the *parents*. Items for both questionnaires were derived from the Hoover-Dempsey and Sadler (1995) study.

The results suggested that parents were motivated to help with homework when their child was getting lower grades or if their child experienced difficulty with his/her school work. The data collected suggests that a child's invitations may or may not be as powerful as other theorized contributors to parental involvement. These contributors include the following.

- (1) Parents perceive their parental role as participating in their children's education.
- (2) Parents have a positive sense of efficacy for helping their children to succeed in school.
- (3) Parents receive opportunities or invitations for involvement from their children or from the school. (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995)

The authors found that based on self-efficacy and desire for involvement, the parents' degree of involvement seemed to be a mix a conviction that they can make a positive impact on their child's learning, employment demands and other family responsibilities, as well as specific invitations by the child or the child's school. Using the reasons for why parents become involved, the authors created a model of how such involvement positively influences student achievement. The mechanisms of influence are *modeling*, *reinforcement*, and *direct instruction*. Modeling allows parents to influence their child's educational outcomes by demonstrating that activities related to school are worthy of adult interest. Most children desire to emulate their parents. Reinforcement is effective because children often desire to please their parents. Parents who place an importance on school-related activities, such as studying for tests, completing homework, and asking the teacher questions, impress on the child the value of these academically-oriented behaviors.

Direct instruction comes in two primary forms, which generally yield different learning outcomes for children. Parents who engage in direct, closed-ended instruction (giving orders, commands, and requests for correct answers) tend to promote factual learning and knowledge but do not promote higher-order thinking skills. Parents who engage in direct, open-ended instruction (asking questions, requesting plans, and explaining concepts) tend to promote factual knowledge as well as a higher level of cognitive thinking (Hoover-Dempsey and Sadler, 1995). The complete model is listed in Appendix A.

Hoover-Dempsey et al. (1995) suggest that their model identifies parental involvement as a process which is dynamic and occurs over time. Parental, school, child, and societal contributions, taken together, constitute the involvement process. Parents in low socioeconomic environments, who struggle to meet basic survival needs for their families, may

not fit the model presented in Appendix A. Poor parents are less likely to get involved in school activities, not only because of the hardship of survival but also because of a sense of intimidation and past negative school experiences.

Other researchers have explored the problem of how to get parents involved with the school life of their children. Patterson (1994) wrote a dissertation describing a program that was implemented in a rural elementary school in Florida. The school's goal was to increase parental involvement of students in grades one, four, and five. The characteristics of the students in this study were African American, came from single-parent households, and were considered low-income. A pre-program survey revealed that many parents reported involvement in such activities as reading to their children, assisting with homework, and discussing school with their children. Parent workshops were conducted and handbooks were distributed. The program centered on workshops held over a three-month period to teach parents techniques for helping their children with homework assignments. Homework activities requiring parental participation were sent home to bridge the gap for parents who were unable to attend the workshops.

Program evaluation revealed that although the workshops, handbooks, and interactive homework activities served to increase some parental involvement, the increase was not significant. Parents rated the program as beneficial; however, parental participation was not consistent. Many parents found that trying to balance a head-of-household status, along with attending workshops, became laborious and almost impossible. The author concluded that although single parents in low socioeconomic areas have the *desire* to become involved with their children's school work, lack of time prevents such busy parents from doing so over an extended period (Patterson, 1994).

Bal and Goc (1999) sought ways to increase parental involvement to improve academic achievement in the subjects of reading and math for fourth-through-sixth-grade students in two Midwestern metropolitan schools. This action-research project included thirty-four students. Four types of interventions were attempted: "Using a variety of communication tools to enforce two-way communication; providing information about how parents can assist learning at home; regularly assigning interactive homework that required interaction with parents; and distributing student work for parental comment and review on a regular basis" (Bal et al., 1999). Pre-and-post intervention surveys were administered to both students and parents. The surveys attempted to ascertain communication frequency and parental academic involvement with their children. Reading and math tests were used to measure academic improvement of the students. Teachers were asked to use the telephone to inform parents of positive and negative concerns on a regular basis. In addition, weekly teacher checklists were devised to inform the parents of work completion and grades earned. Each student was given a notebook to record homework. The notebooks provided space for teacher and/or parent comments. Parents were asked to view the notebook daily and to verify the completion and accuracy of the assigned work before signing it. Parents were also provided with information regarding how they could assist learning at home. A program orientation was conducted at open house; monthly newsletters were sent home; and guides in assisting particular academic skills were offered.

Post-intervention data indicated a modest increase in parental involvement. The data indicated a slight improvement in reading, but no improvement in math performance. (Pre-and-post survey questions are in Appendix C. Survey results are displayed in Appendix B.)

Salend, Duhaney, Anderson, and Gottschalk (2004) provide guidelines and examples for using the Internet as an interactive tool for facilitating comprehensive two-way communication between teachers and parents regarding homework. The homework assignments used in this article were designed to provide students with additional instructional time to master the general education curriculum and to share information with families regarding their children's progress. The authors developed a three-phase system for a Homework Assistance Center (HAC). A Homework Assistance Center website was introduced gradually so that parents and students could slowly acclimate themselves to the system. Phase 1 of HAC consists of seven sections. "Section 1 is a welcome paragraph that provides parents with an overview of the site. Section 2 contains website guidelines. Section 3 displays an index. Section 4 lists frequently-asked questions with answers. Section 5 delineates the homework policy. Section 6 contains homework-assistance recommendation. Section 7 provides teacher contact information.

Phase 2 has three sections (1) homework assignments, (2) homework models and rubrics, (3) homework and curriculum standards connection. Finally, phase 3 has six sections (1) online homework resources, (2) digital dropbox, (3) online homework groups, (4) web-based information evaluation guidelines, (5) online survey of website, and (6) digital suggestion box (Salend et al., 2004).

Salend et al. (2004) found that a homework website is a very effective method of involving parents in student homework. The current generation of children grow up with fast and efficient computers. Using the Internet to complete homework provides an exciting learning activity which allows children to learn without realizing they are working. Parents are more inclined to assist children with Internet homework because it is convenient, immediate, and efficient. Teachers also benefit from the homework website. On the web, the teacher can more easily adapt homework to the educational needs of individual students. Varying content, length, and purpose of the assignment as well as modifying response modes, extending timelines, and employing alternative evaluation strategies are some of the many

decision-making responsibilities of the teacher which can be carried out much more efficiently with the use of the Internet. Turning in homework digitally, helps eliminate problems that some students have with turning in homework on time or turning it in at all.

Tobolka (2006) also conducted a research project using the Internet to enhance parental involvement. As an elementary school teacher, Tobolka created a user-friendly website combined with e-mail to communicate with parents. The author used both qualitative and quantitative data during a six-week project. Prior to the study, the author held a tutorial in the computer lab so that parents could learn how to easily access the website and e-mail messages. The data collected were from parent surveys, student interviews, e-mails, checklists, and observations. Both before-and-after surveys were posted on the website for parents. Student interviews were conducted on an individual basis to determine student use of the website at home and at school. Students were asked if they would like their parents to become more involved in their school activities. At the end of each week, the author sent e-mails to parents about student behavior, missing work, as well as quick notes and reminders. Checklists and observations were used to keep track of student improvement.

The results of Tobolka's action research suggested that electronic communication improves students' interest in their schoolwork and provides parents with more knowledge about daily class activities. Parents felt more involved in their children's school activities and they felt more connected with the teacher. Students felt that it was important to work hard on class work and to turn in homework so that they could get a positive electronic note home at the end of the week.

An experimental study in the content area of science was conducted by Van Voorhis (2003). He examined the effects of weekly interactive science homework on family involvement in homework, student achievement, and homework attitudes. The experimental study was conducted with sixth-and-eighth-grade students at Clearwater Middle School in a Mid-Atlantic state. Sixth grade and eighth grade science teachers participated in the study which included 253 students over a period of 18 weeks. The teachers conducted homework interaction over the first two marking periods.

Six classes completed Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) with directions for parent and family involvement. Examples of TIPS assignment topics include: "Student conducts a simple home experiment by using liquids of different thicknesses, and then discusses the results with a family member. Student asks family members for their shoe sizes or heights and then computes the averages. Student interviews a family member about hairstyles that were popular when he/she was the student's age, then writes a paragraph about those hairstyles, and reads the paragraph aloud to a family member"(Van Voorhis, 2003). Four classes completed non-interactive homework.

Interactive students reported significantly higher levels of family involvement than did non-interactive students. Students in both groups who had more regularly-involved family members completed more assignments. More TIPS students turned in accurate assignments than did non-TIPS students. TIPS students also earned significantly higher science report-card grades. Higher levels of family involvement in TIPS science did not carry over to other subject areas such as language arts and mathematics classes which did not include the TIPS design. The findings of the experimental study support the hypothesis that TIPS interactive homework affects family involvement in homework, science attitudes, and student achievement in the middle grades.

Bailey, Silvern, Brabham, and Ross (2004) attempted to determine if designing interactive reading homework would increase parental involvement and improve students' abilities to draw inferences from reading.

The subjects in this interactive-homework study were second graders pulled from three schools in the Southeastern Alabama. The students were separated into two experimental groups and one control group. Of the three schools, School One was under warning of takeover by the State Department of Education; School Two received a "C+" on the State Department of Education Report Card, and School Three held an academic status of "B+" on the State Department of Education Report Card. One hundred percent of the students at School One qualified for free or reduced lunch. Sixty-five percent of School Two's students qualified for free or reduced lunch, and 75% of School Three's students qualified for free or reduced lunch. Teachers of Schools One and Two were given a one-hour training session on how to create interactive homework assignments. Children were pre-and-post tested to determine if interactive homework improved their ability to make inferences. A pre-parent-involvement survey was administered to ascertain the amount of time parents spent assisting their children with homework. During the 21-day study, parents were required to keep logs to record the *amount of time* devoted to their child's homework and to make comments about their own involvement.

The Bailey et al., 2004 study provided evidence that interactive homework did influence students' performance on reading inference tests and increased parental involvement. The results of the study matched the original hypothesis. The authors make the following suggestions to improve parental participation with homework. (1) Educators should consider making assignments designed to solicit parental interactions. (2) Educators should consider parents' and students' interests when making homework assignments. (3) Educators should make assignments that are appropriate

for diverse populations to include not only multicultural diversity but other kinds of diversity as well, such as individual learning styles, interests, abilities, homework environments, etc. (4) Educators should consider effective delivery of assignments to students and parents, such as postings by e-mail or website or weekly newsletters, or students' notebooks. (5) Educators should make assignments that require students to use higher-order thinking skills. (6) Educators should make assignments that foster self-directedness and self-management skills (Bailey et al., 2004). Furthermore, the authors suggest that educators should involve parents in homework workshops that will provide parents with skills and motivation to engage in interactive homework with their children.

Machen, Wilson, and Notar (2005) discuss how parental involvement can influence student achievement and how to improve parental involvement, even in the upper grades.

This article uses information from published literature by Munoz, 2000, Adunyarittigun, 1997, and Pelco, Reis, Jacobson, and Melka, 2000. In the Pelco et al., 2000 study, ten fourth-and-sixth-grade students from various socioeconomic backgrounds were given the Burns/Roe Informal Reading Inventory for the purpose of measuring word recognition and comprehension skills. Measures showed poor aspects of reading ability and low motivation in the ten students. The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) was used to determine how students felt about themselves as readers. Parents were given a similar Likert scale questionnaire to determine parent's thoughts about their child as a reader. Complete results from the Pelco et al., 2000 questionnaires can found in Appendix D.

Recommendations for improving parent-school relations include the following. (1) Create frequent opportunities for positive communication with parents. (2) Reduce barriers that prevent parental involvement by providing babysitters and transportation to allow parents to attend school-related activities. (3) Schedule requested parent-teacher conferences during times that are favorable to the parents' schedule. (4) Arrange for parent-teacher conferences at locations other than the school which may be more convenient for the parents to meet. (5) Provide formal educational workshops for parents designed to increase the parents' ability to be more aware of their children's academic potential and aspirations (Machen, Wilson, and Notar, 2005).

Conclusion

Educators must use a variety of methods to obtain and sustain parental involvement. Schools must be proactive by explicitly inviting parents to be their partners. Local schools bear the responsibility of educating parents about the importance of parental involvement through workshops, newsletters, website information, brochures at school sporting events, and by every possible means.

Interactive homework (student notebooks, checklists, quick notes, and reminders) has powerful potential for promoting family-school partnerships which increase constructive learning outcomes. Using technology can help make home-school links more effective. Voice mail, e-mail, and websites make it possible for parents and students to get information about assignments, check current grades, keep informed about current class topics, as well as current school events, and schedule changes. Online communication offers opportunities for interacting with the teacher and gives parents the opportunity to stay connected with their child's education. As technology advances, and computers and Internet access become cheaper, many more homes will have computers making Internet the most effective link between home and school.

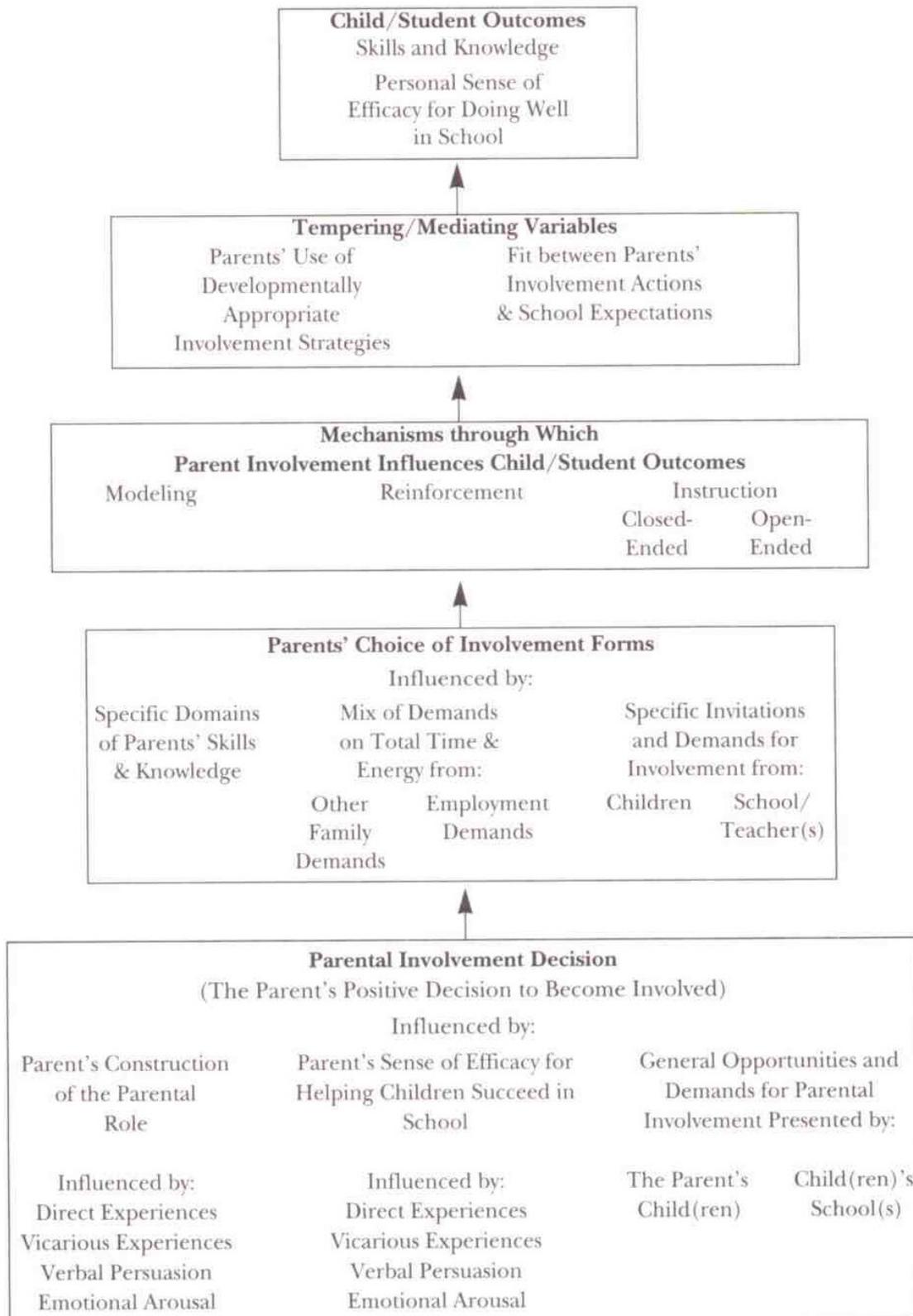
When parents and the educational system join together, positive benefits abound. Attendance, test scores, and high-school graduation rates improve. Teachers have higher expectations for parents and students and they develop more positive feelings about teaching. Extensive parental involvement promotes healthy neighborhoods and good schools.

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Appendix A. Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1995) Model



Appendix B. (Results from Bal and Goc Survey, 1999)

Parental communication/involvement within the school according to parents

| Survey item | Always | Frequently | Occasionally | Never |
|----------------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|----------|
| | Pre Post | Pre Post | PrePost | Pre Post |
| Attend Open House | 63% 58% | 19% 17% | 15% 13% | 4% 13% |
| Attend Parent Teacher Conference | 89% 96% | 4% 4% | 0% 0% | 7% 0% |
| Attend PTA Meetings | 4% 0% | 0% 4% | 7% 17% | 89% 67% |
| Contact child's teacher | 15% 25% | 19% 17% | 44% 38% | 22% 8% |
| Contact the principal | 11% 4% | 7% 13% | 37% 17% | 44% 67% |

Parental academic involvement at home according to parents

| Survey Item | Always | Frequently | Occasionally | Never |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|----------|
| | Pre Post | Pre Post | Pre Post | Pre Post |
| Go to the library with your child | 7% 20% | 37% 25% | 44% 46% | 11% 8% |
| Read aloud to your child | 15% 17% | 37% 38% | 26% 38% | 22% 8% |
| Listen to your child read | 37% 42% | 44% 42% | 15% 17% | 4% 0% |
| Discuss your child's school day | 70% 79% | 19% 13% | 7% 8% | 4% 0% |
| Child seeks your help with schoolwork | 48% 42% | 41% 38% | 7% 17% | 4% 4% |
| Help with homework regularly | 48% 75% | 22% 13% | 11% 13% | 15% 19% |
| Study with your child for tests | 67% 46% | 26% 33% | 4% 17% | 4% 4% |

Appendix C. Parent/Guardian Survey

Part A: Please check the answer that describes how often you are involved with the following.

| Do you attend the following: | Always | Frequently | Occasionally | Never |
|---|--------|------------|--------------|-------|
| Open House | | | | |
| Parent/Teacher Conferences | | | | |
| School Plays/ Sporting Events | | | | |
| PTA Meetings | | | | |
| Do you contact your child's teacher? | | | | |
| Do you contact the Principal? | | | | |
| Do you volunteer to help with class activities? | | | | |
| Do you go to the library with your child? | | | | |
| Do you purchase educational materials to assist your child with school? | | | | |
| Do you read aloud to your child? | | | | |
| Do you listen to your child read? | | | | |
| Does your child seek your help with homework? | | | | |
| Do you offer assistance to your child with homework on a regular basis? | | | | |

1. What guidelines are enforced with your child regarding homework, watching television, play time, etc?
2. Please list the ways in which you are currently involved with your child's academic schooling?
3. What other ways would you like to become more involved with your child's schooling?

Appendix D. (Results from Pelco et al., 2000 Study)

School Psychologists' Perspectives Regarding Family-School Partnership

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Mean* Rating (SD) |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|-------------------|
| Parent involvement can help increase student success in school. | 0.0% | 0.0% | 10.0% | 90.0% | 3.9 (.3) |
| Parents of children want to be involved more than they are now at most grade levels. | 1.4% | 29.3% | 59.0% | 10.3% | 2.8 (.6) |
| School psychologists do not have time to help educators involve families. | 17.2% | 42.3% | 30.9% | 9.6% | 2.3 (.9) |
| Mostly when I contact parents, it's about academic or behavior problems. | 1.7% | 11.1% | 58.5% | 28.7% | 3.1 (.7) |
| Every family has some strengths that could be tapped to increase student success in school. | 0.0% | 6.9% | 47.8% | 45.4% | 3.4 (.6) |

Sample $n = 287$

*Ratings were provided based on the following scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree.

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