A New Generation of Chinese International Students in the United States and Their Experience in the First-year Composition Classes

by

Jianing Liu

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved January 2020 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Paul Kei Matsuda, Chair
Aya Matsuda
Mark A. James

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2020

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this dissertation are two-fold. First, it aims to re-examine the new generation of Chinese students in the United States (U.S.) in light of the changing international and educational contexts. Second, the dissertation seeks to understand the new generation of Chinese students' experience in First-year Composition (FYC) classes in a public U.S. university. A model of dynamic sociocultural approach is developed and applied to explore this new generation of Chinese students. Compared to previous generations of overseas students, the new generation is substantially different in their backgrounds and shares their own unique characteristics. Taking a sociocultural approach, this dissertation undertakes a systematic examination to delineate Chinese overseas students' demographic trends over time, the backgrounds and characteristics of the new generation, the motivations for them studying in the United States, and the pathways these students take to come to the U.S. universities. Furthermore, this dissertation explores the experiences of 23 Chinese undergraduate student participants in FYC classes at a U.S. university. In the past decade, with a soaring number of Chinese undergraduate students, there is a dramatic rise in the number of Chinese students in FYC classes. Compared with their previous English education and learning experience in China, what these Chinese undergraduates are experiencing and how them adapting to in their FYC classes will shed light to better understanding of this new generation, as well as how their previous educational experience in China overlap, facilitate, or collide with their current studying in the United States. This dissertation enriches the literature on understanding the new generation of Chinese students, their background, and their

adjustments to foreign countries and new educational environments. Using the dynamic sociocultural approach, the study provides teachers and administrators an approach for viewing Chinese and other second language (L2) students in a more holistic way. To a greater extent, the study has implications on how to meet the challenges of diversity in our universities and how to help students with different home cultural backgrounds to succeed in class. The results can also be used to improve the services and programs in the U.S. higher education institutions.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated in memory of my beloved grandparents, Liu Yunhou and Chen Kaizhi, who made me be who I am.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In my long journey of working towards the completion of my dissertation, I owe a debt of gratitude to many people. First, I wish to express my gratitude to my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Paul Kei Matsuda, for his support, encouragement, and thoughtful critiques of my wild ideas. My appreciation is extended to my committee members, Dr. Aya Matsuda and Dr. Mark James, for their helpful suggestions and encouraging words. I am also truly thankful for the opportunity of working with my Ph.D. colleagues and friends on this project, who have brought intelligence, respect, and support.

I thank my mother and father, who have given me the love and attention for me to become the person I am today; I thank my husband, who has served as my beckon that I can graduate; I thank my son, who has inspired me daily to become a better person.

I thank my dear friends and mentors, Jean and John Paddison, for their endless support in this long journey; I thank Mrs. Sheila Luna, for her careful work and support, which has made the process of my graduation smooth; I also want to thank my friends, for their understanding, support, and accompanies.

Finally, a special thank-you is extended to people in Chinese community, who have been inspiring and motivating me to take this long journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Page

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSES

What leads an 18-year-old Chinese student, Jane, to pack up her things, leave her family, and fly across the ocean to study at a U.S. university? A pilot interview for the research this dissertation is based on captured Jane in a particular social context. This first chapter, therefore, sets the background that helps us understand such Chinese students in a broader context:

- Active enrollment and recruitment of international students in U.S. universities
- The influx of Chinese students to the United States
- Chinese students in the trend of internationalization

International Students in U.S. universities

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics defines international students as those students who have crossed a national or territorial border for the purpose of education and who are now enrolled outside their country of origin (2013). Given this definition, in the United States there were 1,094,792 international students enrolled in postsecondary institutions of higher education in 2017-2018 academic year alone (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2018). There are now 85% more international students studying at U.S. higher education institutions than were reported a decade ago, and their numbers are continuously increasing (IIE, 2019).

This trend of internationalization of higher education can be traced back to the end of World War II, from which the United States and the Soviet Union, two superpower countries emerged. In order to achieve "a better understanding of the rest of the world and to maintain and even expand their sphere of influence" (Knight & de Wit,

1995, p. 8), the two countries started to create worldwide programs for students in order to promote international exchange. Though, at that time, the programs and student exchange, to a certain extent, had "a diplomacy-oriented objective," those programs significantly encouraged international relations (Knight & de Wit, 1995, p.8).

Therefore, ever since World War II, foreign programs and international students have become increasingly important in university communities throughout the United States and around the world. Up to now, international students represent over five percent of the 20 million students in the U.S. higher education, and this is a 20-fold increase in number compared to five or six decades ago (See Figure 1). The ongoing rise in international students is readily observable across the universities and colleges, from the west coast to the east coast.

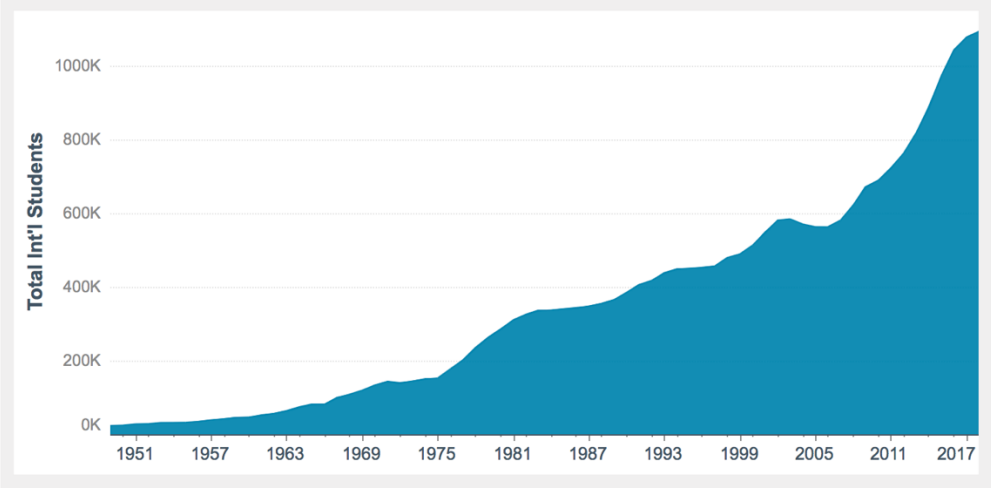

Figure 1. International Students in the United States 1953/54 – 2017/18 *(IIE, 2018).*

The presence of international students provides local students with exposure to different cultures and ideas and their ideas can enliven classroom discussions with their unique perspectives and experiences (MeKenna, 2015). Kirk Brennan, director of

admission at University of Southern California once commented, “Having more international students – who are successfully integrated into campus life – better prepares our student body for international business” (2013, as cited in Siddiq, 2013). According to a Duke University study of alumni from several universities, local students who actively interact with international students are not only learning about foreign cultures but also enhancing their own self-confidence, leadership, quantitative skills and other abilities long after they graduate (Luo & *Jamieson-Drake*, 2013). Research also shows that with more international students on campus, U.S. local students were more likely to have opportunities to engage in international interaction and encounter various ideas and perspectives sharply different from their own both inside and outside the classroom (Astin, 1993; Chang, 1996; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013). Students who engaged in frequent interactions with diverse peers showed a greater openness to diverse perspectives and a willingness to challenge their own beliefs (Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996).

While adding the diversity inside and outside of the classrooms, international students typically pay full out-of-state tuition, which can run two to three times the rate paid by in-state students. IIE Open Doors 2015 reports that “72 percent of all international students receive the majority of their funds from sources outside of the United States, including personal and family sources as well as assistance from their home country governments or universities.” Furthermore, many of the international students have to pay the tuition and fees for intensive language programs and a variety of other programs before they ultimately start to pursue degree-level study. They also spend

heavily on housing and other goods. (McKenna, 2015). On the other hand, American higher educational institutions, especially public colleges and universities, have experienced major cuts in state funding since the global financial crisis downturn in 2008 and are particularly eager in welcoming international students. Hence, while many international students are in favor of overseas degrees, more universities in the United States who are facing sharp budget cuts have begun to depend on international students (Stephens, 2013; Redden, 2017).

International students have already significantly boosted the U.S. economy and increased revenues for American institutions. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 2017-2018 academic year alone, international students contributed $39 billion to the U.S. economy, compared to $21.2 billion five years ago in 2010 (IIE, 2010). A NAFSA economic analysis demonstrated that

> Nearly 455,000 jobs are supported or generated as a result of international student spending on tuition and living expenses in the United States, which means that for every seven international students enrolled, five U.S. jobs are created or supported by students' spending in higher education, accommodation, dining, retail, transportation, telecommunications, and health insurance (Morgan & Penfield, 2018).

The Influx of Chinese Students to the United States

While the United States has long been one of the top choices for international students from around the world, the place-of-origin composition of the international student population has changed remarkably over time. As shown in Table 1 below, in the

academic year 1949-1950, Canada, Taiwan, India, and a number of European countries were leading places of origin. Three decades later in the academic year 1979-1980, Iran, Taiwan, and Nigeria are the major sending places of origin. In recent years, China is significantly ahead of other places of origin in sending students to the United States (IIE, 2009, 2015).

SY 1949-50		
Country	Number	Share (%)
Total	**26,400**	**100.0**
Canada	4,400	16.5
Taiwan	3,600	13.8
India	1,400	5.1
United Kingdom	800	3.1
Mexico	800	3.1
Cuba	700	2.8
Philippines	700	2.7
Germany	700	2.5
Colombia	600	2.2
Iran	600	2.2
Other countries	12,100	46.0

SY 1979-80		
Country	Number	Share (%)
Total	**286,000**	**100.0**
Iran	51,000	17.9
Taiwan	18,000	6.1
Nigeria	16,000	5.7
Canada	15,000	5.3
Japan	12,000	4.3
Hong Kong	10,000	3.5
Venezuela	10,000	3.4
Saudi Arabia	10,000	3.3
India	9,000	3.1
Thailand	7,000	2.3
Other countries	129,000	45.1

SY 2014-15		
Country	Number	Share (%)
Total	**975,000**	**100.0**
China	304,000	31.2
India	133,000	13.6
South Korea	64,000	6.5
Saudi Arabia	60,000	6.1
Canada	27,000	2.8
Brazil	24,000	2.4
Taiwan	21,000	2.2
Japan	19,000	2.0
Vietnam	19,000	1.9
Mexico	17,000	1.7
Other countries	288,000	29.5

Table 1. Top 10 International Student Countries of Origin, Academic Years 1949-50, 1979-80, and 2014-15 (IIE, 2009, 2015).

After China just opened its market to the world in 1978, 860 Chinese nationals left China as the first group of government-sponsored overseas students (Ali & Hsieh, 2009); ever since then, a combined 4 million Chinese students have studied abroad (Huang, 2016), and the number continues to grow at a fast scale. Since 2010, according to Project Atlas (2016), the most popular exporting country of foreign students to the United States is China. The International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF) commented:

China has been a major driver of the global growth in mobility in recent decades,

> and it remains the world's leading source of international students today. No other country sends as many students abroad, and none has had such a dramatic impact on the global marketplace for education (2015).

More recently, for 2017-2018 academic year alone, China sent 363,341 students (see Table 2), accounting for 33.2% – almost one-third – of the total international students in the U.S. colleges and universities, vastly surpassing that of other countries.

Table 2. Top 10 sending places of origin and percentage of total international student enrollment (Adapted from IIE, 2018).

Rank	**Place of Origin**	**Number of Students**	**Percent of Total**
1	China	363,341	33.2%
2	India	169,271	17.9%
3	South Korea	54,555	5.0%
4	Saudi Arabia	44,432	4.1%
5	Canada	25,909	2.4%
6	Vietnam	24,325	2.2%
7	Taiwan	22,454	2.1%
8	Japan	18,753	1.7%
9	Mexico	15,468	1.4%
10	Brazil	14,620	1.3%

Over the past decade, the number of Chinese international students to the United States has rapidly grown during that short time – the figure below (Figure 2) shows the increasing trend of students from China to the U.S. in the last ten academic years.

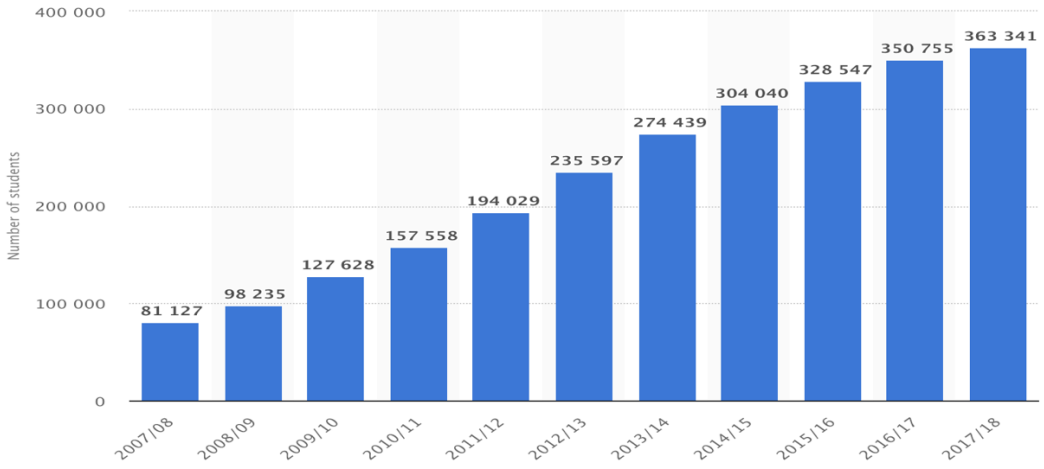

Figure 2. Ten Years of Chinese Students in the U.S. (adapted from IIE, 2018).

The interconnectivity between the United States and China has become closer, in part, because of the Chinese international students. As Evan Ryan, U.S. assistant secretary of state for educational and cultural affairs, has noted, "Having these Chinese students on U.S. campuses helps to build a bridge between China and the United States. When we have qualified Chinese students on U.S. campuses and qualified Americans on Chinese campuses, we can build stronger connections between the two countries." Peggy Blumenthal, senior counselor to the president at IIE, has further affirmed, "America is going to be dealing with China as a partner and as a competitor for years to come. Having the opportunity to engage with undergraduates as peers will provide Americans students with the skills they need to be effective in the workforce." (Allen-Ebrahimian, 2015).

Furthermore, with the trend of internationalization, the U.S. higher education has been and continues expanding its globalization goals to embody both diversity and interconnectivity with the rest of the world. Many universities create programs and activities (e.g., recruiting more international students, participating in study abroad

programs, enhancing students' international perspectives, strengthening international students' services) to "raise their international profile in volume, scope, and complexity" (Altbach & Knight, 2007). In fact, one of the criteria for well-known universities nowadays is a strong linkage between academic excellence and international activities.

Chinese Students in the Trend of Internationalization

In terms of internationalization of higher education, there is however sometimes an assumption that the number of international students is the key; the British Council (2014) report has a more appropriate explanation for the internalization:

> simply having a diverse student body does not mean the education or even the campus is global in nature. What comes as an essential part of a global education is the inclusion of international students in communities and classes. Integration of all students is an elemental factor in the expanding concept of internationalization. (p. 4)

Thus, quantity is an important element for internationalization of higher education, but with the already large number of Chinese students on the U.S. campuses, probably the more urgent question is, "What is the next step?" While more and more U.S. universities have been balancing their budgets on Chinese students over the past few years, of more relevance is how are we going to accept and effectively integrate these Chinese students into our university classrooms and communities?

Up to the late 1990s, international students were expected to adapt to the host institutions. In research and in practice, the focus then was more on how international students lacked particular western academic and social skills and how to help students to

successfully adapt to the norms of the host institutions (Andrade, 2006; Lewthwaite, 1996; Surdam & Collins, 1984; Zimmermann, 1995). Yet, over the past decade, with the numbers of international students fast growing, the research and practice has shifted the focus from adaptation of international students to more comprehensive social and academic integration. In the attempt to provide a comprehensive analytic overview, Kehm and Teichler (2007, p. 264) identified the following seven key areas in the research on internationalization in higher education:

- Mobility of students and academic staff.
- Mutual influences of higher education systems on each other.
- Internationalization of the substance of teaching, learning and research.
- Institutional strategies of internationalization.
- Knowledge transfer.
- Cooperation and competition.
- National and supranational policies as regarding the international dimension of higher education.

The growing and multi-faceted body of research on internationalization of higher education evidently indicates the advancement in the research of international students (McMahon 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar 2001; Altbach 2004), and some specifically focused on Chinese students (Deng 1990; Chen 1996; Zweig 2002; Chen & Liu 2003); nevertheless, few research studies have been conducted to explore and understand the new generation of Chinese students, who are nowadays making up the largest group of international students in the United States.

In fact, the upsurge in the number of Chinese students is causing confusion and conflicts in the United States. Much of the mainstream news coverage of Chinese students has a negative note – from articles like "The China Conundrum" (*The New York Times*, Bartlett & Fisher, 2011) to more exaggerated headlines such as "How Chinese Students Are 'Cheating' To Get Into US Universities" (*Forbes*, Nylander, 2015) and "Fraud frenzy? Chinese seek US college admission at any price" (*CNN,* Lu & Hunt, 2015). The confusion about Chinese students is certainly not less in U.S. colleges and universities. Many teachers and faculties in the universities are not accustomed to having so many Chinese students in their classrooms. An article in *The Wall Street Journal* (Belkin & Jordan, 2016) with the headline "Heavy Recruitment of Chinese Students Sows Discord on US Campuses" describes the challenges of handling the situation. The *Wall Street Journal* alone attracted more than 800 comments, with criticisms and countercriticisms of American university recruitment policies and procedures, and of Chinese and American students' attitudes and behavior.

Because the shift in international student population is already happening at every moment, there will be particularly more and more Chinese students in the American classrooms, and the internationalization of higher education is evidently well underway across the United States. Over the past 150 years, several waves of Chinese students have arrived in the United States, but none is comparable to the current wave, which has "brought some 128,000 Chinese students to U.S. colleges and universities, [and] is creating problems and opportunities unlike anything that has happened previously" (Jiang, 2012). Therefore, there is an urgent need to increase our knowledge of Chinese

students and create awareness of better serving these students in our classrooms and communities.

Purposes of the Dissertation

Therefore, the purposes of this dissertation study are two-fold: **First,** the dissertation aims to re-examine the history of Chinese overseas students and the new generation of Chinese students in the United States in light of changing international and educational contexts. In fact, the history of Chinese students studying overseas can be traced back to the 1860s, and the background of the various generations of Chinese overseas students has shifted with the changing times in China. With China's emergence as a leading world economy in the past decade, Chinese middle-class families have become the leading force in sending students abroad. The volume of the *undergraduate* students has dramatically increased, and the role of governments in sending students has changed from direct sponsors to facilitators. Although a few studies have looked at Chinese students experience in U.S. universities (e.g., Ching, Renes, McMurrow, Simpson & Strange, 2017; Orleans, 1988; Qian, 2002; Yi, 2014) and some news media have reported the influx of Chinese students in recent years (e.g., IIE, 2013; Levin, 2010), little efforts has been made to thoroughly examine and document this new generation of Chinese undergraduate students who newly arrived at the land of the United States. *Therefore, a growing need for university-level educational practitioners and teachers is for them to fully understand the new generation of Chinese students, their reasons for studying in the United States, and by which means they arrive in the United States.*

Second, this dissertation also explores how the new generation of Chinese undergraduate students experience success in a curricular context – First-year composition classes. First-year composition or FYC is an introductory core curriculum writing course in American universities. This course emphasizes on improving students' abilities to write in a college context and introduces students to writing practices in the disciplines and professions. FYC is one of the undergraduate required courses that need to be fulfilled by the time a student graduates. Fleming (2011) called this particular course the "most required, most taught, and the most taken course in U.S. higher education" (p.1). FYC is also one of the few classes that is related to the learning of the English language, a class that Chinese students might think is similar to their English classes in China, yet the objective and content are inherently different. Exploring Chinese students in such a curricular context will offer insights to literature on the new generation of Chinese students and their experiences in the U.S. educational environment. Therefore, the research questions for this study include the following:

Research Questions

1. What is the history of Chinese students studying overseas?
2. Who are the new generation of Chinese students? (How is the new generation of Chinese overseas students different than the previous generations?)
3. What are the new generation's motivations for coming to the United States?
4. What are the pathways for the new generation to come to the United States?
5. What are the experiences that new generation students have, collectively and individually, in FYC classes?

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGIES

In this chapter, I am going to explain the conceptual framework and methodologies adopted for this dissertation study.

Conceptual Framework

Sociocultural theory was first systemized by Vygotsky and his collaborators in the 1920s. Vygotsky (1978) argues that human cognitive development and functioning are mediated by the social and cultural contexts of everyday activities. He concludes that an individual's learning could not be separated from other people's learning and that the connection between the individual and the society mediates and connects learning with the cognitive aspect of mind. The power of Vygotsky's ideas "lies in his explanation of the dynamic interdependence of social and individual process" (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 192). Diverse perspectives in relation to sociocultural theory have grown substantially in the United States and around the world in the past few decades (Abu-Lugbod, 1991; Eisenhart, 2001; González, Moll, and Amanti, 2005; Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). Heng (2016) proposed a hybridized sociocultural framework that aptly explains the theory from mainly three perspectives:

1. Humans are embedded within and shaped by their sociocultural contexts.
2. Humans participate in more than one sociocultural context, and their participation, motivations, attitudes, and behaviors may change within each context and across time.

3. Humans possess agency in improvising, interacting, or contesting the values, beliefs, and behavior associated with different sociocultural contexts (p. 5).

The findings of Heng's study further reinforced the sociocultural theory from a more holistic perspective that an individual is a social individual and is active and dynamic, and whose experiences are constructed within various sociocultural contexts. Furthermore, another important aspect of the sociocultural theory also extends to the exploration of relationship and experience created through social interactions (Klem and Connell, 2004; Lee, 2015); humans learn through interactions with their environments (Watson-Gegeo, 2004).

A Dynamic Sociocultural Approach

Therefore, based on Heng's (2016) hybridized sociocultural framework, I proposed *a dynamic sociocultural approach* to guide this dissertation study, one which encompasses four sociocultural perspectives:

- Humans' experiences are shaped by various social, cultural, and historical contexts.
- Humans are embedded in multiple sociocultural contexts, and their participation, motivations, attitudes, and behaviors may change within each context and across time.
- Humans' experiences are informed and shaped by various social interactions.
- Humans possess agency, and agency shapes experiences.

The first perspective emphasizes that humans' learning and behavior are influenced by and intertwined with their sociocultural contexts (Rogoff, 2003). For

instance, Tobin, Wu, and Davidson (1991) observed that the pedagogy and content in different preschools in China, Japan, and the U.S. reflected the larger societal and dominant cultural values, all of which varied significantly across the three countries. For instance, Chinese preschoolers are taught to be ready to learn and disciplined in response to societal and family's emphasize on education and personal improvement; Japanese preschoolers are taught to recognize others' feelings, and not explicitly express their own feelings and thoughts in response to the society's value for collective responsibility; preschoolers in the U.S. are encouraged to freely express their feelings and creativity to assert their individualism, which is valued by the dominant U.S. culture. In other words, schooling and classroom practices are influenced by dominant socio-economic-cultural structures, and schools are the contexts where students' learning, development, and behaviors are negotiated and shaped.

Furthermore, humans are active and dynamic and has the propensity to participate in different sociocultural contexts (perspective 2); therefore, an individual's learning, development, and behaviors cannot be essentialized to only a single culture; instead, it is a complex interplay of an individual's past and current experiences in various sociocultural contexts (Erickson, 2011). An individual is embedded in multiple sociocultural contexts, and his/her participation, motivations, attitudes, and behaviors may change within each context and across time. Moving from home, students who have crossed borders to study in a foreign country may particularly feel their experience being negotiated in new educational and social contexts, given changing expectations and environments (Phelan, Davidson & Yu, 1993).

The sociocultural theory is also often involved and applied in relation to understanding how the active and dynamic individuals' experience is created through social interactions (perspective 3). For example, Moll (2014) used sociocultural theory as the theoretical foundation for his research on language learning; he pointed out that "educational development is always a social achievement" (p. 80) in that educators and learners teach, interact, and learn from each other. Students interact with and learn from their teachers; at the same time, they teach their teachers about who they are and what/how they can learn through interactions. Teachers educate their students, while at the same time, they learn from their students what and how to teach. Moll acknowledged the social nature of teaching and learning language and emphasized the importance for teachers to interact with and learn about their students. He urged teachers to be aware of their students' social and cultural backgrounds and get to know students through interacting with them because such knowledge can help teachers create lessons that are most relevant to their students, which leads to "the quality of education."

Related to individuals' behaviors and social interactions in multiple sociocultural contexts is the very concept of human agency (perspective 4). Agency can be defined as "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p.112). In other words, agency is not simply an individual's trait, "but a contextually enacted way of being in the world" (van Lier, 2008, p. 136). As Willis (1981) noted, humans are not passive, but "active appropriators" (p. 79). While individuals' sociocultural experiences were being shaped and negotiated in the different sociocultural environments, it is worth exploring how an individual possesses agency in making sense and interacting or negotiating the

values and expectations associated with various sociocultural contexts. Below is a diagram that I created to illustrate how to use the dynamic sociocultural model (see Figure 3) to answer the research questions for this study:

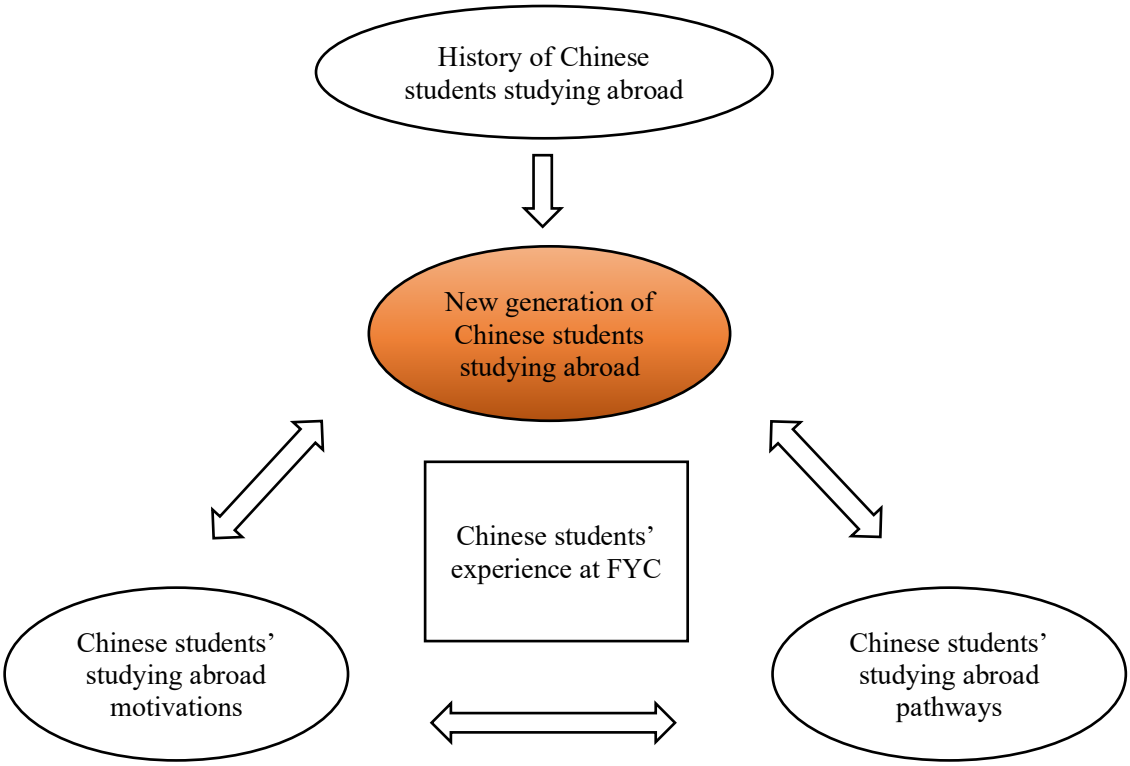

Figure 3. A dynamic sociocultural model.

As shown from the diagram above, in order to bring a deeper understanding of this new generation of Chinese students and their experience in the curricular setting of U.S. universities, I explored five aspects of Chinese overseas students (Research Questions of this study):

- History of Chinese overseas students
- Characteristics of the new generation of Chinese students studying abroad
- Motivations of the new generation of Chinese students studying in the U.S.

- Pathways of the new generation of Chinese students studying in the U.S.
- Chinese students' experience and interactions in the FYC course

The dynamic sociocultural approach suggests a need for studies that shed light on knowledge of students' previous social, cultural, and historical contexts. In fact, "history is placed at the center of sociocultural understandings that suggest that actions and meanings in the present are always mediated by the personal and cultural past" (Edwards 2000). For this reason, it is important to explore the history of Chinese overseas students in that the past generations not only are the precedents, they also brought significant change to the new generations. From history to present, we can see the changing patterns of Chinese students studying abroad and the growing dynamics that emerged from the new generation.

Exploring the motivations and pathways of the new generation of Chinese coming to the United States can give us a much deeper understanding of the drive of studying abroad and also provide insights and direction for educators and administrators. Furthermore, as Chinese students enter the new contexts, in this case, the FYC course, they carry their sociocultural history and try to make sense of new experiences through a process of understanding and negotiating who they are, what they know, and what they will learn within a new set of experiences and interactions.

Methodologies

This dissertation adopted qualitative research methodologies. *Chapter 3: The history of Chinese students studying abroad*, and *Chapter 4: The Characteristics of the new generation of Chinese students*, is research executed through consulting a wide array

of documents found in the library and online. These documents are in the form of academic research papers, encyclopedias, scholarly journals, books and news articles. Using these documents, I conducted extensive research on topics including Chinese students in the United States and worldwide, Chinese and global economics and politics, Chinese education, international studies, sociology, and cultural practices.

In addition to the research on Chinese students, qualitative research methods of one-on-one interviews and surveying were employed. The one-on-one interview is a fit approach to explore the motivating factors that influence the Chinese students coming to the United States (Chapter 5), the pathways Chinese student take to come to the United States (Chapter 6), and their experience in the FYC classes (Chapters 7 & 8). First, an interview is defined as an intentional conversation for the researcher to find out what is "in and on someone's mind" (Patton, 1990, p. 278). The interview method allows the researcher to collect data from participants' own thoughts and words, and gain insights on the topic (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). For instance, in Siczek's (2018) study on international students in First-year composition, she used one-on-one interview with ten participants to explore their experiences and changes in FYC classrooms; Stahl's (2016) study centered around the interviews with fifteen Chinese international students to explore their U.S. high school experiences.

To stay open-minded to the information that emerges, semi-structured, open-ended interview questioning is employed in this study. Open-ended questions allow the researcher to gain as many details as possible. The participants can answer the questions from "their own frame of reference rather than being confined by the structure of pre-

arranged questions" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992), thus allowing them to express themselves more freely. Open-ended questions can also enable the researchers to discover and understand the topic from new perspectives.

Participant Researcher and Interviewer

The fact both researchers of this study and the interviewers of this project were members of the group being studied brings up another methodical point. The researcher first came from China to the U.S. in 2002 as an exchange student at a community college in the Southwest of the U.S. Later, she came to the U.S. in 2007 for a master's program. Upon completing the master's degree, she started her Ph.D. program in the department of English in 2009. During the course of her study in the U.S., she encountered numerous Chinse students, and she also witnessed many students struggling, surviving, and thriving on U.S. campus. Those Chinese students are the ones who stimulated the researcher's interest and desire for this study.

Within the qualitative research tradition, the positive evaluation of the participant researcher has a long history. In their book, *Analysing Social Settings*. Lofland and Lofland (1984) advocate the notion of "starting where you are." They contend that accidents of "current biography" and "remote biography" give the researcher "physical and/or psychological access to social settings," which is an important "starting point for meaningful naturalistic research... when it is accompanied by some degree of interest or concern." Lofland and Lofland (1984) wrote,

> 'starting where you are' provides the necessary meaningful linkages between the personal and emotional, on the one hand, and the stringent intellectual operations

> to come, on the other. Without a foundation in personal sentiment all the rest easily becomes so much ritualistic, hollow cant [*Sic*] .... Unless you are emotionally attached to your work, the inevitable boredom, confusion, and frustration of rigorous scholarship will endanger even the completion – not to speak – the quality – of the project (p. 15).

The researcher's membership with the studied population made it possible for her to reach the desired "intimate familiarity" (Lofland & Lofland,1984) with the phenomena that she was studying. It allowed the interviewer's accessibility to certain situations and information that would not always, or not as quickly, be accessible to an "outside" researcher (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). This increased the researcher's ability to acquire "rich data." For example, being able to speak Chinese and having a similar cultural background helped the researcher to uncover and understand the "inner" feelings of some Chinese students, much of which would have been difficult to explain in a foreign (other than Chinese) language.

Institutional Context and Data Collection

The study took place in the FYC program at Arizona State University, a large research-oriented university in the western United States. The program offers two course tracks: mainstream and multilingual. Multilingual students can choose either track. No significant distinctions are made between the mainstream and multilingual tracks in terms of the course content. ENG 101/107 is the first-semester writing course, which focuses primarily on developing and expressing ideas effectively, by engaging in various literacies and building an understanding of the rhetorical process. ENG 102/108, the

second-semester course, aims to help students with writing arguments supported by claims and evidence, usually from secondary research. WAC 107 is a stretch program with two-semester designed for students who have minimal training and experience with academic writing to develop effective writing.

Most multilingual students chose the multilingual track: ENG 107 → ENG108; WAC107 → ENG108. Therefore, for the efficiency of recruiting Chinese student participants, the researchers decided to only email instructors teaching the three multilingual courses, asking for a 5-minute class visit permissions to recruit Chinese participants whoever were willing to participate in the study (See Appendix B and Appendix C for Chinese and English versions of recruitment letters). The students who agreed to participate then signed on the invitation letter (APPENDIX D) with their contact information. To encourage participation rate, a financial incentive in the form of a $10 gift card was offered to the students who were willing to participate in the study.

Each interview had two procedures. First, students responded to a questionnaire regarding background information including age, city of birth, years of learning English, TOEFL scores, majors, and whether they have used agencies to apply for universities in the U.S. (See Appendix E and F for Chinese and English versions of Background questionnaire). Second, students were interviewed (See Appendix G and F for Chinese and English versions of interview questions). Semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to generate students' in-depth experience in taking the aforementioned three kinds of classes.

All twenty-three interviews were conducted in Chinese by four Chinese speaking researchers. Being Chinese students, there was little difficulty for the interviewers to make contact with the participants of the study. Since the interviewers and the participants had similar backgrounds and the interviewers were identified as a member of the community, it was natural for the interviewers to talk spontaneously and freely with the participants, which effectively avoided the interviewer from being a "social intruder" in the cross-cultural research (Shah, 2004). More importantly, the participants were able to express their insights as precisely as possible and meanwhile feel less nervous in answering interview questions. Furthermore, multiple interviewers provided cross-interviewer reliability.

Participants

In total, twenty-three Chinese speaking students from multilingual courses under the FYC program participated in the study. Gender distribution was fairly equal, with twelve males and eleven females. Their age ranged from nineteen to twenty-three. At the time of the data collection, all twenty-three participants were enrolled in one of the multilingual writing classes described above at the time of the data collection. Ten participants were enrolled in the basic writing course, and thirteen participants were enrolled in the other two serial courses. (See Table 1 for the profile of Chinese participants). The fact of whether students had gone to an intensive English program (IEP) before officially attending the university determined the two kinds of courses they would register in at the university. In other words, students who went to an intensive English language program directly registered the serial sequence writing course after they

officially entered undergraduate school. Students who did not go to the intensive English language program registered the basic writing course after they entered the university.

Table 3. Chinese Participants' Profile.

Name	Gender	Eng. Learning	Course	IEP
S1	F	10 yrs	WAC107	No
S2	M	10 yrs	WAC107	Yes
S3	M	10 yrs	WAC107	Yes
S4	F	9 yrs	WAC107	No
S5	M	14 yrs	WAC107	No
S6	M	12 yrs	WAC107	No
S7	F	14 yrs	ENG107	N/A
S8	F	11 yrs	WAC107	Yes
S9	M	12 yrs	WAC107	Yes
S10	F	10 yrs	WAC107	Yes
S11	F	10 yrs	WAC107	No
S12	M	10 yrs	ENG107	Yes
S13	M	10 yrs	ENG107	Yes
S14	M	10 yrs	ENG107	Yes
S15	F	10 yrs	ENG108	No
S16	M	10 yrs	ENG108	No
S17	M	10 yrs	ENG108	Yes
S18	F	12 yrs	ENG108	No
S19	F	13 yrs	ENG107	No
S20	M	12 yrs	ENG107	Yes
S21	F	11 yrs	ENG108	Yes
S22	M	7 yrs	ENG108	No
S23	F	11 yrs	ENG108	No

Before journeying to the United States, these twenty-three participants had learned English for an average of ten years. Back in China, sixteen of them used an agency to apply for undergraduate study in the U.S., and seven of them did not use an agency for application. The agencies students used back in China helped them decided which universities to apply to, as well as preparing for the tests and the preparation of

application materials. Some agencies also offer one-year-long high school courses to help students pass ACT, SAT or TOEFL tests required by the institution they planned to apply for.

Data Analysis

The first two research questions in this study were based on the extensive research conducted through consulting a wide array of documents found in the library and online. Research Questions 3-5 were based on the data analysis from the interviews. (Research question 3: What are the new generation's motivations for coming to the United States? Research Question 4: What are the pathways for the new generation to come to the United States? Research Question 5: What are the experiences that new generation students have, collectively and individually, in FYC classes?) The interview data were kept in Chinese and only translated into English at the result drafting stage to avoid meaning change.

After all twenty-three interviews were transcribed, two interview texts were coded preliminarily for exploratory analysis to determine the thematic categories. To ensure the reliability of the analysis, I explained the thematic categories to a second coder, who was a Ph.D. in Rhetoric, Composition and Linguistics at the time of coding. We then used those initial categories to code one transcript (chosen randomly) individually and discussed discrepancies. After solving the discrepancies, the two coders modified the thematic categories. Using the revised thematic categories, and for this paper, we used the formula described in Miles and Huberman (1994):

$$\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{numbers of agreements}}{\text{numbers of agreements} + \text{numbers of disagreements}}$$

The two coders coded four interview data individually to calculate the inter-coder reliability, and the rate of data matched thematic categories was 81.5%.

CHAPTER 3

A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF CHINESE STUDENTS STUDYING-ABROAD

Research Question 1: What is the history of Chinese students studying abroad?

Sociocultural approach suggests a new direction for understanding L2 students. In particular, it suggests a need for studies that shed light on knowledge of students' previous social, cultural, and historical contexts. In fact, "history is placed at the center of sociocultural understandings that suggest that actions and meanings in the present are always mediated by the personal and cultural past" (Edwards 2000). For this reason, it is important to explore the history of Chinese students studying abroad in that the past generations not only are the precedents of the current generation, they also brought significant social change in China; Li (2015) in his analysis on history of Chinese studying overseas commented,

> each student who studied overseas and each small step in the direction of cultural reform have ultimately contributed to social remittances and knowledge brought home from abroad, which began to transform Chinese society far beyond any expectations.

Chapter 3 therefore intends to answer Research Question 1: What is the history of Chinese students studying overseas? From 1847 the first-known Chinese student, Yung Wing, who studied in the United States to the 1980s and 1990s, when the majority of Chinese students were seeking a doctoral degree, to now, many Chinese students, who are from middle-class families, come to the United States for undergraduate-level study,

the history of Chinese students studying abroad is long and having deep roots in today's new generation of students.

In fact, for several centuries, the Chinese government discouraged Chinese migration to other countries in order to maintain internal stability. Before the first Opium War (1839-1842) with Great Britain, China had been a self-reliant country for centuries, with relatively little contact with the rest of the world. However, the first and the second Opium War (1856-1860) were a major eye-opener for Qing Dynasty and prompted Qing Government to exchange labor and culture with foreign countries. Adapted from Wang's (2005) research, Chinese students studying abroad can be divided into five generations:

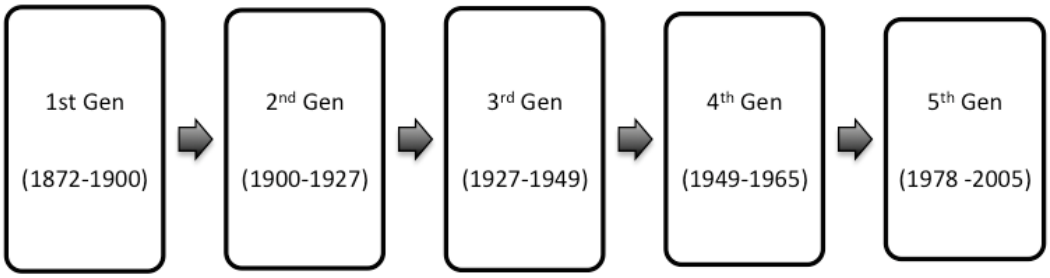

Figure 4. Wang's (2005) Classification of Chinese studying abroad.

First Generation (1872-1881) – Government-sponsored program by the Qing dynasty to send young Chinese students to study in western countries.

The first-known Chinese student studied in the United States was Yung Wing (Rong Hong), who was born in 1828 in Macao, China. In 1841, he entered a missionary school – Morrison school in China, whose principal was an American missionary named Samuel R. Brown. When Brown returned to America in 1847, Yung Wing was asked to go with him. Wing then attended Yale University and graduated in 1854. The same year,

Yung Wing returned to China, and at that time the country was still under the rule of the Qing Government. He then worked as an interpreter for missionaries from western countries.

While studying at the missionary school and Yale University, Yung Wing firsthand experienced the western education and witnessed the advanced technology brought by the education. Wing was an enthusiastic advocate to promote the Chinese government to accept western education, so that China could be influenced and strengthened by the "technological, progressive civilization" (LaFargue, 1987). It had also "become increasingly obvious to more liberal-minded officials" that China was falling way behind western countries in military and technology. Therefore, almost 20 years after his return, Wing finally won the support from the senior government officials, such as Tseng Kuo-fan (Zeng Guofan), Ding Richang and Li Hung-chang (Li Hongzhang). Chinese government then approved Wing's educational proposal of sending 30 young Chinese of 12 to 16 years old to the United States to study each year in the first four years, and the plan would continue if it received satisfactory results. This plan is proclaimed as the Chinese Educational Mission (CEM) plan in 1871 (LaFargue, 1987; Wing, 1978), with the goal to reform the government system and to catch up with Westerners (Fenn, 1976).

Though Yung Wing got permission from the Chinese government, it was not easy to fill in the quota of the first thirty students. The candidate students first had to go through a whole year of preparation study where they were not only learning Confucian classics required by Chinese bureaucracy but also English. Those who passed in the final

English examinations were selected as “government officials” to go on the education mission. After the selection process, the first 30 students were then sent to the United States in 1872, with their education paid at the Chinese government’s expenses.

In 1877, the Chinese government also decided to send about one hundred students to England to study the modern navy and warfare techniques (Yang & Tan, 2006). The returned students from England made significant contributions to China’s navy, among which include naval commanders such as Liu Buchan and Lin Yongsheng (Li, 2015). During the time the Chinese students studied in the United States, the U.S. country had however undergone the Great Depression that lasted from 1873 to 1879. Chinese workers competed with many unemployed white workers, and anti-Chinese feelings thus grew; the relations between the U.S. and China unfortunately became to deteriorate. Eventually, in 1881, the Qing government withdrew all the Chinese students. Education plan failed at the end after ten years of operation.

However, it should be noted that the students, who were sent to study abroad during this movement, many years later ended up as notable professionals including Tang Shaoyi, the first Premier of the Republic of China, Zhan Tianyou, the “Father of China’s Railway” and the “Father of China’s Modern Engineering,” Tang Guoan, the first president of Tsinghua University, and Liang Cheng, who negotiated the refund of the Boxer Indemnity. Other famous historical figures that came from the Education plan were Chinese novelists – Lu Xun and Guo Moruo – who later became major influencers in China’s left-wing literature movement in the 1930s (Yang & Tan, 2006).

Second Generation (1900-1927) – self-supported study abroad in Japan; government-sponsored study in the U.S. – the Ching Hwa Institute Era (1900-1929); study abroad in the Soviet Union

Since the cease of the Educational plan, there was not any large-scaled government-sponsored study abroad program during that time. However, the influence of western advanced technology and culture was impactful. Chinese families and students began to embrace the inclusion of "Westernization" into their traditional culture, and the stigma that was attached to studying abroad was shed. This was also a time in which the Qing government had a great deal of foreign debt, so the vast majority of students who studied abroad during this time paid for their expenses out of their own pockets. During this time, many Chinese students went to Japan, a country closer to China compared to the United States, with the goal of learning from Japan's Meiji restoration, which was mainly Japan's time period of cultural reformation similar to what China was in need of. The number of Chinese students who studied in Japan went from 600 to 20,000 from the year 1902 to 1910 (Beasley, 1981).

In fact, since the 1890s, with the military defeats, there is a pressure for the government to develop a school system that fits nationwide. After the Boxer Rebellion defeat in 1900, the wide-ranging reforms in education, military, economics and government were actually implemented. Kang Youwei (1858-1927) and Liang Qichao (1873-1929) called for the abolition of the Chinese imperial exams. In 1905, the century-old system of civil service examination was abandoned.

In 1909, the Chinese government announced its Boxer Indemnity Educational

Plan, which is “a preparatory school run entirely in the American way, with American personnel and an American curriculum” (Chou, 1989). The plan also included the guidelines for selecting students to study in the United States. In June of 1909, the preparatory school was established in Beijing, and the first examination was held. Forty-seven students passed the examination, and they were sent to the United States in December of the same year.

In 1911, since the establishment of the Republic of China, the Kuomintang government reorganized the preparatory school and named it “Ching Hwa Institute.” In twenty years, from 1909 to 1929, Ching Hwa institute sent more than one thousand students to study in the colleges and universities in the United States. Since the enthusiasm of studying in the United States was to some extent revitalized through this program, many Chinese people went to the United States self-supported. In 1929, Ching Hwa institute was reconstructed into a full-fledged university in China. Therefore, its function of selecting and sending students to the United States was eventually lost.

In 1922, the Soviet Union was formed, which was then the world’s first socialist country, which motivated Chinese students to study in the Soviet Union to learn about evolution from communism to socialism (Li, 2015). The events happened during that period of time, such as the May 4th Movement in 1919 and the founding of China’s Communist Party in 1921 prompted Chinese students to study overseas to find solutions for a better country. By 1930, over 2,000 Chinese students have studied in the Soviet Union, many of whom would later became writers and activists and who would help shape the success of China’s revolution (Guo, 2003).

Third Generation (1927-1949) – self-supported and government-sponsored study in the U.S. and other western countries.

The first surge of Chinese students studying abroad appeared in this period. From 1927 to 1937, about a thousand Chinese students went overseas for studying every year, and America absorbed about one-fourth of them. The increase of students abroad was gradual and steady at that period. The increasing trend was kept until 1937 (see Figure 5).

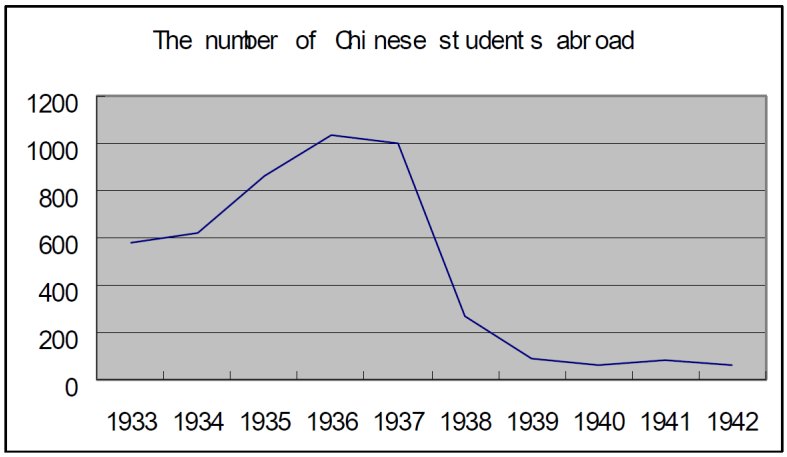

Figure 5. The number of Chinese students abroad. Statistics of the Education Department of China.

The figure above shows that the studying-abroad peak appeared in 1936, the year before China's War of Resistance against Japan, 1,002 Chinese students went to America to study. However, the number dropped drastically in 1938, which is the year when the Sino-Japan war broke out (Chu, 2004). During the war, China put almost all its energy to fight in the war. The low level continued until 1942 when there were only 59 persons going overseas to study (Yao, 2004). Towards the end of the war years, the government began to expand the scale of Chinese students abroad again for meeting the need of

constructing the country. The first test for selecting self-supported students abroad by the Education Department was organized in 1943 and more than 300 students got the qualification of going overseas studying in this way. In the same year, about 1,200 Chinese from government institutions dispatched to America for short-term training. It was estimated there were nearly 4,000 Chinese students in America from 1948 to 1949. In this period, most of the students abroad were studying in America (Waldrop, 2016).

Fourth Generation (1949 -1965) – government-sponsored program to study in Russia and other communist countries in Eastern Europe [after the founding of the new People's Republic of China, before the Cultural Revolution].

After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, China realizes the importance of reorganizing the country's scientific establishment. In the September of 1949, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference stated that "Efforts should be made to develop the natural sciences in order to serve the construction of industry, agriculture, and the national defense." By that time, there was a significant influence from the Soviet Union, and Chinese science establishment was explicitly modeled on the Soviet science system. The director of Soviet Academy of Sciences, Sergei I. Vavilov, was extensively consulted. Vavilov's book, *Thirty Years of Soviet Science* was translated into Chinese to serve as a guide for China's science reorganization. On the other hand, due to the pro-Soviet policy, the connection to the Western countries was largely cut (CIA World Factbook; Pang, 2001). Figure 6 below is a picture of Chinese student in Moscow during the 1950s.

Figure 6. Chinese students in Moscow during the 1950s, from The National Art Museum in the 20th Century, Moscow.

During the 38,000 people to the 1950s, China sent about Soviet Union for study and training, among which 7,500 were students and 2,500 were teachers from colleges and universities and postgraduate scientists. The rest 28,000 were technicians from different key industries (Chari,). Above is a picture of Chinese students in Moscow during the 1950s. The Soviet Union also sent about 11,000 scientific and technical aid personnel to China. In the 1950s, China and the Soviet Union saw a close bonding:

> In 1954 China and the Soviet Union set up the Joint Commission for Cooperation in Science and Technology, which met annually until 1963 and arranged cooperation on over 100 major scientific projects, including those in nuclear science. When the Chinese Academy of Sciences completed a draft twelve-year plan for scientific development in 1956, it was referred to the Soviet Academy of Sciences for review. In October 1957 a high-level delegation of Chinese scientists

accompanied Mao Zedong to Moscow to negotiate an agreement for Soviet cooperation on 100 of the 582 research projects outlined in the twelve-year plan (CIA World Factbook).

However, in the 1960s, the political and ideological relations between China and the Soviet Union reach the breaking point when the two governments engage in the debate of the future of communism. The exchange programs between the two countries therefore gradually decreased (Berstein & Li, 2010).

Fifth Generation (1978 – 2005) – -supported study in countries all around the world [after China open-door reform], Revitalization of Studying in America.

From 1966 to 1976, China experienced the "Cultural Revolution," and the movement lasted for ten years. Information from the outside world was literally unavailable to Chinese people during those years. Due to decades of isolation from western countries, China's development in science and technology were years behind the world's leading industrialized countries. However, since 1978 China's *Open Door Policy*, the Chinese government experienced major policy change and started to aggressively promote modernization through international scholarly and technological exchange (Yan & Berliner, 2011). As a consequence, Chinese students started to come to the United States in large numbers in the early 1980s. The official Chinese Statistics showed that from 1978 to 1988, approximately 64,000 students and scholars were selected by the government and sent to 76 countries and regions. In addition, about 20,000 students went to foreign countries for education on their own. (*From reform of Higher Education in China, 1978-1989 by Lee, Arizona State University, 1993, p. 243*). Among the students

who came on their own, many believed that their professional growth was limited back in China due to the lack of research equipment, and coming to the U.S. was considered an ideal path to achieve professional advancement.

However, due to China's economic backwardness at that time, few families can support the students financially to study overseas. In general, there are three primary sources of financial support: The first one is directly from Chinese government; since the government quota for studying abroad support was very limited, so the process to select personnel to study overseas was usually strict, and thus being able to study overseas supported by government was viewed as a privilege. The second financial supporting source is from the students' overseas relatives. The third source is from the U.S. universities' research fellowships or teaching assistantships. In fact, only a small number of Chinese students were supported entirely by their sponsors of any kind, and most students could only get partial financial support from the sponsors. Many students had to work in a Chinese restaurant illegally to meet the ends. Below is a description of the extreme hardship of a Chinese student from Li Li's (1993) dissertation *Chinese Students and Their Lives in United States Universities*:

> [My job] was illegal. But all the Chinese students were doing that.... I want to use the vacation time to make some money. I could not waste any time. The only job that was available was in a Chinese restaurant in Chinatown.... I was like a waiter's waiter. I did everything, to changing tablecloth, to unloading trucks. I went to the restaurant at 10:00am and left there at 12:00 mid-night.... One day, while unloading some heavy boxes from a truck, I hurt my lower back. I was in

> so much pain that I could not work anymore. The restaurant owner was not going to do anything for me. I had to lay down in bed in a friend's apartment for several days.

Another female student in Li's study described her experience working in a Chinese restaurant as "devastating," she said, "To tell you the truth, during the first three months, I probably cried more than what I did in the last 20 years." "But here, you had the lowest status working in the restaurant. Your employment is illegal; your co-workers were boat people, those who had 'turned black' (a despising Chinese term for illegal immigrants); or those who had no education. The things they talked were very low class. Being with them made me feel I was very inferior too." Most Chinese students at this time period come to the U.S. with the purpose to make a better living and intend to make the U.S. their permanent home. (Zhang & Carrasquillo, 1992).

On the other hand, it is also worth noting that though most of the overseas studies during the 1980s and 1990s were supported by the government. The government spots for In 1984, the State Council (国务院) issued Temporary Provisions of Going Abroad for Self-Funded Students (国务院关于自费出国留学的相关规定), which required the provincial and local government to promote self-funded students to apply for overseas study and treat them as equal to government-funded students. One year later, China abolished the policy of Verifying the Qualification of Self-Funded Students Applying for Overseas Study (资费出国留学资格审核), signaling that China would now allow self-funded students to study abroad, with the same status and privileges as government-funded students.

The five generations of Chinese overseas students symbolized the development of China as a country and provides the historical context for later generations of Chinese student studying abroad. Students and scholars studying overseas are like building a bridge to connect the rest of the world to China. Since 2005, China's economy was boomed, and the numbers of Chinese students going abroad speeded up. Studying abroad has become the vogue in the big cities and attracts young people. China thus has become the leading source of international students for foreign universities and colleges and has ushered in its new millennial generation to the world.

CHAPTER 4

THE NEW GENERATION OF CHINESE STUDENTS

Research Question 2: Who are the new generation of Chinese students? (How is the new generation of Chinese overseas students different than the previous generations?)

This chapter will answer Research Question 2: Who are the new generation of Chinese students? The population of Chinese students is rapidly making up a vital component of U.S. universities and colleges in the past decade, and there is an urgent need to better understand this population, which is a much-needed source of financial revenue for U.S higher education institutions and beyond. Certainly, it would be inappropriate to treat this generation as a homogeneous group; however, knowing the new generation's growing environment and some of their distinctive characteristics will help us know more about this population.

The number of Chinese international students to the United States has rapidly grown only in the past decade, and this new generation is one of the most unique generations in Chinese history because rarely has so much social and economic change occurred in just one generation. This new generation is an increasingly complex demographic, who are more familiar with the power and influence China wields as a result of that rapid economic growth and who have enjoyed freedoms that previous generations had seldom experienced. In this chapter, therefore, I will discuss the rapid economic development in China, the rise of the middle-class families, the influence of the one-child policy, the phenomenon of studying abroad at a younger age, and why more and more current Chinese overseas students are willing to return home.

The Rapid Economic Development in China

From China's establishment in 1949 to the end of 1978, China maintained a centrally commanded economy, during which state-owned enterprises and collective enterprises dominated the Chinese economy. This socialistic planned economy tremendously confined the economic development, since people were hardly motivated to work due to the need-based income distribution. Additionally, the postwar recovery also stagnated Chinese economic progress. Hence, the social productivity of China in the 1950s-1970s remained extremely low. In December 1978, China implemented the new "open door" policy and economic reform program, which has substantially transformed the economic landscape of China. Since the "Opening Up" reforms to the policy and the free market, China has been among the world's fastest-growing economies, with real annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth averaging in the double digits over the past three decades. The GDP per capita in China was last recorded at 13608.15 US dollars in 2018 (See Figure 7).

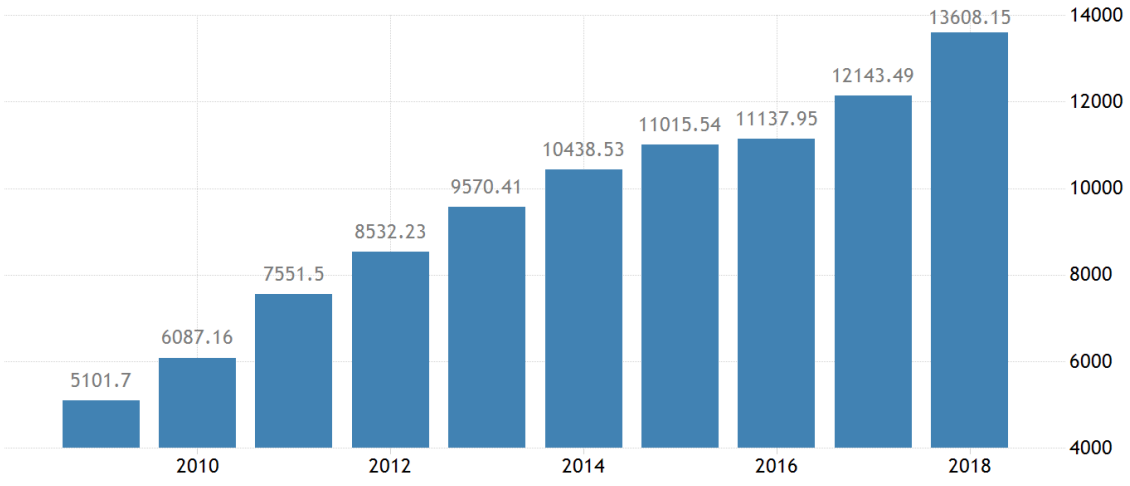

Figure 7. China GDP Per Capita PPP, World Bank (2019).

The rising economy in China not only lift hundreds of millions of households out of poverty (Farrell, Gersch, & Stephenson, 2006) but, for the first time in history, also created a massive middle class. In Li's (2010) book, *China's Emerging Middle Class*, he wrote,

> China's ongoing economic transition from a relatively poor, developing nation to a middle-class country has been one of the most fascinating human dramas of our time. Never in history have so many people made so much economic progress in one or two generations. Just twenty years ago a distinct socioeconomic middle class was virtually nonexistent in the People's Republic of China (PRC), but today a large number of Chinese citizens, especially in coastal cities, own private property and personal automobiles, have growing financial assets, and are able to take vacations abroad and send their children overseas for school (p. 3).

China's middle class is now the biggest in the world and growing much faster than America's (Credit Suisse, 2015). According to McKinsey,

> In 2012, 54 percent of China's urban households were considered "mass middle" class, meaning they earned between US$9,000 and US$16,000 per year. But by 2022, thanks to a growing number of higher-paying high-tech and service industry jobs, 54 percent will be classified as "upper middle" class - meaning they earn between US$16,000 and US$34,000 a year (Iskyan, 2016).

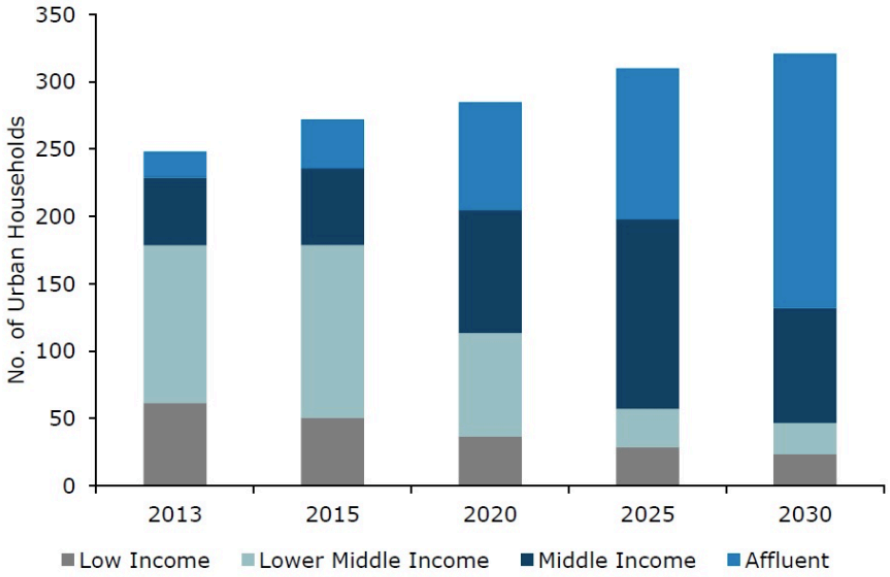

Figure 8. Projection of China's Urban Households by Income Groups, the scale is in millions (Scutt,2015).

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) showed that on the purchasing-power basis, China surpasses the United States to become the world's biggest economy (2015), and the wealth of China will continue growing. The above figure (Figure 8) from Business Insider (2015) shows the explosive growth of China's emerging middle class and the expected changes in the composition of Chinese household wealth from 2015 through to 2030.

Middle Class Investing in Education

According to the International Business Times (2012), the burgeoning middle-class Chinese families, influenced by centuries of Chinese culture, are investing heavily "in education. On average, education spending makes up nearly half of the per capita consumption of a 20-year-old in China, as opposed to less than 25% in the United States" (IECF, 2016). According to Deloitte China (2016), the Chinese education sector "will

expand at a 12.7 percent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) over the next three years to generate revenue of nearly $440 billion in 2020". Chen (2002) asserted that when assets continue rising in the middle class, Chinese people tend to adopt a fervent strategy of education investment in order to maintain the obtained advantage in social status and cultural capital. Though this nouveau social class emerged just a decade ago, the middle class' high education expectations have manifested in the field of international education.

Another factor that is supporting Chinese families spending a significant amount of money on overseas education is the low level of household debt. Though with a fastest growing economy, "China's household debt-to-GDP ratio of 40 percent is less than half the American household debt-to-GDP ratio" and is significantly lower than those of other developed countries (see Figure 9) (Iskyan, 2016). In one Forbes article, "One big difference between Chinese and American households: Debt," Robert Weagley (2016) from MoneyBuilder shared the data on household debt between China and the U.S.,

> The average US household debt is 136% of household income, compared to 17% for the Chinese. Moreover, if we include federal borrowing, the United States number increases an additional $109,792 per household, to $224,303 per household or 266% of average household income.

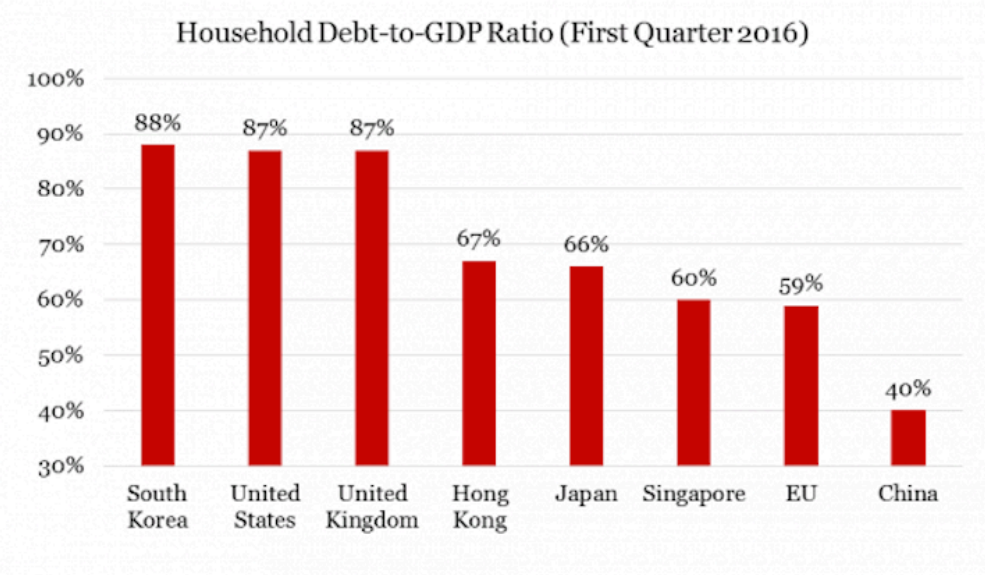

Figure 9. Household Debt-to-GDP Ratio (Iskyan, 2016).

Not only do Chinese have less debt, the middle-class Chinese household savings rate has no peer among major economies. In fact, the household savings rate in China rose from about 16% of disposable income in 1990 to over 40% (figure 9), which is much higher than in most countries. However, though Chinese have a variety of cultural, societal, and personal reasons to save, when it comes to education, they like to spend generously on their only child. A survey conducted by China's Hurun Report showed that 85 percent of wealthy Chinese parents planned to send their child to study abroad as an educational investment (*The Chronicle of Higher Education,* 2010).

In addition to benefiting from opening up to foreign trade and investment, the middle class also embraces western values and has "forged close economic and cultural links with Western countries" (Li, 2010, p. 6). Unlike the traditional parental authorities, the middle-class parents tend to accept western values of individualism and independence. More and more Chinese families, rather than subjecting their child to the

traditional Chinese system of learning, are looking for the educational opportunities that emphasize greater critical and creative thinking skills, which have been traditionally offered in the United States and other western countries (International Business Times, 2012). Furthermore, the high education expectations that the middle-class holds are a personal strategy for family development rather than a choice for the public good. When making the decision of education investment, the Chinese middle class is more concerned with the potential advantages yielded to their own child and the family.

The Increase of Lower-income Families Spending on Education

Also worth noticing is the fact that not just middle-class Chinese families **send** their child overseas; some of the lower-income families work tirelessly to open up every educational opportunity for their child. They want their children to be better than themselves, and children may also be regarded as the *only hope* for a family to move to a higher social class (Fong, 2004). In fact, no matter what the social class is, Chinese culture has always placed great emphasis on education. One Chinese proverb says, “The pursuit of knowledge is superior to all other walks of life” (万般皆下品, 唯有读书高).

Research also shows that Chinese parents are more willing than other ethnic groups to sacrifice for their children's education. For instance, Schneider and Lee (1990) found out that Chinese parents always work long hours to save money to send their children to college. The lower-income families see education as one of the most essential means for their children to move up the social ladder. Many families are selling their apartments to raise funds for their child to study overseas (Sharma, 2013). In his book *Governing Educational Desire: Culture, politics, and schooling in China*, Andrew Kipnis

(2001), an anthropologist at Australian National University, says that the amount spent on education in China is "becoming extreme." Kipnis did his research on the intense desire for education while at Zouping County in Shandong Province, China, among both middle-class and rural households. Kipnis wrote:

> Families are spending less on other things. There are many cases of rural parents not buying healthcare that their doctors urge on them... Part of the reason is that they would rather spend the money on their children's education.... Parents may be forced to put off building a new house, which they might have been able to do otherwise ....

As Marginson (2016) noted, "Education is a positional good subject to an absolute scarcity of high-value opportunities" (p. 430). Most importantly, this study revealed that the strength of generous support of parents, even if they were poor and illiterate, was among some of the most important factors in shaping students' self-confidence. When further equipped with access to a variety of scholarships, students with academic aptitude and strong motivations appeared to be able to open the door towards study abroad for higher degrees (Yang).

The One-Child Generation

After the Cultural Revolution movement, China was facing severe economic depression. While the Open-Door Policy was created in 1978 in response to the situation, in the following year 1979, China's *one-child policy* was initiated by the central government, which is a birth planning program designed to control the size of the population. The one-child policy was officially ended in October 2015; however, the

three and half decades of policy implementation created a one-child generation (Ding, 2006).

The policy limited each urban household to one child. The basic rationale for implementing the policy was to reduce the growth rate of China's enormous population. The regime of Deng Xiaoping argued that rapid population growth would retard achievement of the "four modernizations" (in industry, agriculture, science and technology, and defense) by hampering attainment of full employment and by cutting into increases in capital accumulation, living standards, and education (Bongaarts & Greenhalgh, 1985.). Below (see Figure 10) is a poster designed in 1986 to promote the one-child policy, that says, "Carry out family planning implement the basic national policy (实行计划生育，贯彻基本国策)"

Figure 10. Poster for promoting One-child Policy (Designer: Zhou Yuwei, 1986).

Another purpose of the one-child policy in China was to improve child wellbeing. The government has taken strenuous efforts to ensure that couples limit their fertility in exchange for a better-quality life for their one child "give birth to fewer children, but give them better care and education" (Yang, p.1). The underlying rationale is that with the one-child policy, there would be more resources at the national, community and household levels available for children, and that children with fewer siblings would receive more resources and be better off in physical and intellectual development (Chen 1979; Peng 1997; Wu 1997). Although the one-child policy has been widely criticized, especially by western countries, it does allow the parents to concentrate all their financial and emotional resources on their only child, particularly in education.

Furthermore, the 'one-child policy' has contributed to the rise in China's household saving rate and in years of children's schooling. "China's household saving rate has been increasing at a rapid rate between 1982 and 2014, and the average urban household saving rate rose steadily from 12% to 31%. Human capital accumulation has also accelerated over the last thirty years, with the average years of schooling increased by about 50% -- from 5.8 years to 8.9 for an adult aged 25" (Choukhmane, Coeurdacier & Jin, 2013, p. 1). With less economic pressure thanks to the one-child policy, Chinese families are willing to spend their savings on their only child (Vandermeid, 2003; International Business Times, 2012). Based on the research conducted by China's National Bureau of Statistics in 2001, more than 60 percent of the Chinese families invest one-third of their income on their children's education (Mazzarol & Soultar, 2001). The money spent on children's education has become the second largest expense in Chinese

families, following food expenses (Yang, 2007; Bodycott, 2009). A Euromonitor survey found that "per capita annual disposable income in China rose by 63.3% in the five years to 2012, yet consumer expenditure on education rose by almost 94%" (Sharma, 2013). It is typical in China that educating a child is not only one family's efforts; it is an extended-family project – "It goes beyond tiger mothers, it also includes tiger grandmothers and grandfathers," commented Todd Maurer, an expert on education in Asia and partner at the consultancy firm Sinica Advisors. All the financial and emotional resources of the two parents and four grandparents are concentrated on their single child. With the only child in the family and the cultural emphasis on education, the new generation students' families have overwhelmingly high education expectations for their only child (Sharma, 2013).

Moreover, it is widely believed in Chinese culture that going to a top tier university and receiving a "Western" education will guarantee a bright future. Therefore, with the economic growth in China, concentrated family resources, and the increasing opportunity to go abroad, the number of Chinese students studying abroad has sharply increased since the turn of the century. Among all countries around the world, the United States is the most favored destination for Chinese students to study abroad (Geuna, 2015; Svoboda, June 2015).

Studying Abroad at a Younger Age

Unlike in the 1980s and 1990s, when the majority of Chinese students in the United States were graduate students, mostly adults with families, who relied significantly on scholarships from the western universities, many Chinese students

nowadays receive their tuition funds from personal and family sources (Haynie, November 2014). As a result of China's booming economy over the past decades, more middle-class Chinese families are able to afford the expensive tuitions of American universities. As a result, the average age of Chinese international students has decreased, because students began studying abroad at the undergraduate or master's level. (Yin, 2013). Figure 11 below shows the percentage of all Chinese students in the United States in July 2018.

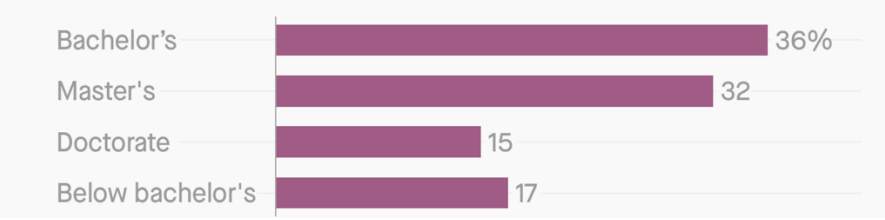

Figure 11. Department of Homeland Security (Zhou, October 2018).

Young Chinese students are swarming to the United States for undergraduate degrees, helping to "drive the number of international students studying in America to record levels" (Associated Press, November 2013). However, there was a drop in the number of graduate applications from China in both 2013 and 2014, as reported by the 2014 international graduate admissions survey from Council of Graduate School (as shown in Figure 12, Council of Graduate School, 2014).

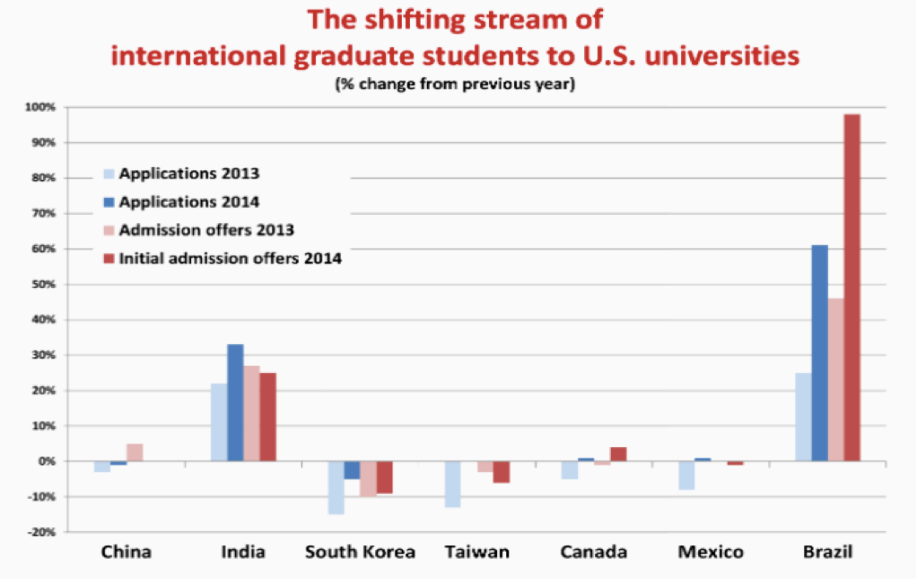

Figure 12. Council of Graduate School, 2014 international graduate admissions survey.

In fact, due to China's increasing investment in the fields of academic research and higher education, more and more promising doctoral students stay at home instead of going abroad (Belay, 2018; Levin, 2010). Robert Bernhard, Vice President for Research at the University of Notre Dame said, "The [Chinese] government has boosted its spending on science, and Chinese universities are upgrading their equipment"; therefore, fewer Chinese students are seeking advanced degrees at American institutions in science and engineering, which were the two most popular majors among Chinese graduate students in the 1980s and 1990s (Mervis, 2014).

For most of China's modern history, Chinese students didn't have many options for their education – a combination of poverty and restrictions on travel prevented most from studying abroad and seeing the outside world (Crawford, 2018). Now, with the remarkable economic development in China, studying abroad is no longer a symbol of elite education, but is one of the options for the younger generation in the middle-class

Chinese family to receive higher education (Annual Report on the Development of China's Study Abroad, 2012).

Willingness to Return China

The trend of the returning home of Chinese students studying aboard varies at different times. For the earlier generations (e.g., First, Second, Third, and Fourth Generations), foreign study was home-centered. Tradition also holds that the Chinese were a non-migratory people:

> Generally speaking, no Chinese will leave his home to seek his fortune at a distance unless he is in some way driven to do so . . . No Chinese leaves his home not intending to return. His hope is always to come back rich, to die and be buried where his ancestors are buried (Skeldon, 1996, p.434).

Most foreign-educated students in early times returned to China after finishing their studies. Due to the distinctive cultural and linguistic differences, most Chinese students in foreign countries had very limited interaction with the local people and life while they were abroad. They were also highly relied upon to provide service in higher educational institutions and the government when they returned home (Meng, 1931). Therefore, the return rate for the earlier generations of oversea Chinese students (1872-1965) was high.

However, in contrast to the earlier periods, the new generation's foreign study features a low rate of return. The rate has decreased sharply since the mid-1980s. Among about 80,000 students and visiting scholars who came to the United States between 1979 and 1989, only about 26,000 returned, most of them before 1986 (Orleans, 1988). The People's Republic of China's survey of the period 1978–2006 reported that "70 % of the

Chinese who went abroad as students remained overseas after graduation" (Tu, 2016, p.2). Major reasons accounting for the *fifth-generation (1978-2005)* Chinese students' non-return were the same as what had pulled them overseas: better living and working conditions, higher salaries, better research facilities, greater career development opportunities, and personal freedom. In fact, the "brain drain" has become increasingly phenomenal during the contemporary foreign study movement in China (Yan, 2017). The return rate remained lower than half until 2010 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2015).

With the booming economy, domestic conditions have improved, and the number of returnees to China is firmly on the rise (see Figure 13). More specifically, in 2012, more than 272,000 Chinese returned after completing their education abroad, 86,700 more than in 2011, a 46 percent increase, according to the China Ministry of Education (Siddiq, 2013). While more than 500,000 students left China in 2015, more than 400,000 returned home in the same year, according to the Chinese Ministry of Education (McPhilips, 2016). The latest statistics show that the number of Chinese returnees reached 432,000 in 2016, an increase from 409,100 in 2015.

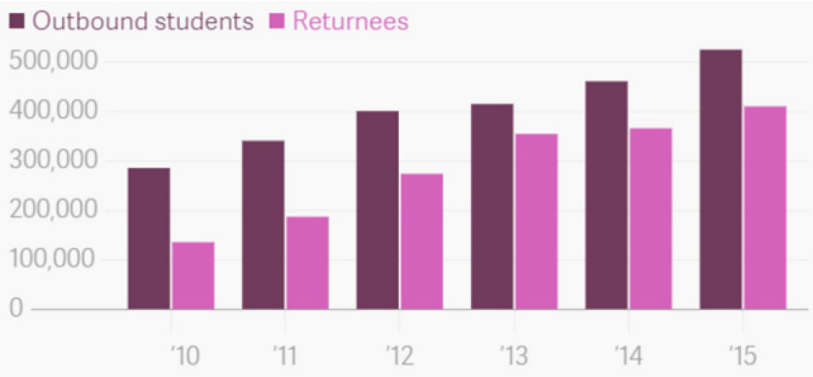

Figure 13. Number of Chinese outbound students and returnees. (Chinese Ministry of Education, cited from Huang, 2016)

In a survey conducted on Chinese living in North America by CareerBuilder, a recruiting company, 70 percent of participants expressed willingness to work in China or start a new business in China (chinadaily.com.cn). Though some students return home because of strong family ties and the will to live close and take care of their parents, many returnees are as well strongly attracted to China's fast economic growth. After the financial crisis in 2008, while other world leading economy countries were trapped in recession, China's economy remained robust, which has created more opportunities at home. Many overseas-educated graduates, therefore, take advantage of increased employment opportunities at home, hence spurring the return of Chinese students. As Andrew Chen, Chief Learning Officer at WholeRen Education, commented,

> For new graduates entering the Chinese employment market, it is definitely more competitive for them to have Western education credentials, especially if it is from a prestigious and world ranked academic program .... I believe this trend [of graduates returning] will continue because of China's strong job market and its demand for highly educated graduates, which cannot be supplied by Tier 1 universities in China alone" (Kennedy, 2018).

There was also a significant increase in the numbers returning after gaining senior work experience overseas. The Chinese government has brought in a series of incentive policies to attract people back. In late 2008, the Chinese Communist Party started the Thousand Talents Program (千人计划), aimed at the talented overseas Chinese, which

forms the cornerstone of China's efforts to combat emerging talent development issues and helps maintain the Chinese growth locomotive. Through a wide variety of incentives, including the prestigious title, high pay, and visa privileges, the program has encouraged academic and research institutes, as well as municipal governments, to "bring back the best." Thousand Talents program has met with some success. As of 2018, more than 7,000 people had returned under this program (Jia, 2018).

While China's strong job market, as well as its favorable domestic policies toward returnees, has incentivized a growing number of Chinese returns in the United States, its caps on the working (H – 1B) visas has become more and more stringent. On the other hand, while Chinese students are still drawn to the U.S. universities, under the recent Trump administration, Chinese students especially are facing new administrative challenges (Magnier & Bases, 2019; Redden, 2018). In general, tighter immigration policies in the United States and western countries are likely to accelerate the trend of Chinese overseas students returning home.

Therefore, growing up in an environment when China experienced enormous economic development and under the nation's one-child policy, many of the new generation study abroad at a young age, together with their willingness to return to China distinguish this new generation of Chines overseas students from previous generations.

CHAPTER 5

MOTIVATIONS OF THE NEW GENERATION COMING TO THE UNITED STATES

This chapter aims to answer Research Question 3: What are the motivations of the new generation of Chinese students coming to the United States?

The recent rapid growth of Chinese undergraduate students in U.S. colleges and universities reflects the trend of Chinese youth to study aboard. Meanwhile, the eagerness of American academic communities to attract full tuition-paying Chinese students also substantively contributed to this upsurge. In this chapter, the following predominant reasons for Chinese students to come and study in the U.S. will be examined and discussed: 1) China's educational environment, 2) the pressure of college entrance exam, 3) parents' and families' high involvement in education, 4) the promises of American education, 5) learning the English language, and 6) the active recruitment of Chinese students by U.S. universities.

China's Educational Environment

With the opening up of China and new Chinese leadership headed by Deng Xiaoping since late 1978, the Chinese government has placed priority on developing education so to revitalize the country in economy, politics, culture and social construction (Lieberthal & Lampton, 1992). China's Ministry of Education designs, develops, and controls China's education system. Since 1986, nine-year compulsory education has been implemented by the government "at various levels and [has] made significant progress" (Ministry of Education of China, cited from China Education Center, 2014). In 2014, the Ministry of Education had confirmed a 99.7% rate of nine-year education (China

Education Center, 2014); thus far, China's education is the largest education system in the world.

Many scholars believed that the history of education in China could be traced back to the 16th century B.C. Xia Dynasty (1523-1027 B.C.) when education was only the privileges of the elites from upper-class families. Later in Han Dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.), a form of public education was established; therefore, ordinary people can also receive education and use education as a path to advance into the upper class. During the same period, the first civil service exam, known as *Keju* (imperial examination), was set up, whose purpose was to select candidates for the state bureaucracy. The exam was based squarely on the fixed knowledge of classic literature, mainly from the text of Four Books and Five Classics (the acknowledged subjects of the Confucius culture) (China Education Center, 2014). The tradition of civil service examination had continued and reached its full bloom during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912), in which the whole system rigorously developed into three levels of examination: district-level exam, provincial-level exam, and state-level exam. If a person passed the provincial exam, "his entire family was raised in status to that of scholar gentry, thereby receiving prestige and privilege" (The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed., 2001-2007). There is an old Chinese saying: "To enrich your family, there is no need to buy good land – books hold a thousand measures of grain," indicating how education and the examination system was and continues to be highly regarded in traditional China. The civil service exam helped to shape China's intellectual, cultural, and political life that "met the needs of the dynastic bureaucracy while simultaneously supporting late imperial social structure" (Elman,

2013, p.47).

The *Keju* exams were intensely competitive, and the success rate was quite low. Years of hard work and study were needed to pass even the first level, and many people never did. Nonetheless, the rewards were so attractive that the arduous journey rarely deterred many from trying. "For ten years no one cares about you when you are studying in a cold room"; the old Chinese saying further tells young people, "but the entire world will know you as soon as you succeed." （十年寒窗无人问，一举成名天下知）.That saying, which sums up the hardship and reward of education, originated in the *Keju* era. (Zhao, 2014).

The idea that success in the examination system is the basis of social status is still strongly embodied in the current Chinese education system. Sticking to the intense and various levels of exams has still been the impetus of the school curriculum that is being followed in China today. From daily and monthly check-up tests to the final exams at the end of each academic semester to the biggest test of all – *Gaokao* (college entrance exam), vigorous assessment in all school subjects is the focus of China's education system. In fact, a typical Chinese student's school life can be divided into three stages and three major tests. To get placed in a good middle school, the 6th graders have to take "small test" (小考, middle school entrance exam). For the 9th graders to get placed in a reputational high school, they have to take "middle test" (中考, high school entrance exam). For the 12th graders, the stakes are higher with "high test" – *Gaokao* (高考, college entrance exam). Therefore, the entire system of China's basic education is

gravitated towards the goal of passing tests in each stage. Before advancing to each successive level of education, students in China first have to fight each other in "test wars."

Most of the tests are built upon recitation and memorization of the "correct" knowledge from the text or the teacher (Neuby, 2012). Therefore, the teachers' task is to provide the answers to the students, and the students' task is to learn and absorb the enormous amount of knowledge and information needed to pass different tests. In fact, in many high schools, middle schools, and even some elementary schools, the teachers' salary is closely associated with students' academic performance. For instance, in the interviews of this study, S9 shared that although he worked very hard in his high school, he eventually had to give up because his test scores had been a drag on his teachers' salary: "I was in a very reputational public high school, and the test scores are associated with teachers' salaries."

Over twenty years ago, in his *The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism* (1990), Redding reported five essential characteristics that define the Chinese student, which are still representative of Chinese students today: (a) harmony and reconciliation, (b) focus on the practical, (c) lack of abstract thought, (d) emphasis on particulars, and (e) an understanding of the concrete example. It is argued that Chinese students' learning relies heavily on repetitive rote-learning and memorization (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991). These characteristics of Chinese students make their academic performance excel remarkably among their peers worldwide as evidenced in top international education rankings. For instance, the champion of 2013 PISA Global Education Assessment, a program that

compares the subject scores from mathematics, reading and science skills among 510,000 secondary school students worldwide (Phillips, 2013). However, the secrets behind academic success are rote learning, long hours of school time and tedious homework that almost every Chinese student has to endure.

Many students and their families are not content with the education system. S16 from the study said, “I feel the high school education in China does not fit me well, and I have a feeling that all the learning in high school is just for *Gaokao*, so you don’t have a choice and you need to go this path [preparing for *Gaokao*].” When asked about his impression of the high school in China, S16 commented, “I think in the first one or two years of high school we have learned all the knowledge we suppose to learn, and the whole senior year is just to prepare for *Gaokao*. We just review the old stuff, not much new knowledge....”

Problems in China’s education system have been noticed in recent years, as it has been realized that a high score on the examination does not equal to a well-rounded quality of a person. The China Ministry of Education pointed out that test-oriented education “hampers student development as a whole person, stunts their healthy growth, and limits opportunities to cultivate social responsibilities, creative spirit, and practical abilities in students” (Levin, 2013). In 1999, the Central Committee of the CCP State Council (中共中央国务院) promulgated the “Decision on the Deepening of Educational Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality Education,” clarifying the change from exam-oriented education (应试教育) to quality-oriented education (素质教育) (Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council, 1999). While the reform has

had some effects and encourages students to take part on their own initiative, the traditional notion that the test score speaks for everything is still ingrained in Chinese education, which is hard to transform in a short period of time. Moreover, with *Gaokao* still being the sole determinant of college admission, many see "quality-oriented education" just as a fancy label since *Gaokao* itself is rooted in the soil of China's test-oriented education. Though many question the *Gakao* mechanism, claiming it smothers students' creativity and imagination, the *Gaokao* is still recognized as the most fair and objective form of assessing and selecting qualified university candidates from among the large population. Chinese students learn from a young age that they have to endure enormous academic and psychological pressure to fulfill the requirements and get through this exam-oriented educational system (Zhao, Selman, & Haste, 2015).

***Gaokao* (College entrance exam)**

Gaokao is the abbreviation for the National Higher Education Entrance Examination
(全国普通高等学校招生统一考试), which is the test in China that ultimately decides whether or not a student will advance to a university/college or will enter the job market. June 7 and 8 of each year are the two days that most Chinese students have lived the first 17 years of their lives for – the two *Gaokao* days, when everything reaches its climax during this nine-hour testing. In these two special days, the three core academic subjects are mandatorily tested: Chinese, Mathematics, and English (for a few students, this second-language subject may also be substituted by Japanese, Russian or French).

Students also need to pick an integrated test: science integrated test or humanities integrated test, based on students' interests of their major in college (Zhuang, 2017).

Universities will then determine an admission cutoff score based on the *Gaokao* scores in that year. In general, universities in China can be categorized into four tiers: Tier-1 (also called 211 universities, administered by the central government), Tier-2 (administered by the provincial governments), Tier-3 (administered by the municipal governments), and Tier-4 (mostly vocational colleges, sponsored by private enterprises) ("Higher education in China," n.d.). The test results only allow students to select one single university to apply to from each tier. If a student's score is not high enough for the Tier-1 university's admission line, the student will be put to the lower Tier. Sometimes a student's score reaches the Tier-1 university admission line but does not meet the admission score of his or her chosen major and university, then the student will be put to the lower Tier as well. And many students' scores are too low for any university (Fu, 2013).

As Chinese students are eager to gain higher education, China does not have enough universities to meet the needs of the large population, and admission to a top university is therefore extremely competitive. According to Gaokao Net (2018), in 2017, about 9.4 million high school students competed for fewer than 7 million university slots, among which there are only less than 1 million slots for Tier 1 universities; the gap was even wide a decade ago, in 2006, when only 5.9 million slots were available for 9.5 million students (Wong, 2012). Being the key factor of college admission, *Gaokao* plays an important role in the Chinese education system for the following two reasons：

First, as mentioned above, the number of available spots in higher education is limited; thus, the *Gaokao* test is the essential 'gatekeeper' to universities. In the early 1990s, the gross university enrolment of all high school graduates was only 3.5 percent. In response, China launched nation-wide initiatives of university expansion in 1999. Though university enrolment has increased to 34.5 percent of high school graduates as of 2016 (MoE, 2016) and 43 percent of graduates as of 2017 (Xinhua Press, 2017), there is still furious competition for students when advancing to higher education. "Compared with their counterparts in North America and Western Europe, Chinese students encounter more difficult university admission tests and criteria" (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2010).

Second, the *Gaokao* determines not only if a student will advance to higher education, but also at what level. Higher education institutions in China are hierarchically ranked and diversified. National universities (Tier 1) are ranked at the top, striving for global excellence, often receiving extra government funding compared to provincial universities. Provincial universities (Tier 2) are ranked in the middle, acting as major higher education providers for increased provincial and local enrolment. Higher vocational colleges and private institutions (Tier 3 & 4) are at the bottom, providing primarily vocational programs (Zha, 2011). Depending on their *Gaokao* test scores, students will receive offers of enrolment from correspondingly ranked schools, as well as suggested majors to study. This has a significant impact on students' future career opportunities, and some students may choose to test multiple times over several years in

order to improve their scores, thus allowing them to get better enrollment offers and more desirable majors of study.

An online picture recently went viral in China (see Figure 14): a note put on a newborn baby says, “The countdown to *Gaokao* is 6574 days.” While many Chinese are laughing at the parents’ creative idea, the issue itself is not something that can simply be laughed off. As one anonymous blogger commenting on the picture, “this light-weight note paper is too ‘heavy’ for the baby, bless her.” In fact, preparing for *Gaokao* is a grueling ordeal for both the students and their parents and families. Many families have to move several times so that their children may be admitted to a better school, where the children can be better trained for the tests. It is also not unusual that parents quit their jobs to help their children study for *Gaokao*. The pressure to succeed in the tests is overwhelming – a 2014 report on China's education showed that the majority of Chinese student suicides were from the culture and pressure of the extremely tough examination (AFP, 2014).

Figure 14. 6574 days countdown to *Gaokao*. (2015).

Moreover, although eventually many Chinese students will be admitted to universities, with such a large population in China, the phenomenon of degree inflation is more rampant than elsewhere. Consequently, only students who get into the Tier-1 universities are likely to find decent jobs after graduation; the reality, thus, is that everyone is competing for the admission to Tier-1 universities (LaFraniere, 2009). One Chinese saying compares *Gaokao* to a stampede of "thousands of soldiers and tens of thousands of horses across a single log bridge." Yet failing in *Gaokao* is stigmatized as a big failure in one's young life. According to S9 in the study, who did not get the *Gaokao* score that she needed for her chosen major: "I already know the shame." So she decided

to come to the United States. S20 also shared that the reason he came to the United States was that he did not get a good score at *Gaokao*. S9 and S20 in this study epitomize the countless Chinese students who are studying abroad because they did not do well in *Gaokao* and cannot get into their (or their parents' and families') desired universities. In fact, because of the extreme competitiveness and complexity of *Gaokao* testing system, even a decent score might not be good enough for China's Tier-1 universities.

In other words, *Gaokao* is the fiercest and most stressful exam for Chinese students, and many students do not even want to face *Gaokao*. Therefore, many students and parents consider studying overseas as an excellent opportunity to avoid competition in *Gaokao* and seek western education. For instance, in the interviews of this study, S3 said, "I study abroad because I thought I could not get a good score in *Gaokao*. So I came to the United States and I did not even take the *Gaokao* test..... I came here in the middle of my senior year in high school." Similarly, S7 shared, "The reason I want to come to the U.S. is that I didn't want to take the *Gaokao* test."

Parents and Family's High Involvement

In many cases, according to research studies and anecdotal evidence, compared to western parents, Chinese parents have higher expectations of their children, especially in education. Chen, Lee, and Stevenson (1996) compared Chinese and the United States parents' involvement in students' education and reported that Chinese parents had higher expectations of their children's academic performance and spent much more time in helping their children with school homework than parents in the United States. Another study conducted by Cai (2003) compared over 500 sixth graders in China and the United

States and found out that a much larger percentage of Chinese parents checked their children's homework more regularly than did the U.S. parents.

Furthermore, in the Chinese culture children need to respect and follow their parents' wishes, which is originally from the Confucian philosophy of "xiao," translating literally "filial piety." In traditional Chinese families, filial piety is believed to be the golden rule that holds a family together and is believed to be one of the most important values that a Chinese person should have. Chinese parents believe that they know and can predict what is best for their children and, therefore, often tend to override their children's own desires and preferences (Chua, 2011). Compounding the issue is the one-child policy that was introduced in 1979, which allows parents to spend more attention on the single child in the family. Many parents are willing to invest their life savings in their child's education, as Linda Bridges, Associate Dean of Admissions and Director of Program Development in China for Wake Forest University, remarked, "Chinese parents only have got one child and for that one child you will do everything you can to help [them] get ahead" (Marcus, 2013). Children growing up in families that give lots of attention to them are often called "little emperors" (小皇帝). Compared to their parents, the "little emperor" generation has grown up with much better material resources due to China's economic growth. The parent generation (i.e., those who were born in the 1960s-1970s) experienced a tough time due to numerous political and cultural disturbances – many of them did not have opportunities to receive formal education. In order to compensate for the difficulties they faced in their own childhoods, parents try every means possible to create a good learning environment for their children. There is a saying in China: Hope

one's son will grow up into a dragon, hope one's daughter will grow up into a phoenix (望子成龙，望女成凤) – Chinese parents usually set high expectations for their only child's talents and academic achievement (Breitenstein, 2013; Chen, 2016; Wang, 2013).

Therefore, when it comes to the decision of studying abroad, the parents and families always play a critical role, as Zinch and Nafsa's report noted, "(t)he cultural norm in China is to consider a 17-year-old not yet capable of managing a decision as important as his or her college education" (Zinch and Nafsa Report, as cited in Marcus, 2013). For many cases, parents are the ones who make the decision for their children's lives, not to mention college education, which is commonly considered as the most important factor for one's future success. In fact, Chinese parents believe that the most effective way to protect their children is by preparing them for the future and providing them with the best education that they can afford; hence, if their children are not able to get into a good university in China, or they are not happy about Chinese higher education, the parents can decide to send their children abroad (Cheng, 2018).

In this dissertation study, most participants described their context for coming to the United States as being strongly influenced by their parents and family. When asked why he came to the United States for college education, S17 simply replied, "it is required by the family." S13 said his parents always were thinking about sending him overseas because they believe the western education is better. When S13 was a junior in high school, his parents had discussed with him about studying abroad, but he was not willing to. After *Gaokao*, his parents still persuaded him to come to the United States, and this time, he agreed. S3 further shared,

> For our parents, I think it is a trend for them (to send kids to the U.S.) .... like my Dad's business friends, many of them send their kids overseas....it's a last-minute decision. One day my Dad picked me up from school and he told me in the car 'let's prepare for studying abroad.' Then a week later.... [they found a study-abroad agency].

In a like manner, S10 said,

> I came to the U.S. because of my parents..... they did not tell me anything about studying abroad until two weeks before *Gaokao*..... they told me I don't need to take the *Gaokao* test anymore: 'We prepped your college entrance application to study in a U.S. university.' Then, I felt a little confused..... but I was very excited, because I did not need to take the test. I then just played really hard with my friends.

S15 also shared her experience,

> At the beginning, I did not like the idea of studying abroad, because my major is *Theater*, and my school in China is reputational. However, my family does not like my major, and they think theater and acting is not a great career path for girls. I was very opposed to their idea .... but my families and the study-abroad agent was pushing me to take language tests and prepare the materials for application, and so I am here. At first, I did not want to be here, because I had to give up my college in China, but then gradually, I am getting used to being here, and I am starting to like the life here.

Broader Choices for Higher Education

The fierce competition and emphasis on test scores of *Gaokao* have been criticized for putting students and their parents under unnecessary stress and denying the students of getting a well-rounded education. On the other hand, the Chinese university enrollment quota is distributed to each province and provincial-level municipalities – such as Beijing and Shanghai – based on the student's household registration (*Hukou*). *Hukou* is a system that links a person to his or her place of birth, and there are generally two types of *Hukou*: rural and urban. Basically, a student is required to attend high school and take the college entrance exam in the locality that is linked to his or her *Hukou*. However, competition for spots at Tier-1 universities is less fierce urban cities, especially bigger cities like Beijing and Shanghai than in other more rural provinces, because most Tier-1 universities in China are located in big cities, and the universities tend to reserve more spots for local students. In other words, higher education in China is rigidly stratified, with limited choices especially for the students with rural *Hukou*. (Chitwood, 2019; Smith, 2019). For instance, S7 shared, "My high school work had a lot of work....and I am in Shandong Province, where even if you got a decent *Gaokao* score, you still cannot go to a good university.... Like 211 universities....the quota for Shandong Province is minimal. Even if you have a high *Gaokao* score, you still cannot go to good universities, so it is not worth trying." S11 also commented that growing up in Beijing, she had all his primary and secondary education in Beijing, but when it came to *Gaokao*, she had to go back to Chongqing, just because her *Hukou* is at Chongqing; but if she took

the test at Chongqing, it would be tough for her to go to a Tier-1 university because of the limited quota of spots for Chongqing.

With various limitations on *Gaokao*, many students and their families turn their goals for higher education overseas. Because of the excellent reputation enjoyed by many U.S. universities, studying in the U.S. is the prime choice for many Chinese students who want to be spared *Gaokao* and who want to get a better higher education. A similar score in the SATs (compared to the *Gaokao*) would allow a Chinese student the chance of going to many different top-tier universities in the U.S. In other words, those who could not get into top universities in China have the freedom to find a better path in their academic journey in western countries. As S12 shared, "Before *Gaokao*, I had never thought about studying abroad. My *Gaokao* score did not reach the Tier-1 universities score level; I can only go to Tier-2 universities in China, so [coming to the United States] is a better choice I think." Moreover, different than the Chinese higher education system, American universities allow students to choose their major or delay the choices of major if they see fit. For instance, S16 in the study shared,

> I like here [the United States] better because I can pursue two majors I like and I don't even need to decide which major when I entered the university. This is especially beneficial for me because I can't decide which major(s) I like before I take some related classes, and this is better than in China, where you definitely need to decide the major before you enter the university,

Furthermore, some students took part in *Gaokao*; however, they did not get a satisfying score that can get them into a decent university. As S12 reported,

> My *Gaokao* score is enough for a Tier 2 university, not enough for any Tier 1 universities, so I think (study abroad) is a better path....I can also improve my English here and have an overseas experience....Before *Gaokao*, I never ever thought about studying abroad though.... I got the applications and visa in a hurry, everything within only one month....

On the other hand, some students have already had experience in Chinese universities (most of them in the Second Tier or Third Tier colleges), and then they decide to study abroad for a better higher education. For instance, one participant in this study, S2, shared,

> I was a freshman at a Tier 2 university in China because I did not do well in *Gaokao*. When I went to the university, I felt the pressure that I might not get a good job after graduation because this is only a Tier 2 university, so after a half year in college, I decided to come here.

U.S. universities also provide more opportunities for athletic students. Chinese universities are more focusing on academia instead of sports, so it is hard for athletic students to go to a Chinese university and at the same time have enough time to practice. S19 in the study is an athletic student, and she shared, "[In China], we don't have a system like in the United States, where you can actually go to a good university, and practice and have a scholarship, you learn in a university like any other regular student."

Therefore, as many students and parents view education in China as inflexible, instead of taking *Gaokao* and studying in a Chinese university, they consider studying overseas as a better choice for higher education, where students can have a more

enriching experience and have the opportunity to experience and immerse themselves in a new cultural and academic environment.

The Promises of American Education

The impact of western education on China, Chinese people, and Chinese education has been immense. In fact, the contemporary desire and preference for western education gradually started ever since the Opening Up policy. With more contact with the the rest of the world after 1979, the negative image of the west as Western Imperialists before and during the Cultural Revolution quickly evaporated and was replaced with positive depictions, especially among the educated (Yan & Berliner, 2011). The strong influence of study abroad has spread into the inner workings of China by the opening years of twenty-first century. Bevis (2014) wrote in her book *A history of higher education exchange: China and America*: "Of the 356 full and alternate members of the 2006 Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee, for example, 32 had studied or worked abroad. Fifty-four percent of the members of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and more than 80 percent of the members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences had studied abroad, chiefly in the West; in Shanghai, about 80 percent of the presidents of its universities held foreign degrees" (p. xii). As the New York Times' article (Larmer, 2017) noted,

> [I]t is a strange historical moment when the elites of a rising power send their only sons and daughters, products of China's former one-child policy, to the schools of a geopolitical rival. Yet the idea of a liberal Western education exerts an almost talismanic hold over China's ruling classes..... Even President Xi

Jinping, who is presiding over a crackdown on Western influences in China's schools, allowed his daughter to attend Harvard.

In general, Chinese parents and students perceive that a good education will guarantee a better future in career and beyond (Ashley & Jiang, 2000). A student with a foreign degree is considered as having better skills and advantages in the job market (Fam & Gray, 2000; Gareth, 2005). Given the fact that the United States hosts most world's top-tier universities (Rosovsky, 1990), the U.S. receives the largest number of international students annually. Therefore, overseas degrees are highly valued in the Chinese job market, with U.S. degrees the most favored. According to Kirby (2018): "beyond the openness and accessibility of American universities there is a widespread perception on the part of Chinese parents that a U.S. education is simply better than a Chinese education."

S14, one participant from the study claimed that the reason he chose to attend a college more than 7,000 miles from his home is that "American education is very good." Since the opening up of China in the late 1970s, China began to look beyond to western countries for advanced science and technology. Chinese students studying in the U.S. for graduate degrees have been common since the 1980s. From the late 1980s to the late 1990s, Chinese graduate students were the largest international student group in the United States (IIE, 2012). Upon returning to China, these students were offered good jobs and better benefits and were promoted rapidly in their careers (Wei, 2013). The general public has witnessed the advantages of studying abroad and has begun to believe that studying in the U.S. is a faster and more effective path to success. To be enrolled in a

master's program at MIT, an interviewee in one article from *Time* magazine said, “I think the college education in China is not very practical. When I will be searching for a job, I think a degree from a very famous [foreign] university is a huge thing I think that will put me into a very good place” (Bergman, 2012).

Moreover, over the past 20 years, the population of Chinese students studying overseas has been shifting thanks to China’s major economic growth, leading to more prosperous families. Unlike in the 1980s and 1990s, when graduate students mainly relied on scholarships and fellowships from American universities, many Chinese families can now afford the expensive tuition for undergraduate studies. Chinese parents see the hefty cost of U.S. universities as a worthy investment for their children’s future. For the most part, however, Chinese parents know little about American education, relying on an assumption that American education is good. Anwei Feng, the author of *English Language Education across Greater China* and a professor of language education, said, “Because China has just opened its doors in the last three decades, going abroad to further one’s studies is still the dream for many families” (Clavel, 2014).

Some participants in the study also shared why they think higher education in the United States is more promising. S4 said that “I think my major of biology is very advanced in the United States, and so [coming here] is beneficial for me finding a job later.” S5 also shared, “I feel that that the major of mechanical engineering is stronger here in the U.S., and in general, the education here [is better than that in China] .... I was planning to study abroad since high school.” S7 said, “The ranking of business school here is pretty good; that’s why I come here.” S16 shared what his parents think about the

United States and the education:

> In my parents' opinion, they think the U.S. is most inclusive to every ethnicity, and if you go to other countries, they may exclude people from other countries. They may have some discriminations. Also, they want me to major in Business, so they think the U.S. is a better choice. Although the U.S. experienced the economic crisis, it is still a superpower second to none in the world, and there is still a lot that we can learn from it.

In fact, for many Chinese students, coming to the United States is "a long-cherished wish" (S6) since they were little children. Because China's economy has grown very fast in the past decade, a lot of culture has been borrowed from the Western ideologies. Chinese people, to a certain extent, are influenced by western pop culture and values. Many Chinese families are choosing the U.S. over other countries also because they are more familiar with U.S. products and brands.

English Language

Another emerging reason that draws Chinese to the United States is the English language. As for most Chinese students, English is the only second language they learn at home. An important point to remember is that due to the United States' hegemonic power, the vast majority of commerce and business worldwide is conducted in English (Gürüz, 2008). In fact, the use of English as a *lingua franca* worldwide for business, leisure, diplomatic, cultural, educational, and other purposes appears to be continuing its growth (Firth, 1996; Tardy, 2004; Jenkins, 2007). English is the most commonly learned language in the world (Guruz, 2011), and a large number of nations whose official

language is not English are introducing degree programs where all work is conducted in English. Many people around the world think that an ability to participate in the academic endeavor in the English language could be advantageous for them in terms of their career prospects (Tang, 2012).

Our world increasingly demands sophisticated awareness and skills about how the societies operate and also an ability to use English in a number of ways as a core aspect of global competency (Jackson, 2010). Furthermore, studies have shown, for instance, that in this age of the internationalization of higher education (e.g., Knight, 2003; Teichler, 2009), students from EFL backgrounds, if they choose to pursue higher education abroad, tend to favor English-speaking countries, and there has in recent years been an increased demand by such students for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from English-speaking countries (Abubakar et al., 2010; Vandermensbrugghe, 2004). According to Vandermensbrugghe (2004), international students choose to study in English-speaking countries "to acquire internationally recognized linguistic and cultural competencies, which can be very useful in a global context," and believe that their degree from a university in an English-speaking country could be their "passport" to the world (p. 418). For instance, in this study, S8 revealed that the reason she chose to come to the United States was that "coming to the U.S. will definitely better my English, and I believe English is useful in the future." S12 also shared that one of his reasons for coming to the United States is to "improve my English and broaden my horizon." S20 said, "I was attracted to the U.S. because of the U.S. movies that I watched when I was at a younger age."

As for most Chinese students, English is the only second language they learn at home, from elementary school all the way to colleges. For instance, when asked why she came to the United States, S17 said, “because since I was little, I learned English, American English....I watched many American dramas, like Workaholics, the Big Bang Theory, Gossip Girl, The Following ...”Similarly, S21 shared, “I started to learn English when I was in elementrary schools; for this many years, English is the only second language I learn. I think my English is pretty good.”

The Active Recruitment of U.S. Universities in China

While many Chinese students are in favor of overseas degrees, many American universities that have been facing sharp budget cuts in recent years began to depend on international students who normally pay full tuition (Stephens, 2013). In fact, over the past two decades, the world has given much attention on China’s social and economic development, mainly as a result of China’s opening-up and integration in the worldwide processes of globalization and internationalization. It is fair to say that the increasing number of Chinese students at American universities is a phenomenon of global free-market exchange.

There were more than 360,000 Chinese students in the United States for the academic year 2017-2018, and China is the number one country sending students to the U.S. over the past decade (IIE, 2018). As U.S. schools benefit from the tuition Chinese students pay, more and more universities nowadays are balancing budgets with Chinese students (Associated Press, 2013). Thus, U.S. higher education institutions have been increasing their interest in actively recruiting Chinese students over the last decade

(Choudaha, Chang, & Kono, 2013; Wheeler, 2011). Many U.S. universities have developed orientation programs at major cities in China (e.g., Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen). More and more American universities are paying commissions to Chinese recruiting agencies to enroll more international students.

In general, the pattern of Chinese students' motivations to study in the United States may be explained by a combination of "push and pull" factors (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). "Push" factors usually operate within the source country and initiate a student's decision to undertake study in a foreign country. These "push" factors for Chinese students to study in the U.S. include 1) China's educational environment and a lack of access to higher education, 2) the competitiveness of *Gaokao* exam, and 3) parents' and families' high involvement in education. "Pull" factors operate within a host country to make that country relatively attractive to international students. "Pull" factors include 1) broader choices of higher education in the U.S., 2) residing in an English-speaking country, 3) promises of American higher education, and 4) the active enrollment of Chinese students from the U.S. institutions.

CHAPTER 6

THE PATHWAYS TO U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION

Research Question 4: What are the pathways that the new generation take to U.S. higher education institutions?

In order to answer Research Question 4, this chapter focuses on the five main pathways Chinese students are taking to get into American higher education institutions: (1) study abroad service/education agency, (2) private college preparation programs, (3) conditional admission and intensive English programs, (4) pathway programs, and (5) U.S. high schools. These different pathways entail different resources and options. As China continues to send the largest contingent of students to American institutions, Chinese students make up the largest share of the growing market of pathway programs. Within this rapidly shifting context of internationalization of higher education and where there is a wide range of choices for Chinese students' higher education, it is worth exploring the pathways available to Chinese students who seek to prepare for undergraduate education in the United States.

Study Abroad Service/Education Agency

The study-abroad education agency is a mushrooming industry in China, which provides a series of U.S. and other western countries' college application-related services. These agencies do so in the following ways: introduce Chinese students to the western education system and culture, help students and their families decide the targeted schools, and brainstorm personal essay ideas and polish their writing, among other services. Some U.S. university admission experts say that the agency service is critical as it is "acting as

guides to an application process that can seem totally....foreign" (Bartlett & Fischer, 2011), because most Chinese students and their parents lack the English skills to complete the applications, for most of the application materials are printed in English.

Besides the language barrier, another challenge Chinese students and parents face is the foreign concept of application. Unlike in China, admission into a university simply counts on the scores of *Gaokao*, American universities emphasize on multi-perspective of a student. The university usually needs personal statements, TOEFL/IELTS scores, recommendation letters, athletic achievements, and other documents to demonstrate the all-around abilities of a student. There is a slim chance that a Chinese student has ever written a personal statement in their native Chinese language, let alone in English. Asking recommendations from teachers is another obstacle when the teacher has known little English and is not familiar with the format and content of a recommendation letter. Few Chinese high schools have university application counselors. Therefore, educational agencies are the places that Chinese students and their parents can turn to for help when they are seeking education overseas. As S2 commented, "Everyone is using an agency....because we know nothing about the application procedure." Some students, however, do admit that what the agency can do is very limited, and if the students have the knowledge and information of U.S. college applications and procedures, they can prepare the applications themselves. As S2 further noted, "I know that the agency charged a lot of money, and it's a rip-off, but we really did not have any knowledge of U.S. college application at that time."

In fact, education agencies have a long history in China of sending students

abroad, “dating back decades to a time when American dollars were forbidden in China and only agents could secure the currency to pay tuition” (Bartlett & Fischer, 2011). Especially in the past decade, agencies have played a critical role in helping Chinese students apply for overseas universities. Many Chinese undergraduates at some point in the application process turn to an agency for help. One of the few studies focusing on Chinese undergraduate students’ experience with educational agencies, Zhang and Hagedorn (2011) reported 57% of the 257 out of 900 students who completed surveys confirmed that they used agents to help them apply to American universities. In this dissertation study, among the 23 participants, 16 students reported that they used an agency to help with their U.S. college applications. One participant, S8, said that “without the help from the agent.... my essay would be so poor.” S8 also pointed out a cultural barrier that Chinese applicants encounter, “We tend to overthink what the universities want and then write a very goal-oriented essay to satisfy the admission officer's taste, but we don’t usually have much knowledge on what is a good application essay. The agent, from a third-person perspective, helped me to write the essay more effectively.” In a like manner, S13 also shared, “[The agent] will let you know what materials the universities need, you give the materials to the agent, and they will submit the applications for you. In China, few people have that experience, so it is safer to let the agent make the applications. Our parents neither have experience or time to do all that for us.” In general, many students appreciate the help from the study-abroad agency to submit the applications for them.

However, the help received by the Chinese students from these education

agencies is sometimes problematic. According to the Association of International Educators and U.S. educational consulting firm Zinch China, 90 percent of recommendation letters for Chinese applicants to Western universities had been falsified, 70 percent of the students' essays were written by others, 50 percent of high school transcripts were made up, and 10 percent of the applications list academic awards and other achievements they did not receive (Bartlett & Fisher, 2011). These numbers are shocking; however, the practice of fabricating information on application is not completely heinous – the agencies are simply responding to the needs of the students and parents. Paying the hefty tuition, together with the expensive service fees for agencies, the students and their parents want to ensure that they can get the offer(s) from American universities by seeking any kind of help from agencies. In this study, some participants (e.g., S2) also mentioned that they sent in their materials in Chinese, and the writer from the agency helped the students write their essays in English. S1 shared, "The study-abroad agent recommended many U.S. universities, and my dad picked several schools from the list. Then, [the agent] applied for the universities for me. I just need to give them my transcripts. They wrote the applications and essays for me." S15 also shared how the agent helped her with the application materials:

> I did not have very decent TOEFL scores, and I did not like the idea of retaking TOEFL, but my agent was pushing me to take the test again and again until I got a good score for the applications.... The agent gave me a range of U.S. universities and asked my family and me which schools that we like ....The application materials, until right now, I am not very interested in them, and I only had looked

> at those materials, the agent wrote the application papers for me. I felt those papers were good, but they had revised the papers several times .... The thing that I did was to take the tests.

Interestingly enough, however, that using a falsified application does not necessarily indicate that the student will do poorly in the academics once admitted to a U.S. university. Ms. Tang, an interviewee for an article in The New York Times, admitted that a staff member in an education agency wrote her admission essay to Delaware University. The agency charged Ms. Tang $4,000 and asked her questions about herself in Chinese, and they helped her write the admission letter in English. After spending a period of time in the U.S., including six months in an intensive English program (IEP), Ms. Tang can write in English herself, and earn good grades and enjoy her American college life; however, when she looked back about the experience of using an agency with her application, she thought that was inevitable because her English was not good then (Bartlett & Fisher, 2011). Mr. Tang's experience echoes with S15's reflection in this study. S15 shared that only with the help of the agent to write application papers for her was she was able to come to the United States. Although she thought her English was not good, she made substantial progress and adaptation in the U.S. university: "I am confident about my study here because I made decisions myself. I just finished my second year here, but I almost have completed all the course requirements for my bachelor's degree, except for computer and statistics....I have plenty of time for a minor degree or even double majors." Unquestionably, a student's good academic performance in college may not justify the misuse of the service provided by

educational agencies; however, it does indicate in some way that the application process for foreign students to a U.S. university may need to be reexamined.

Private College Preparation Programs

College preparation programs are relatively long-term (typically one or two-year) programs that mainly center around test preparations and English proficiency. Students usually receive college application services at the same time. Students who choose to enroll in the program usually opt out of taking the *Gaokao*, because the curriculum of these programs are significantly different than that of a traditional Chinese high school. The programs focus heavily on preparing students for various tests required for admission to U.S. institutions (e.g., TOEFL, ACT, SAT) and study skills to navigate through the unfamiliar U.S. college system. In fact, accessing American higher education nowadays is big business in China. It is reported that the test preparation industry alone was worth $3.9 billion in 2016. (Hawkins, 2019).

In this study, many participants shared their experience of studying in a private college preparation program. For instance, S15 said,

> Many students will go to Beijing for the college prep programs, like the New Oriental Education .... a boarding school located in the suburban area of Beijing, isolated from the outside world. We go to English classes every day, and after the class, it's all on yourself. Every day, we recite the vocabulary words, do a ton of exercises, and I felt the most challenging part of English at that time is listening. [Listening] is a matter of practice, and the teacher could not provide much help in that aspect .... they can only share some strategies .... However, because we were far away from home and somethings happened

that affected the learning there, so at the beginning, my test score was not that good. Later, the scores were improved.

S7 shared her experience of spending a whole year in an organization to prepare for SAT and apply for U.S. universities:

> The organization I went to for preparing SAT has three levels, and each level has about six courses – science, math, reading and writing, listening and speaking .... classes like that .... which means I stopped going to classes in my high school. The schedule of the organization is like a high school that you go there every morning and leave in the evening. We take classes [in that organization] for SAT because you know, for mainland China, there aren't SAT tests. You at least need to go to Hong Kong for the SAT test, but if you take the classes in that organization, you have the privilege to take SAT in mainland China. [The prep school] has a department just for college application. They have advisors to recommend college schools for the students. They also help with your applications, revise your personal statement and recommendation letters.

S16 shared,

> In training, most teachers are native speakers of English, and they teach in English entirely. The courses there include reading, writing, math, computer, and science. Some Chinese teachers are responsible for testing training. Therefore, the whole training is a miniature of the U.S. high school. To us, subjects like math and science, we don't have much trouble. The problems are the vocabulary words, so the training helped us increase the vocabulary and allowed us to feel the western-like education – the U.S. high school

> environment – and it is a good transition to U.S. universities. The training also prepared us for the tests.

Then, S16 shared the different perspectives on testing between Chinese and American education:

> I think in American education, the exams are a way to measure how did you learn. What you've learned can be reflected in your exams; but in China, we think that the exam score can be boosted within a short period of time by nonstop practice and mock testing, which can help to improve your score to another whole new level. In that way, you can get a high score, but to most American people, they probably see exams as the gradual knowledge accumulation from the past, and they don't usually reply on test-prep training.

S16 also explained how the training experience helped him adjust to the U.S. education environment:

> Because I had this experience of the full-English teaching model, I adapted to the pace and environment of the new classrooms. Also, the first-year courses are relatively simple and basic, not difficult, I have learned some of the content before, so the adjustment to me is easy. However, compared to other Chinese students who came directly from high school and did not have the experience of all-English college prep training, I think my adjustment period is much shorter.

The Private College Preparation Programs are very goal-oriented with the sole focus to prepare the path for Chinese students to study abroad. More and more students nowadays are taking part in the college preparation program to make themselves ready for a smooth transition from a Chinese high school to an American university.

Conditional Admission and Intensive English Programs

As American universities are seeking to increase their international student enrollments, many are offering more flexible admissions than before. An increasing number of universities are providing conditional admission programs for students whose English proficiency test scores do not meet the cutoff scores of the universities. Mitch Leventhal, Vice Chancellor for Global Affairs at the State University of New York, noted that many colleges and universities see conditional admissions as "part of a comprehensive recruiting strategy" to expand their international appeal and increase student enrollments, and "if you don't do it, you could cut off a substantial part of your market" (Fisher, 2010). Conditional admission allows more Chinese students to study in the U.S. universities' undergraduate programs, as evidenced in most of the colleges contacted by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in 2010: "Chinese students were by far the largest group of provisionally admitted students" (Fisher, 2010).

For the students who are conditionally admitted to the universities, their English proficiency has not met the required score, thus once the students are granted conditional admission, they usually need to apply for university-approved Intensive English Program (IEP). The coursework that IEP provides is usually a prerequisite for entering the degree programs and are mostly non-credit courses. The IEP program usually includes instruction in reading, writing, listening, speaking, as well as grammar. Students are placed into various levels based on their placement test scores. Historically, only those institutions with their own intensive-English programs were able to issue conditional acceptances; nowadays, however, an increasing number of colleges have established

partnerships with independent language program providers. For instance, ELS Educational Services, Inc., one of the largest companies of private language providers, has more than 60 centers across the United States, serving over six hundred universities as "external" IEP programs (Redden, 2013; Fisher, 2010).

The university where the participants in this study were from has on-campus homegrown IEP program, as explain on the university IEP program website,

> Students who complete the Advanced 2 level of ASU's Intensive English Program can receive a TOEFL waiver for undergraduate admission at ASU if they have the required GPA for their program of choice. Students in the Conditional Admission track build the skills needed to be successful at an American university and make connections with their future college advisors.

Among the 23 study participants, 19 of them had gone through the IEP program. S11 shared, "I don't have a TOEFL score because I decided to study abroad in a hurry, and I don't have enough time to take the test; however, the conditional admission gives me the opportunity to study here. And now I am in the IEP program, polishing my English. Next year, after I pass all the classes here (IEP), I can take the regular university classes. I think this is a good timeline for international students who need more time working on the English language and gets ready for the real university classes." S10 commented on the program: "[I]t's beneficial because you can experience the American style of teaching and learning, and because you need to pass all the classes here before going into the university classes, it motivates you to work very hard." And other participants described their IEP program experience as their "transitional period" to the

mainstream classes (S10, S12), and their English, especially oral English and listening had improved during the time they studied at IEP.

Some participants admitted that the IEP program not only taught them English, but more importantly, allowed them to come to the United States in the first place. For instance, S2 shared that the reason she chose the university was for the conditional program because she did not have time to prepare for the TOEFL test. S12 also shared, "this school does not need a language test score .... it has conditional admission. I don't have a TOEFL score, because I don't have time to prepare for the test." S18 echoed, "[I chose this university] because my agency told me that xxx university has conditional admission, which means that I don't need to have a language test score for applying to the university." Moreover, some participants described IEP experience as a "transitional period" to the mainstream classes (S10, S12), and some want to graduate from IEP as soon as possible. For instance, S9 commented on how he thought staying in IEP is a waste of his time:

> I don't think it is very helpful, and I think the only benefit is to give me some pressure to study because you don't want to stay there long .... There are two ways to get out of the program: one is to pass the TOEFL test, and the other is to take the classes from Basic One to Advance Two; all the classes need a decent grade to pass. This is a waste of time and money.

Pathway Programs

Whereas the non-credit-bearing IEP program is the traditional model that conditionally admitted students have to go through before they can officially be

matriculated into the mainstream university courses, an increasing number of American universities are creating pathway programs. Different from the conditional admission programs, the pathway program gives full admission to academically qualified international students who need additional English training. Students accepted into the program usually have a decent high school GPA, but do not have high SAT verbal scores, or low to no TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores. Usually, the pathway programs provide support for international students throughout their freshmen year, during which students can enroll concurrently in mainstream undergraduate courses and ESL English courses. The pathway program, therefore, is rather appealing to international students, because instead of spending additional time and money in IEP, they now can "combine English and academic study and get started on accumulating credits toward a degree right off the bat" (Redden, 2013). Bob Gilmour, Director of Academic Programs for Oregon State's Pathway Program "INTO OSU" commented that the pathway programs can also allow U.S. universities to "maintain or even raise their standards for direct admission while still creating opportunities for students who fall below those standards," which is like creating a "buffer zone" for universities (Redden, 2013).

In general, the practice of conditional admission and pathway programs has provided opportunities for those who would not otherwise have been admitted into American universities. However, the problems associated with conditional admission and pathway programs are gradually emerging as more and more students take advantage of this policy. Rahul Choudaha, Director of Research and Advisory Services at World

Education Services, a credential evaluation agency, has asked, “How do you ensure that while you provide opportunity and a second chance to students, it does not lead to an overlooking of minimum standards set by the university?” The question probably will be compromised by the money that international students bring to the American universities through conditional admissions; however, some reports have shown a satisfying rate of students graduating from IEP/pathway programs, who have mingled smoothly into the mainstream classes (e.g., Boston University CELOP Report, 2013). Bob Gilmour noted, “That’s interesting when on paper they didn’t qualify for direct entry in the first place ..... ex-pathway students are performing at the same level as the direct international, if not slightly better” (Redden, 2013). While it is still a debate of whether conditional admission can uphold standards, a more practical question lying ahead is in what aspects college educational practitioners can help these conditional-admitted international students succeed in American universities.

U.S. High Schools

As many Chinese families want to send their child to the best undergraduate programs in U.S. colleges, they realize that the process needs to start earlier – by sending their kids to the U.S. high schools to receive a broader education, with the belief that an American high school degree may help them get into the best colleges later (Yin, 2013). Four years of private American high school education can cost around $200,000, a considerable amount of money, but many Chinese families see it as an opportunity for their children to be able to come to the U.S. earlier to refine their English-language skills,

to become acquainted with U.S. academic and social culture, and eventually to be admitted to the prestigious U.S. colleges and universities (Gao, 2012).

On the other hand, U.S. high schools, private high schools particularly, are starting to pay attention to international students. Rajika Bhandari, IIE's Deputy Vice President for Research and Evaluation, said,

> We've typically tended to focus on higher education when we're thinking of inbound student mobility, but we haven't paid enough attention to the fact that students from overseas are beginning to study abroad at younger and younger ages and that high school does provide a pipeline, or pathway, if you will, into higher education (Redden, 2014).

In fact, many U.S. private schools are adjusting their recruiting strategies accordingly. Some U.S. high schools start to host annual admission orientation tours in China to recruit students. Moreover, some high schools use the resources of education agencies in China to help increase the recruitment of Chinese students. In an article, *How China's New Love Affair with U.S. Private Schools is Changing Them Both*, the following statement notes, "The Association of Boarding Schools, an organization with roughly 300 member schools, has partnered with a Chinese education consulting agency to organize large school fairs in Beijing and Shanghai" (Gao, 2012).

Thus, in recent years, the number of Chinese students in U.S. high schools has grown tremendously. IIE's 2014 report, *Charting New Pathways to Higher Education: International Secondary Students in the United States* (Farrugia, 2014) provided the evidence of the increasing numbers of international students coming to the United States

for secondary education "with the intention of remaining in the country for post-secondary studies." According to IIE's 2014 report on international secondary students in the United States, 32.3 percent of international secondary students – some 23,562 students total – in the U.S. in 2013 were Chinese. Another report compiled by IIE in 2017 reported that, "around 2 in 5 international students enrolled in American high schools came from China and that the total number of students from China increased by 48 percent between 2013 and 2016" (S11 attended two U.S. high schools before she came to ASU, so she did not use an agency).

In summary, the pathways that most Chinese students take to arrive at U.S. universities include seeking help from study-abroad educational agencies, going to private college preparation programs, going through conditional admissions and IEP programs or pathway programs, and going to U.S. high schools. In fact, the numerous pathways reflect more than just the broader choices available to Chinese students to pursue higher education overseas. Through these means we can see the rising economic prowess of China's middle class, the eagerness and ambitions of Chinese people to go abroad, enriching their experience, and their belief that education abroad will be beneficial for them in the future.

CHAPTER 7

STUDENTS' ENGLISH LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN CHINA AND EXPERIENCE IN FYC

Research Question 5: What experiences the new generation are having at First-year composition classes (Compared to their English learning experience in China)?

Chapters 7 and 8 together will answer Research Question 5. Respectively, Chapter 7 focuses on the comparisons between English education in China and English in FYC and examines Chinese students' experience with writing in FYC classes, and Chapter 8 explores Chinese students' experience with teachers, classmates, and writing center tutors.

Fulfilling various purposes and taking different pathways, the new generation of Chinese students, with their unique cultural, educational, and language background, enter U.S. campuses. Nonetheless, one common experience that these Chinese students are sharing is their extensive English learning and training in China. Though the emphasis on English education in China only started to emerge since the early 1980s, after the adoption of Open-Door Policy, the growth of English education is rapid, and the impact is substantial and prevalent nationwide. English is a mandatory subject in China starting in the third year of elementary school, and the proficiency is evaluated through various tests and examinations at different levels for students (Zhang, 2007). Therefore, the way Chinese students are accustomed to their English learning may not be appropriate for studying in the United States and the American educational approach may look

unfamiliar to Chinese students who are used to expecting more guidance and restrictions from teachers.

Thus, it will be meaningful to look at Chinese students' English learning experience in China and their experience in the FYC course. Such comparison in experiences not only will facilitate the understanding of the background and culture these Chinese students bring with them as they enter U.S. universities and FYC courses, but of how these students perceive, experience, and adjust language learning in mainstream classes. Furthermore, it can also help FYC teachers of Chinese students or other international students to develop the instructional practice to meet the needs of these students. Such a purpose echoes with the position statement on Second Language Writing and Writers in 2009 calling for writing program administrators to "recognize [... and] take responsibility for the regular presence of L2 writers in writing classes, to understand their characteristics, and to develop instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural needs" (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2009).

English Education in China

In the past 40 years, English education in China has been shaped by the changing contexts of rapid national development. With the opening up of China and new Chinese leadership headed by Deng Xiaoping since the late 1970s, English education has been getting more attention nationwide. As English is the international medium of scientific and technological information, English education has figured prominently in the drive for modernization (Adamson & Morris, 1997). Guangwei Hu, a professor at Nanyang

Technological University, Singapore and an expert on English-language curriculum in Asian countries noted, "[In mainland China] mastery of a foreign language was viewed as vital to meeting the needs of opening up and reform, speeding up socialist modernization, developing students' intellectual power and raising the level of educational quality" (Clavel, 2014).

By the early 2000s, English education was in full bloom in China. High school graduates studied at least six years of English before they entered college. English is one of the three core subjects in *Gaokao*, the college entrance exams, along with Mathematics and Chinese. The standardized English tests of *Gaokao* consisted mostly of multiple-choice questions, and students were evaluated on phonetics, reading, grammar, and writing. Moreover, college students needed to pass another standardized test, the College English Test (CET), before graduating from college (Xu & Fan, 2016). One article in China Daily 2010 commented on the importance given to English education after China carried out the reform and opening-up policy,

> And accompanying China's rise on the world stage in recent years are growing connections of commerce and culture with other countries, especially those developed English-speaking countries […] The entire Chinese society attaches high importance to the English study as sometimes it even plays a vital role for a person who plans to pursue further education and seek a better career. There is no doubt that people who have a good command of English are more competitive than their peers (He, 2010).

The number of English teachers increased tremendously as well. By 2001, there had been a "353% increase from the number of English teachers in 1978." Among these teachers, "more than 85% hold qualifications that meet official requirements, as compared to less than 22% in

1986" (MOE Department of Planning (1984) & MOE Department of Development and Planning (2001), as cited in Hu, 2004, p. 17). Especially since Beijing won the bid of the 2008 Olympic Games, English has been considered as one of the most important subjects and a nine-year English education program was put forward in China, introducing English as a compulsory subject as early as the first grade in elementary schools. Moreover, in recent years, more and more foreign teachers come to China to teach English. The extensive English teaching and training certainly enhanced the quality and accountability of English education in China (You, 2010).

On the other hand, the excessive emphasis on English education from the central government has led to the enormous intensity of teaching and learning the language simply as an academic subject rather than a communication tool (Fang, 2016; Hu, 2005). The goal of learning English has gradually been reduced to passing various English tests – from daily English quizzes on vocabulary and grammar to end-of-semester final exams at schools, from the high-stake English tests (e.g., *Gaokao*) to the proficiency tests (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS, CET). Following such a test-oriented trend, most of English classes in China are overwhelmingly lecture-loaded and teacher-centered, focusing only on grammar and memorization – English knowledge that will be tested in the exams. At the college level, the teaching of English has a particular emphasis on improving vocabulary in preparation for standardized tests rather than fostering the original and communicative writing skills. For instance, in O'Morrow's (2017) textbook review on two of China's popular college English textbook series: *New College English* and *Academic English Reading and Writing*, he pointed out that excessive attention is paid to the teaching of vocabulary and grammar in isolation. Exercises in the two series of textbooks include vocabulary drills,

paraphrases, cloze activities, translation from either Chinese to English or from English to Chinese, and some passages for memorization.

Apart from English teaching in public schools, many privately run English training schools began to burgeon for English improvement or study overseas (e.g., the Beijing New Oriental School for TOEFL and GRE tests) (Deloitte China, 2018). In fact, the hit of English learning has been heightened by the rapidly growing privately-run language schools and training institutes across the country. By 2010, there were an estimated 30,000 organizations or companies offering private English classes in China (Thorniley, 2010). Many interviewed participants in this study reported they had taken private English classes/training before coming to the United States.

Many participants in the study commented on the intensity and test-oriented nature of the learning experience. For instance, S1 said, “In China, English teachers like to do exercise sheets in Class .... they then grade the papers and call the students to answer the questions. I don’t think that fits me well. There’s no real interactions between teachers and students.” S8 explained, for writing, rather than create something on our own, we usually follow a writing sample. Similarly, S15 shared, “The language teacher will tell you some quick tips. Though you have to do it, but more about how to get scores greater, faster, better and more economically (多快好省). I think the English teachers in China more focus on vocabulary, vocabulary is the king. Eventually, we have to pass the test, and teachers are teaching us how to pass the test.” S12 also shared her learning experience,

> At school, we don’t really focus on speaking or listening. We focus more on grammar and reading.... we don’t usually have a class just for writing.... the goal of our English

> classes is for *Gaokao* and other English tests, so we don't really care about speaking and listening. Though we have listening in the test, but it does not count toward the final score.

When asked how the English teacher taught the subject, S12 explained:

> We were constantly doing the exercise sheets and multiple-choice items, more reading comprehension practice. When at 高三 (the 12th Grade in China), we are doing reading comprehension practice every day. (That's because) the teachers focus more on *Gaokao*, because 60% of the test is about reading. You are doing the reading comprehension every day, so you learned the test skills, and you utilize that skill to past the test. It is like the TOEFL (training), the goal is not to improve your English proficiency, we did very little listening, because the listening is easy in the test. All those years are just for *Gaokao*.

On the other hand, some students appreciated the English education they received in China. S14, "we have textbooks, we follow the textbooks. We do the exercise daily .... and I think it is helpful for my reading and grammar." Similarly, S13 shared,

> The English classes in China is focusing on memorization, but I think it's very helpful to improve English. You need to remember the grammar, vocabulary words, and how to use them. Here in FYC is more focusing on getting the sources and knowledge from the passages. You read a passage and you get some ideas from it and then you figure out how the vocabulary and grammar are being used in the passages....that is, in China, the teacher will directly tell what is the tense of a sentence, and why and how to use next time. Here, the teacher probably will just read the sentence, that's it.

English in First Year Composition

Many Chinese students coming from such an English education background are getting used to the test-oriented learning of English – centering on learning the narrow sense of English knowledge – vocabulary, grammar, writing good sentences, etc. This type of knowledge, although essential for English learning, unfortunately, is not the focus of FYC curriculum, whose goal is to familiarize students with academic discourses and to "provide opportunities to master the genres, styles, audiences, and purposes of college writing [and] offers guided practice in reading and writing the discourses of the academy and the professionals" (Lindemann, 1993, p. 312). The Writing Program Administrators (WPA) Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2014) outlines the competencies that students should have developed after completing the course: rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, reading and composing, writing as a process, and knowledge of conventions. In her article *Which Non-Native Speaker? Differences between International Students and U.S. Resident (Language Minority) Students*, Joy M. Reid describes the situation of the international students she worked with in the 1990s at the University of Wyoming:

> These students know, understand, and can explain English grammar, and often their reading skills are substantial. Usually, however, their listening and oral skills are hampered by lack of experience, by non-native English-speaking teachers, and by the culture shock that comes from being immersed in a foreign culture, the language of which sounds different from their studied English language. Their writing skills are also limited because their prior English education has not provided opportunities to write formal compositions; rather it required them to

> complete exercises in written grammar or to answer reading questions in single sentences (p. 20).

As the goals of FYC are different compared to the objectives of English learning in China, many Chinese students have encountered difficulties in FYC classes. These students may "know, understand, and can explain English grammar", but their writing skills may be limited because their prior English education has not provided enough opportunities to write formal composition; mostly it required them to complete exercises in written grammar or to answer reading questions in single sentences. Thus, it is meaningful to look at their experiences and the kinds of difficulties that Chinese students may have at FYC, echoing with the position statement on Second Language Writing and Writers in 2009 calling for writing program administrators to "recognize [... and] take responsibility for the regular presence of L2 writers in writing classes, to understand their characteristics, and to develop instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural needs" (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2009). We should understand that when they enter our FYC courses, they will bring with them a variety of backgrounds and experiences, and their previous reading and writing in English will lead to varying degrees of success in adjusting to the discourse conventions in FYC.

All the 23 students have received at least nine years of English education in China; however, their view of FYC varied greatly due to their various English proficiency and different English education background. Some students think highly of the composition class, and their writing has been improved from the class. They think the

class is helping with the writings in their major or other classes they are taking. For instance, S4 commented, “I think this class is good. It helped me with the structure of my paper. This semester I need to write reports for my biology class, and it is this class help me with the structure of the paper.” S3 said,

> The biggest help is I got a lot of writing practice.... like in my major, biology, we hardly have any opportunity to practice writing. And in this writing class, from now and then, she will ask us to write five pages. Before, I felt like two pages, like the writing on TOEFL Test, takes me forever to write. Like 600 words, wow..... But now, I find five pages, just write every day and follow the flow, I don’t feel stressed. Even five pages for now, I feel just so so, it’s fine for me....

S11 shared, “I think the English class is pretty easy because it is just writing. I can totally do that, and I don’t need too much effort in doing that. I can do it pretty quickly.” S19 had more in-depth thoughts on the class, she said, “[The FYC] probably is more encouraging you to think, critical thinking; whereas in China, you were told where you did wrong, what you have to remember and recite, you have to do it.” S22 commented, “The class is rigorous, but I think it still has a high level of freedom, you can decide what you want to write about, as long as you follow the teacher’s big guideline.” S15 also shared,

> I don’t know why, but when she [the teacher] is speaking really fast, you are not really focusing on what she is talking about. However, probably because she is speaking really fast, it will help you to emerge in an environment, like the Crazy English, that kind of feeling, of course that she is not Crazy English, she will

> communicate with you, let you participate, like doing presentation, but the fast pace speaking can provide with an English environment, even if you speak Chinese in class, you want to speak fast too, somehow the fast speed will help you to remember things....

Meanwhile, many of the participants also revealed that FYC classes were quite different from the English classes they took in China. The former is to familiarize students with academic discourses and to prepare them as better writers in different fields, whereas the latter is to emphasize the memorization of vocabulary and grammar. These culturally specific educational discrepancies embodied in the two different types of curricula make some Chinese students think that their expectations of English classes are not being met in FYC courses; for instance, S2 mentioned, "I think the English teacher in China teach you good vocabulary words, phrases, they can help you to memorize some good words and sentences; here, is more about the whole essay organization and ideas. In China is more about passing the test." When being asked if FYC is helpful to improve her English, S1 said,

> No, in order to improve my writing, [in the past], I would like to read the texts in the textbook and underline the good words and sentences, because I really want to enhance my ability to write good words and sentences; however, the (FYC) teacher does not talk about this at all. She is focusing on the structure of the paper and telling you how to write a paper in general. However, for instance, the (Chinese) teacher was focusing on how to write well for preparing the TOEFL test.

Echoing with S1, S13 also shared,

> In general, I think the class is not very helpful....I think learning English has to deal with vocabulary and grammar; however, ENG107 is different, maybe the way the teacher teaching is different. For instance, before the class, he will assign an article and let you read. If you don't know some of the words, just look for them in a dictionary. He is not really focusing on grammar, never really talking about grammar. The assignment is writing, write a similar essay as the ones we read. So he thought you should learn something from the reading. But we cannot learn about grammar and the usage of the vocabulary. I need more help with grammar, but this class is not discussing grammar. When you completed the essay, the teacher will tell you something is wrong (e.g., sentence structures, verb tenses), but he does not tell you why, so if I want to correct the mistakes, I have to work on it very hard myself.

S3 had a similar experience, and he shared,

> I don't know how to put it, and probably this is the reality of American classroom, and I felt that the teacher does not teach much. My teacher keeps saying that we work on a project, say a month an assignment. [The process] includes going to the writing center, peer review, all kinds of stuff; however, I do not feel she's teaching anything. We keep writing by ourselves, and then go to the writing center, and then show the writing at peer review. That's what we do the majority of the time.

Since what they do is so different than what they do for English writing in China, the student felt really confused and does not understand the writing process here. S3

continued, “I am puzzled. In China, the teacher will teach you some writing tips. Here, just writing. Write, revise, write, revise, write, revise. The paper is longer every time, that is the process.” S3’s feeling about the class echoes what S1 describes her thought about the class, “Basically, the teacher is just there as a guide; the success of the learning depends all on your own efforts.”

When asked what the FYC class should be like in her opinion, S9 said, “I thought it should be more or less like the teaching in China, where it teaches you vocabulary, how to use grammar, more advanced grammar, or some tips, but they don’t have these (in FYC).” When asked what she learned from the class, S9 shared, “Just how to write a paper, the structure, the content, the format; you got to have the right format. I want the teacher to tell me all that explicitly.” S16 explained the difference he saw between the American and Chinese English teachers,

> I think my [FYC] teacher’s mind is broad. He talks about the writing topic from small things and observations. He then will give you a big and general topic to write about, and he will give you suggestions. For instance, we had a writing topic called *a problem to solve* in which we need to describe a problem and explain the solutions. That’s it, no other requirements. This is a very broad topic, and it all depends on your experience and imagination, and we need to do a lot of research to complete the task. But my Chinese teacher will not require a lot of research, which is a good thing for me, because I can then save some time, and I can just write myself.

Chinese Students' Experience with Writings in FYC

In China, writing in English always takes place in the form of producing 50-200 words short-essays, so the English classes in China, therefore, are, to a large extent, focusing on teaching students how to cope with different kinds of essays by providing the format, the often-used vocabulary words, or some test-taking strategies. On the other hand, the curriculum of FYC courses is often process-based, aiming at nurturing students to perceive writing as a process, in which they need to accumulate the ideas and resources over a period of time rather than writing an essay at one stretch. As S22 put it, "I think in China [English writing] is about passing tests, and here, is to practice writing skills. The teacher in China focuses a lot on grammar and here the teacher cares about ideas, thoughts and structures."

Some participants in this study were quite confident with their writing or their grades in the FYC classes; for instance, S21 said, "I got an A+ in ENG107 last semester, and I feel very confident with my writing." S6 commented, "When I was preparing the IELTS test, I had experience of writing papers like the ones we are doing now....and I actually feel that this class should have higher standards than right now." Other participants expressed that writing is still the biggest area of concern compared to other areas; S12 said, "I worked hard on my writing, but I think I made little improvement. Writing is really hard." S23 shared that out of the four skills of English, she thought writing was the worst. Researchers also found that students themselves are more anxious about writing than any other aspect of academic life (Berman & Cheng, 2010; Christison & Krahnke, 1986). The extent of this anxiety was evident in the experience of participants in this study, particularly as they moved into the second half of the semester, where

writing expectations became more demanding. The "big" writing assignments uniformly provoked anxiety.

The length of a paper

The writing projects of FYC courses often require students to work towards a much-longer-length paper of 1200-2000 words. With the substantial change in length compared to their English writing in China, many students are experiencing a hard time in adjusting themselves in writing longer papers. In this study, almost half of the participants (11) commented that the most challenging part they felt about FYC courses was the required length of the writing projects. For example, S10 complained, "five pages are too overwhelming, and I cannot handle the length. That is too much for me." Further, she added,

> I felt I am literally writing, writing, and writing, but still cannot reach the requirement of five pages .... I don't know what to add; I really do not have anything to say. Then, I just follow what the teacher suggests – add more dialogues – which takes up much space, a dialogue a row, so I just desperately add dialogues to lengthen my essay, but I don't think my essay is good.

Similarly, in sharing her experience of writing the observational essay, S4 said that the only concern she had was not being able to meet the required length. "In the end, I don't know what to write," S4 said. S2 also commented, "[The difficulty I have with this class] is what I have to write is way too long for me....about 1500 words....I do not know if my writing is being improved or not. It's just writing and writing, don't know if I am making any progress." S14 echoed, "In the past [in China], we just casually write, and

the writing is not usually long. Here is different. I got a really low grade for the first writing project because my essay is too short." And when asked why not to make the paper longer? S14 said, "I cannot think of any, way too stressful!"

S7 also shared the difference between writing class in the U.S. and in China:

> [The difference] is that here you have to revise to make your essay longer and longer. you have your first draft, second draft, you have to revise constantly to make your paper longer and longer, better and better. At first, I did not know about the writing center, so I revise the paper myself, and I feel my revision is not good. Then, I went to the writing center, and the revision is much better, and my paper is longer."

Lack of lexical resources

Among the 23 participants, more than half (15) articulated that they had difficulties in expressing themselves accurately in English due to the fact that their English is not good enough and they cannot find the exact words. Most students stressed that as they lacked the knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structures, there was a gap between what they intended to say and what they were able to produce in their writing. Failing to express their ideas in English as accurately as they could in their native language not only gives them the impression that English writing is challenging but also made them feel frustrated and lack in confidence with their language proficiency.

For instance, S9 said, "I am not confident with my English writing, because I know I don't have enough vocabulary. I have my ideas, but I don't have enough English words to write about my ideas." Commenting on his biggest challenge in English writing – inadequate vocabulary and sentence structures – S6 said that he always found one-third of his paper was

repeating the same content: “there is something in my mind that I want to write out, but I cannot actually put them into English, and I have to repeat the same ‘regular’ (常规) words and expressions again and again, which is the barrier [in my writing] that I feel I can never overcome.” S22 also shared, “my main problem in English is the lack of vocabulary .... I don’t really know the exact word to express my ideas and thoughts”.

In alike manner, S1 said that she wanted to finish the paper without being interrupted, but always found herself getting stuck by some vocabulary issues. Because of her limited knowledge of vocabulary, she was unable to choose the right words that fit the context. S2 also shared an example of his observational paper, in which he wanted to describe the layout of Starbucks, but he did not know how to describe it in English because of the lack of vocabularies. Another participant, S20 said, “sometimes I want to write something more academic. I wrote about the one-child policy, but my writing is too plain. I find it really difficult [to make the writing more academic.]”

Moreover, owing to the lack of vocabulary, Chinese students find it impossible to achieve lexical variety in writing, and lexical limitation also prevents them from fully expressing their ideas. In their writing, their vocabulary is so small that they cannot make full use of synonyms to enrich the expression, that they cannot find appropriate lexical items to accurately convey messages. S4 and S14 also mentioned word choices as one of their difficulties when it comes to academic writing. Though having been studying English for over ten years back in China, S4 still found that limited vocabulary affected his improvement in English writing, especially the use of appropriate words and the nuances of expression. As S14 commented on her writing, “I

really don't like using the same word again and again in my writing, but I don't know what other words to use."

Having some issues with vocabulary and sentence structures, some of the students are holding the belief that their English is not standard English. For instance, S22 shared, "um, my reading is fine, but my writing, um....., I think the main problem is my writing is not authentic, always has some traces of Chinese way of writing and thinking." S23 also said,

> I think my writing is weak because my use of words is very .... not impressive ("俗"), very plain, I cannot think of the words that are deep and sophisticated, so my writing is plain .... I don't know very sophisticated words, I do not even know how to read them, let alone to use it in my writing, so I feel my writing is kind of informal .... sometimes I don't know why I am using some weird words, like 'sucky', and I don't know how to use a more formal words to express that kind of idea.

Due to lexical difficulties, sometimes students need to turn to literal translation in English writing. For instance, by calling his own writing "Chinglish," S3 expressed his frustration when he could not change his "Chinglish" to "pure" English. He then shared an example of one Chinese expression, "腿上被灌了铅一样，走不动那种" [the leg is like filled with lead, so the person cannot move a step], which is a common Chinese expression to describe when a person is being stunned so that he/she cannot move a bit. S3 explained that in situations like this, he could not find a corresponding English expression that can best convey the meaning he intended. He was afraid if he directly translated the literal Chinese meaning into English, the whole sentence would be turned into "Chinglish," which might not make sense to the reader. S3 continued,

> Some of the English expressions are really troublesome; for instance, when you think of a Chinese word, and you want to change it into English, but it's really hard to find the "authentic" English expression. Sometimes, I am afraid that some people may not recognize my expression and I have to double-check with my teachers or go to the writing center to ask the tutor there.

American style of writing

Some participants think that Chinese academic writing has different structures than English academic writing. For instance, S14 commented, "I think the way Americans write is different than Chinese. Their writing has structures; for instance, they have an introduction, and then the content, in the middle, and towards the end is the conclusion." S6 thought the differences in structures are resulted from different thought patterns:

> Chinese writing gears towards holistic ways of thinking, thus using a more inductive method to organize the paper. I usually start with facts and details and developed with a thesis in the end. Actually, I have to adjust myself to the deductive structure in English writing by raising the thesis at the beginning and supporting the main idea with details and analyses afterward.

Moreover, some participants commented on how the teacher's focus only on the American way of writing discouraged them from writing well; for instance, S5 shared when he submitted the paper, the teacher changed the paper substantially, and the heavy feedback sent an influential signal to S5 that his paper was "really, really bad .... that kind made me really upset and let me down on my writing. I know I wrote in the way that was different than the American way of writing, but still, I think my ideas were good and match the topic. I think the teacher

looked at the paper as it is very disorganized, and she does not really understand my ideas. I felt confused and did not know how to improve or change."

One writing task in FYC courses that is particularly identified as challenging by many Chinese students is the argumentative essay. In fact, there is a type of writing in Chinese that resembles argumentative essay – *Yilunwen* (议论文), literally meaning – discussing paper, and many Chinese students equate argumentative writing with *Yilunwen*; however, the Chinese *Yilunwen* is a genre emerged in the context of the Confucius culture of eclectics that seeks the middle way as a philosophy of solving problems. On the other hand, argumentative writing in English is more about taking a definitive stand on a controversial issue by using evidence and sources. When a Chinese student is confronted with an argumentative essay topic, they are more likely to experience the sense of "cultural shock." S15 commented on his experience of working on the argumentative essay,

> We need to write a paper that has a clear standpoint, and I feel that I am really weak in this aspect. "Argument" means that you need to really refute someone else's ideas; however, I don't really understand that. Argumentative essay means a paper on a controversial topic, but since it is controversial, it cannot hold a standpoint because both sides must possess some righteousness. Therefore, my teacher thought that my paper is not good, I am still working on it. It is really hard for me to have a clear stance, and my standpoint is always vague. Although I am trying to stress my standpoint, I am still not good at it .... Also, the teacher wants you to pick a controversial topic, and the students usually pick the topics like abortion, the smoking/drinking ban, but I am not familiar with those kind of topics .... so I picked a topic, but that topic brought me a lot of trouble later.

He further explained,

> So I picked the topic of the city simulation games, that kind of video games. I think to most people, especially the young generation, video games are good, but probably other people don't agree, and I don't have a ground. I picked that topic because I major in civil engineering, but later, I was so confused. The city simulation video games help people understand the concept of civil engineering, so I support those video games, but that's it, I don't have much to say, but if I write about the counter-arguments, I can also write a lot. Then, it seems that I am supporting the other side of the argument, so I was confused....

S10 also shared her difficulties in writing an argumentative paper, and she said, "..... you will sometimes find that the grammar, vocabulary, and sentences in the paper are all correct, but you still cannot earn a good grade. That is because you've made a serious mistake – that is about your standpoint – your evidence cannot support your standpoint. I find it so hard to have a clear standpoint."

Citations

Another task that many participants felt confused about is the unfamiliarity with the convention of incorporating other's research/ideas into their own academic English writing. Numerous studies have reported that Chinese international students are confused by the differences between Chinese and American ways of borrowing ideas (Jia, 2008; Zhang, 2008). Writing assignments in FYC classes, particularly argumentative essays, generally call for research of literature or previously published material and document those sources, which is a task that is not focused on in the English writing curriculum in China. Some students in this

study have not even known what source documentation is. For instance, in writing her argumentative essay, S16 found that she was baffled about how to document sources in her paper. She said,

> I think this will happen to many Chinese students that they don't know where the sources are from, who are the authors, etc. I was, too, very confused. First, the teacher did not really focus on teaching how to document a source. Second, I probably did not catch what she said, so I don't know how to cite the articles. I think to us Chinese students, when we are looking for sources, we tend to look at Chinese websites, but we don't know how to cite Chinese sources. The teacher told us to print out the Chinese source together with an English translation, then she would know where and how we cited the source, but I felt this is really difficult and awkward because we don't know that thing [source documentation] even exists. Even though now I know I have to cite in my paper, it is really hard for me to get used to that. The Chinese teacher taught you the writing strategies, but no one asks you to cite anything, so we only write, but no citation. However, in English writing, especially I need to write a lot of papers, and I am having so many problems with citations and references. I am just writing and writing, but then [the teacher] requires you to cite if you borrowed some ideas. I am just confused....

On the other hand, Chinese students tend to use many well-known proverbs, maxims, and fixed phrases in their papers to show that they are knowledgeable in certain areas (Wu & Rubin, 2000), but very often they either do not think it is necessary to cite or they do not know the sources of those sayings. There were few rules about citation or documentation in the Chinse academic writing. Usually, when students write in Chinese, they are not required to specify the sources

they incorporated. S22 commented that “our Chinese students are not used to doing these. We don’t have the concepts of how to do these tasks, so it is not that handy (得心應手) for us; that is why we are experiencing some difficulties. S16 echoed,

> It is very common that we wrote something in our paper that we don’t think it is necessary to cite, but our teachers, they are professionals in writing, and they can tell immediately and ask you if that is said by someone else and if so you need to cite. My classmates are having the same problems, he liked to use “someone said XXX” in his paper, but he does not know who that “someone” is, because he does not know the sources of that quote. Documenting the sources is my big problem, and also the trouble I had while arguing for my side. I don’t know how to write the argument paper.

S16 further remarked that American students know how to cite sources since they were junior and senior high school students; therefore, some FYC teachers think that students already are familiar with these tasks, but a lot of Chinese students are still struggling with doing citation and references. He added,

> To most Americans, citation and reference are so “ordinary” (稀松平常), and they used to do that since they were little at school, so the teacher thought we have all known the concept or the previous teachers have already taught the knowledge; however, I think this is the kind of knowledge that should be taught multiple times. See, now we have a lot of Chinese and Korean students here, and those Korean students, they cannot do it (citation and reference) neither.

In alike manner, S21 said, “In my biology. You need to be really clear on your citation.....if.....at the beginning, I did not know about citations....then....if you don’t include your

citation, he (the teacher) will consider it as plagiarizing, and he will give you a zero. It (Plagiarizing) is very serious here. And the FYC teaches you all these (how to do citation). What are references....because quotations and citations are a very new concept to me. I never learned it before....I think this is a cultural difference."

S22 shared how the teacher helped her used the school's library database to work on her research paper, which was something she had never done before in China. Back in China, the English class was more about teaching words and grammar and pass the English tests. She was amazed to see so many available articles that she can read and use the ideas to support her argument. She felt later her ideas in writing come out as swift as the flow of a spring ("文思泉涌").

Unfamiliar content and terms

Not only the genre or the citation rules that Chinese students are not familiar with, the content and themes of the course sometimes set a significant barrier to Chinese students too. Although the FYC courses in the university are not theme-focused, the content and ideas discussed in the class are mostly centering around American culture. Some participants described feeling lost or disconnected when they lacked the historical or cultural context for some discussions in the class (e.g., S18, S20). For instance, S7 shared,

> Sometimes, the teacher or the classmates will talk about pop music or talk about a movie, but I have no knowledge of those music or movies. I mean, it is certainly good for me to get familiar with American culture in this class, but I do think

> lacking that knowledge to some extent set barriers for me to understand the content of this class.

Though the content of the FYC courses are intended to be socially and intellectually meaningful to students, and Chinese students indeed can learn Western culture and constructs in the writing course, they are, however, not really exposed to what Van Gyn et al. (2009) would call "diverse sources and contexts of knowledge" (p. 26). This speaks to the gap between the big-picture rhetoric and policies of the institution and the on-the-ground reality for L2 students in classroom settings. Further, despite this institutional reality, much of the research on international students takes the form of acculturation studies—in other words, how well these "foreign" students adjust to existing educational frameworks, rather than how our education meet the needs of those students.

Besides the content and constructs in the course, some students also reported their unfamiliarity with the technical terms in writing, or the terms were so abstract that they could not contextualize them in their own writing. For example, S20 shared that as a native speaker of Chinese, she had no idea of the term "proposal," and therefore, she could not perform well in a task that asked to write a proposal on a certain topic. S10 mentioned that he felt what the teacher required (e.g., audience of the paper) sometimes is really abstract to him and when he actually wrote the paper, he could not keep the requirement in mind. S19 also shared that she can't understand the teacher because of some "professional terms," and she was hesitant to ask because she was afraid the teacher explained the term already, and just she did not catch it because her "listening is not that good." Thus, when L2 students have to learn the concept and

language simultaneously, they would find the task particularly challenging. For instance, S14 shared,

> I am not familiar with American education, and I don't really understand the grading system.... back in China, we do what the teacher taught us or just do the homework, (the homework is) all on paper. Here, we have to do it online.....and I am not familiar with doing homework online....plus, I don't really understand what he is talking about in class....Probably I have some problems in listening, I am not really blaming him (the teacher), but I only understand half of the class. I kind of know what he is talking about, but I don't know how to write.

S2 mentioned that the sample writings that the teacher provided were all written by Americans, and he did not really understand their concepts. "[From the sample writings] I want to see the process of how to revise a paper.... I hope our teacher can give us some samples written by Chinese students."

CHAPTER 8

CHINESE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE WITH FYC TEACHERS, CLASSMATES, AND WRITING CENTER

This chapter will focus on the participants' experience with FYC teachers, classmates, and the writing center. By exploring these interactional experiences, we can better understand how Chinese students come into contact with people in the American curricular environment.

Chinese Students' Experience with FYC Teachers

In this study, we interviewed 23 participants about their experience of interacting with their FYC teachers. Many students have expressed the different classroom environments and dynamics they've experienced here in the U.S. classrooms than those in China. For instance, S11 shared,

> In China, we are not used to talking and interacting with teachers, because most of the times we are having lectures, and we were taking notes and absorbing what the teachers said in class. Here, in the U.S., I have to say the classroom environment is different where it encourages you to talk, and also many times, I figured out the assignment by talking to the teacher. There are terms I don't understand, and by talking to her I became clearer on the assignment and what she wanted us to do. I feel that I have to talk to someone to keep me on top of my assignments and everything.

Some students' accounts of their education back in China tended to reflect the nature of communication described in Hammond and Gao's (2002) dialectic model; for instance,

S6 commented that “in China, we just listen and receive knowledge, here the teacher encourages you to talk more in class, to express your ideas, I think that is a quite different classroom environment.” S9 echoed, “If I have any problem, I can argue for it with my teacher.... I mean if I don’t agree with the teacher, I can discuss it with him. It is impossible in China .... I have to listen to the teacher all the time [in China].”

What I found from the interview is that many students can adapt to the change in teaching style pretty well. In this study, many students expressed that they benefited from interacting and working with their FYC teachers (e.g., a more clear idea of the assignment). For instance, S1 shared about his teacher,

> Our teacher knows that our Asians do not like to answer questions voluntarily, then she will actively encourage us to talk in class, I like it, so I like to talk in class to practice my oral English, which is lacking in English classes in China. In China, the classroom is not as interactive as here .....so usually in English class in China, we do exercise first, then the teacher will grade the exercise, and in class, the teacher will pick students to answer the questions in the exercise. At that time, I was afraid the teacher would call me. I don’t think this type of teaching/interaction fit me that well.

S3 also shared that his teacher would be really glad if they talked in class. S7 said, “My teacher is very familiar with Chinese culture.... we have many interactions in class, I feel we have something in common .... when we have group discussions in class, she will join us too in the small groups, and I think it is helpful and fun.”

Furthermore, from the interviews, many participants showed appreciation of the feedback they received from the teacher. For instance, S21 said, "I went to see her for each of my writing projects. I get feedback from him, and I went to his office hour....because I think FYC can easily get a good grade (compared to other classes this participant was taking)....because as long as you want to work hard, go to see the teacher multiple times, getting feedback and you do multiple revisions, you can get good grade." S15 concurred,

> Honestly, not until last semester, I started to speak out. Though my English is poor, but he [the teacher] is very approachable and humorous, to help me. ....For example, while I was revising my paper, he gave me several different sentences to replace my sentences, and let me sense which one is better....In one of the paragraphs that I wrote, he showed to me how I used the same sentence pattern; in other words, my sentence pattern is very repetitive. He told me there are many other types of sentences that I can use. Then, while I was working on a big term paper for another class, I realized that I used the same sentence pattern again, and then I recalled what he taught me. Then I revised one paragraph and it turned out a wonderful paragraph, and the teacher from that class liked it a lot.

Sometimes, students see interactions with teachers as a way to negotiate the meaning of the tasks, to make the teaching and learning more effective. It is thus, as McCarthy (1991) put, a process of empowerment and a way of developing learner responsibility. For instance, S16 shared,

> I think it is good that I can talk to the teacher freely. If I have questions, I can talk to the teacher after class or during her office hours. Sometimes, the teacher does not quite understand my ideas, because it's kind of.... like the Chinese way, but I can explain to the teacher how I thought. Most of the time, after my explanations, the teacher will understand and take my ideas.

As well, the following statement from S9 shows how he found negotiation with the teacher is an effective way to solve the problems in his writing:

> Yes, I have many interactions with my teacher. He does not even turn down the jokes..... Both sides, equal communications, yes, we discuss if we see there is a problem [in my writing]. Negotiate back and forth [with my teacher]; then the right solution will emerge.

S9 further shared a specific experience interacting with the teacher:

> Yesterday I went to his office to discuss the concept of technology [in my writing]. He said that you have to use very specific details to support the topic of technology. However, I think that if we are talking about a specific [thing] we have to elaborate on it with details, but when talking about the general concept of technology, you don't necessarily need details. It's just arguing ....and usually the result is not bad. He kind of agrees with my point, but at the same time, I will listen to him and try my best to revise my paper.

In some cases, however, some participants do not consider the interactions with a teacher in class is to be very helpful in improving their writing. For instance, S6 described her professor as a good storyteller: "she talks about her trips to different

countries, she talks about her son, she talks about her hobbies." While S6 was impressed with the stories and enjoyed those stories, "there is not much of discussions about the assignment topics, I want to learn more knowledge about English writing from my teacher." Some participants thought, on the other hand, the teacher encouraged too much on interactions in the classroom. For instance, S17 shared, "When the teacher asked a question, many students raised their hands, and the teacher will call the students one by one. In my opinion, sometimes, the students just repeat the same ideas again and again. I don't think it's valuable, and I think it is a waste of time."

Although many students commented on how they benefited from meaningful interactions with the teachers, other students have a mixed feeling of interacting with teachers. For instance, while S7 appreciate the written and oral feedback that she received from her teacher, she said the teacher had a lot of questions about her writing: "Many things I wrote in the paper my teacher does not know or understand, for instance, I wrote a paper on Pizza Hut in China, and I wrote about the salad bar there. The famous 'salad stacking' in Pizza Hut. [My teacher] does not understand, and she thought pizza hut is just for pizza." When asked if she explained to her teacher about the salad stacking, she said, "I did, but it's hard, I don't know what to say besides it is a salad buffet....I feel it is hard to explain the concept to my teacher" (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Pizza Hut Amazing Salad Towers Of China (Popken, 2011).

On the other hand, some students expressed that they have limited interaction with the teacher. S20: "The teacher is pretty strict and stern .... he is doing lectures in class, and I am not really interested in what he's saying. I think the interaction is 'so so.'" S20 also shared her experience at the student-teacher conference:

> Occasionally, he will let us meet with him [individually] to talk about the paper....Every time I went there, I think probably he's meeting too many students, he talked to me about one minute, then he asked me to pull out my paper, I opened the document, but he did not really look at it .... but then he talked the paper in general, some dos and don'ts, he said if I followed these, there will be no problem. Ok, then you can go!

S20 felt the conference was very “superficial”, and it did not really help her with her writing. S8 shared her experience of the unsuccessful interaction with the teacher: “The first writing project, he looked at it once in a conference. Then, I went to see him again, hoping he can take a look at my paper again. He said, ‘No, everyone has one chance. If everyone sees me a second time, I will be super busy’.” S8 then concluded how he felt about writing,

> I think writing is.... every teacher’s feedback is different from one another in content and style, and if you want to get a good grade, you need to follow the teacher’s feedback. There is no so-called good writing; it is just to follow the instructions. Therefore sometimes, I am confused with my writing because I cannot get enough feedback from my teacher.

Some students commented when they ask the teachers for help, the teachers tend to redirect them to writing center tutors.

Compared to interacting with teachers in China, some participants feel that in China the interaction with the teacher is more passive; here you have to be more active and initiative. For instance, S23 shared that in China, the teacher has to “scold the students every day and consistently remind students to be attentive in class and remind students to turn in their homework. Here, the teacher does not do a lot of reminding, but if you don’t turn in the homework, you have to take the consequences.” On the other hand, some participants still felt the distance with the teacher, and it is easier to relate to the teachers in China, “here it’s like you interact with the teachers by the rules you learned from books” (S3).

Based on the interviews, it seems that many participants are willing to talk to their teacher, and they benefited from interacting with their teachers, which are quite different than what the previous research demonstrated. Many students have also shared what they have considered as different from the Chinese classroom environment. They also talked about the struggles they've experienced while communicating with their teachers and the limitations in their attempt to interact with the teachers. These are all valuable input to the current research on Chinese students and other international student populations.

Chinese Students' Interactions with FYC Classmates

As I mentioned earlier, all the participants in this study are from the multilingual FYC classes, which implies that the students in the class are multilingual students. Much research has been done on students' interactions with the host country students or friends (e.g., Holmes, 2005), but few research is on Chinese students' interaction with the cohort Chinese students and other international students in the classroom. Therefore, it is worthwhile to look at how Chinese students interact with their multilingual classmates.

In general, participants in this study feel comfortable with multilingual students in the classroom; for instance, S9 shared, "we have students from Europe, Saudi Arabia, and Japan. We all have a good time talking to each other during peer review and other inside and outside of the classroom time because we are all young people, and we have something in common." S7 also shared similar experience of working with her classmates,

> We have small discussions in every class, and by talking to my classmates, I feel my English has been improved. Although my classmates do not speak native

> English, neither do I, we feel pretty comfortable talking in English. Sometimes, when we don't understand each other, we guess each other's meaning or search the words online. I think in general, we had a good time together in the FYC class.

S21 also explained how she felt about the cohort of multilingual students in her class:

> The fact that my classmates are all international students makes me less nervous in the class, especially in this writing class, because I know that their native language is not English. We have the similar background from a foreign country and similar English proficiency, everybody is equal, and I don't need to worry too much that my English is not good. I think as long as I work hard, I can do well in this class.

Furthermore, for this particular institution where the participants were from, the majority of the international students were from China. Therefore, most of the students in the multilingual FYC class were Chinese. In several cases, the presence of students from the same Chinese cultural background gave comfort and confidence to participants; for instance, S7 shared, "I think my English is OK, and I felt that my English is improved .... every class, we have small group discussions, and I tend to sit with Chinese students. I feel it's much easier to communicate with people from similar backgrounds, and I feel my English is improved because I feel relaxed to speak English with Chinese students .... Other classes don't have many Chinese students tend to be more difficult." In a similar note, S2 shared how comfortable and relieved she felt in the FYC class because the presence of cohort Chinese students in her class:

> Most of my classmates are Chinese, and I feel comfortable to have Chinese students in the same class, so I don't feel alone. We can discuss the homework together. I think for students like me who only come to the U.S. for a short period of time, it's good to have someone that speaks the same language as you and has a similar background as you to take class together.

S12 shared how his view towards Chinese students in the FYC class has been shifted over time: At the beginning of the semester, when he saw many Chinese students in the classroom, he did not really like to be surrounded with Chinese students, feeling that he cannot improve his English and writing by just working with Chinese students. However, after some positive experiences of working with Chinese students, he started to change his view, he actually felt comfortable and productive to work with Chinese students. He felt like he has more "common language" ("共同语言") with his fellow Chinese classmates.

In terms of working with classmates, many participants mentioned their peer-review experiences. Most of the participants consider that working with classmates on a paper is very useful for them to improve their writing. The most common comments from the participants were as follows: they learned much about writing by reading each other's writing and by giving each other advice; their peers had many useful suggestions to make; having a peer read his/her writing was motivating. For instance, S9 shared, "I think my classmates' comments and suggestions are very helpful to me; Moreover, when I read other classmates' paper, I realized that they put a lot of efforts in the paper, so I need to do well on my paper too." S5 echoed, "I relied a lot on my classmates' comments, and I

like talking to them because they read my paper from their perspectives that they can help to improve my paper."

S3 also shared an example of working with classmates on the observational essay, and his peers helped him to notice problems that he would not otherwise have noticed: "I feel that some of my classmates' comments are useful. For instance, last time I did an observation essay about a building, and my classmates reminded me of writing about the activities in that building. I totally forgot that, and my classmate helped me out .... I feel my classmates are on a similar level of English proficiency as mine. They can help me." S4 also said that the classmates helped her with essay structure and using the right words. S6 echoed, "During peer review, my teacher would hand out two peer review sheets and give feedback to each other. I think my classmates' feedback and comments are pretty good, and I revised my paper substantively based on their comments."

S16 shared his experience of working with one of his classmates and help the classmate understand the importance of audience:

> .... ; for instance, one of my classmates wrote an essay on same-sex marriage. Because of my religious and cultural background, I am actually against that same-sex marriage, and my classmate is for same-sex marriage, which is OK for me. However, in his essay, he did not really address the opposing views, he is just writing about why he is for that idea. Then, I talked with him about my thoughts and suggested him to write about both sides. He said he never thought about the opposing ideas, and he agreed with me that if he writes about both sides, the audience will more readily accept his ideas.

On the other hand, some participants think peer review is not that helpful in terms of improving writing. For instance, S13 shared, "I felt peer review is not that helpful mainly because each student they have different level of English proficiency, and sometimes I felt it's wrong, but it's not. I don't know about the feedback." However, S13 did appreciate the classroom discussions with his classmates: "We are all multilingual students, we are all learning English, and we are not good at English, but we would like to help each other out." S11 felt some students don't really listen to the teacher, and they like to chitchat in the classroom, and they don't know how to answer the questions. They like to be together all the time.

Some participants also worry about whether their feedback is valid both as a reviewer and as a writer. For instance, S16 shared,

> I wrote something too native to Chinese people, for instance, I wrote a topic on college entrance exam in China; for my classmates who are not Chinese, they will feel that they are just reading some news/information, and I don't think they will have a deep feeling about the subject, so they probably will not have many suggestions, or questions on the subject. They will only give me feedback on grammar or essay structure .... I think in general exchanging essays and talking with my classmates is good. However, for some essays, their feedback probably is not that helpful, because we are all students and we don't have much experience, not like our teachers, who can provide more valuable feedback.

S2 also shared his thoughts on working with classmates and providing feedback: "I enjoyed working with my classmates, but when it comes to talk about essays and

provide feedback, I am afraid that I could not give good feedback, I am afraid that they don't understand my feedback." In some cases, language also plays a role in their hesitancy to participate. Students commented that they struggled to put their ideas into English; for instance, S20 shared, "(During peer reviews) I would really like to hear from my classmates, but sometimes they speak too fast, and their accent is hard to understand."

Only a few participants in the study expressed that they did not enjoy class discussions, considering the discussion and talking is a waste of time, like S1 shared, "I really hope that the teacher will not arrange so many discussions during the class period....The class time is gone just for the discussions and talking ....we have many Chinese students in the FYC class, and in the discussion, we just talk in Chinese....although the teacher mentioned that we need to talk in English, but still most of the time [we talk in Chinese]."

Chinese Students' Experience with Writing Center Tutors

In one way or the other, many participants in this study considered the tutoring experience in writing center as a useful resource to improve their writing. Some participants commented that writing center tutors could help to make their writing more "native-like". For instance, S12 shared, "It is definitely useful to go to the writing center, because the tutors there helped me revise the paper, so my paper will not be not understandable to my teacher. Therefore, my grade will be higher because of that." Some participants (e.g., S2, S17) reported that the FYC teachers provide feedback more on the overall organization and ideas, whereas for the minor issue or specific questions related

to writing, they can go to the writing center to seek help. When asked how the writing center can help her improve the writing ability, S19 said,

> They help my writing to be more native-like. They helped me correct my "Chinglish" writing. For example, some of my ways of English expressions were outdated and seldomly being used, like to say 'what a pity' in my writing, and sometimes in my speaking too. And the tutor told me to use 'unfortunately' instead of what a pity.... For us beginner writers, we tend to make many mistakes; when you go to the writing center, your mistakes can be corrected in a short period of time, and the quality of the paper can be improved then.

Similarly, S3 shared his experience with writing center tutors to make sure his writing "sounds right":

> For some expressions, I know how to write in Chinese, but I am not sure the expression in English, and it's hard to look up those expressions. I am worried that if I write the expressions in my way, other people may not understand my writing. Then, I went to the writing center, and ask the tutor there if they understand my expression if my writing sounds right to them. That helps me a lot.

S18 also shared her experience on how the writing center tutors help with the grammar in her writing,

> I am poor in grammar, and one tutor in the writing center helped me a lot in my grammar, especially in verb tenses. He made a tense table for me. You know, in China, the teacher also teaches the verb tenses in the similar way of making a table; however, they are always teaching on the blackboard, seldom is the case I can learn them in real writing.

> While the tutor is teaching me the verb tense, he will ask me, "how do you think?" to confirm that I understand. I then gradually realized that I made fewer mistakes in tenses. I know when and where to use the words like 'was' or 'were.'

S3 shared his experience with writing center tutors on the last writing project: "I felt that I have many problems with my paper, and I visited the writing center many times, and I felt like there are so many problems that I have never noticed before. For example, I always write the pronoun 'I' as 'i,' they help me catch many mistakes, I feel my writing has been improved so much...." S7 even suggested to other students,

> Don't always rely on your own, go to writing, let them look at your paper. They will help you with the organization and other minor errors. Sometimes, you may totally not recognize (those errors), and lose points because of that. I feel it is pretty easy to get an A in FYC class, as long as you go to the writing center often, or even the online writing center is very helpful.

S15 concurred:

> From the point of achieving more, faster in the most effective way, you write your paper the first day and the second day you go to the writing center for revision ideas.... They are the experts in revising other students' papers. I have encountered the same tutor for different classes, multiple times. He is such a great help to me. He will ask me about my goal for the tutoring session – do I want to revise the whole paper or do I just let him pick out the mistakes, so I can correct the mistakes and submit my paper on time. He taught me many things, like how to do the reference page, which I missed from the FYC class. Another example, for instance, in a paragraph I explained redundantly where I found the

> article, who is the author, how I am going to use the article in my paper, things like that, very long. He taught me that I could shorten my elaboration to make it more condensed and precise.... I have taken another class, in which the teacher has a very high standard for grammar .... we are always getting really low scores because of poor grammar. I went to the writing center to find me....I am not good at grammar at all and the same tutor helped me a lot in my grammar, especially in verb tenses. He made a tense table for me. You know, in China, the teacher also teaches the verb tenses in the similar way of making a table; however, they are always teaching on the blackboard, seldom is the case I can learn them in real writing. He will ask, 'How do you think?' I then gradually realized that I made fewer mistakes in tenses. I know when and where to use the words like 'was' or 'were'.

Some FYC teachers encourage students to go to the writing center to seek help or redirect them to the writing center when they ask for help in their writing. Some professors promote the writing center by offering extra credit points if the students utilize the tutoring services. S12 said, "If we go to the writing center, we can get bonus 5 points by showing the teacher writing center receipt." Many students mentioned that they at the beginning they went to the writing center for earning extra credits, then they later want to go there for the tutors to read their paper carefully, talk about the paper, and get feedback so to improve their writing. As S13 shared,

> At first, my teacher told us to go to writing center so that we can get extra credit, then I went there a few time and then I realized that I want to spend time with the tutors to go over my paper, the tutors are just like the same age as mine, and feel comfortable there.

CHAPTER 9

KEY THEMES AND DISCUSSIONS

The goal of this chapter is to link the findings of the study – the new generations of Chinese students' motivations, pathways, and their experiences with FYC classes – to key themes and to discuss the implications in light of the existing literature.

Internationalization of Higher Education and Chinese Students

The worldwide shift in education towards a more global agenda has becomes more and more prominent in recent years. The concept of internationalization of higher education has gradually grown, not only as a goal but "as a means to improve the quality of higher education" (Jibeen & Khan, 2015). The impetus for the internationalization of higher education is often linked to the dynamic interplay of global forces in our society (American Council on Education, 2012; Brustein, 2007; Hunter et al., 2006). With China's extraordinary economic growth and active diplomacy, Chinese international students are playing a significant role in this process of internationalization. There is strong evidence from individual higher education institutions to focus on the recruitment of international students, especially Chinese students, for financial purposes and the agenda to create a more diversified campus.

The findings of this study, therefore, add dimension to the literature on Chinese international students and internationalization of higher education, whose existing research tend to based on the broader trends of global student mobility (NAFSA, 2016) and strategies to expand internationalization (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Brusten, 2007). This dissertation study first researched Chinese students' sociocultural histories and

context of studying overseas in the past. Then, through situating current Chinese overseas students in the combined contexts of past histories, internationalization of higher education, and China's unique social and economic environments, the study provided an opportunity to look at the new generation of Chinese students from a new perspective.

Through conducting intensive interviews, the study also explored Chinese participants' motivations and pathways to the United Stated and particularly their experience in FYC classes. Participants in this study are testaments to global student flows, but they are not just numbers; rather they are individuals whose experiences have been shaped by sociocultural histories, past educational experiences, internationalization in higher education and more. They have visions, shared experiences, and articulated their goals and expectations. Therefore, an important implication of this study is that its findings to some extent challenge our status quo about "who" these Chinese students are and how they are able to negotiate as a part in our social-academic communities and college classrooms.

The Past and New Generations of Chinese Students

As discussed in Chapter 3, the history of Chinese students studying abroad is long and substantial. While having helped to reshape the international student body at U.S. universities nowadays, the population of the Chinese overseas students itself has been substantially shifted over time. It is important to study the development of Chinese overseas students in the past, so it can be re-interpreted for understanding the sociocultural background of the new and future generations of overseas students. With the knowledge of the history of Chinese students studying abroad, from the first group of

Chinese students sent to the United States in the 1800s to now, China has ranked as the top country of origin for international students around the world and is the number one country of origin for the United States. We know that the current influx of Chinese students studying abroad is not an isolated phenomenon, and it has some deep roots.

In Chapter 4, I attempted to explore the characteristics of the new generation of Chinese students. The number of Chinese students at American universities has grown 20-fold over the past decade to roughly 363,341 in 2018 (IIE, 2018), which has significant economic and academic implications. In contrast to the previous generations, the new generation of students is growing up in an environment where China saw extraordinary economic growth. The age of these students who choose to study abroad is increasingly becoming younger. Most Chinese overseas students are coming from middle-class families who can support the students financially, thus adding revenue to the U.S. economy. The new generation is young and empowering. They have access to both Chinese and Western perspectives, values and worldviews, which has provided opportunities for them to develop unique viewpoints and thoughts with their study abroad experience.

Chinese Students' Motivations and Pathways to the U.S. Higher Education

In Chapter 5, I explored the reasons why many Chinese students choose to study abroad and why the United States is their preferred destination. I explained the motivations in terms of China's educational system, the involvement of the parents, broader higher educational choices, and the perception of benefit from a U.S. higher educational institution, as well as the constraints within the students' home country, for

instance, the tough college entrance exam (*Gaokao*) or limited job opportunities. This aligns with what the literature calls the push-pull motivation for study abroad (Altbach, 2004; Chirkov et al., 2007; Lee, 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Such motivations are frequently tied to a desire for practical opportunities, such as seeking a higher-quality education without taking the tough college exams in China and for increased employment opportunities after graduation. However, though these participants certainly explained their motivations for studying in the U.S. in these ways, for example describing limitations in their home countries' higher education or how they heard other people who went study abroad and got a decent job eventually, it was surprising to note the various ways participants articulated motivations that went beyond the traditional push-pull categories. Participants sometimes talked about deeper motivations such as "seeing more of the world," "enhancing the abilities to make decisions," and "becoming more independent," reflecting a sense of self-development and self-actualization through studying abroad. These deeper motivations somewhat echo with Bodycott's (2009) research on how motivations for study abroad differed between Chinese parents/families and their children. Parents' motivations were related to practical benefits and constraints, falling einto the traditional push-pull categories, but many of the participant students were motivated more by the perceived quality of a U.S. degree, personal growth and development, and a desire to have international and intercultural experiences. For some of my participants, these deeper motivations helped them to establish a certain autonomy in their study in the United States: Many participants talked about how they felt they had

grown more self-confidence, become more self-reliant, and become more accountable for their own learning.

In fact, motivations of Chinese students studying abroad have evolved over time, and the changes in motivations are rooted in dramatic increases in choices, as reflected in the various pathways that the new generation of Chinese students can take to arrive on the U.S. campuses. Compared with the previous generations, especially the fifth generation (1978 -2005) of Chinese students studying abroad, when most students were still dependent on the sole pathway of government support to travel abroad, students' choices of studying abroad were severely limited in spite of the theoretically liberalizing 1984 policy (Bartel, 2015). In the fourth (1949 -1965) and fifth generations (1978-2005), many students' opportunities to study abroad were dependent on the external financial resources –from the Chinese government or from the students' overseas relatives or from the U.S. universities' research fellowships or teaching assistantships. This forms a stark contrast with the decision process of new generation students, who with more economic power and emphasis on education are armed with more choices and pathways to studying abroad.

Chinese Students' Experiences in FYC Course

Writing like an American!

Taking different pathways, the new generation of Chinese students, with their unique cultural, educational, and language background, are entering into the U.S. university curricular setting. This study particularly explored Chinese students' experiences in the FYC course, the required core curriculum writing course in American

college. Through interviewing 23 Chinese students in the FYC program at a large research-oriented university in the western United States, the study enhanced our understanding of Chinese students and what we can learn from orienting ourselves to the students' specific experiences in FYC classes.

The finding showed that while some participants are confident with their writing and getting decent grades in FYC classes, other participants expressed their concerns with writings in the FYC classes, and they framed their concerns in terms of lack of lexical resources, unfamiliarity with the citation conventions, and difficulty in writing "American-like" essays. In a sense, these participants were trying to accept the norms and values of the U.S. academic community. They aspired to adapt to the standards of U.S. higher education and try to be able to write and communicate "like Americans." I think this trying to be "like Americans" does not indicate that these students are trying hard to fit in the American academic culture, but more because most of them have a clear goal – to pass the class and get a decent GPA. On the other hand, most of the FYC classes were drawing heavily on American pop culture and themes. This seems to support Zhou, Knoke, and Sakamoto's (2005) findings on L2 students assimilating into a Western knowledge framework, one that is perpetuated by members of the dominant community, who may unconsciously view L2 students as different or unfamiliar while focusing less on "the effects of reciprocal unfamiliarity" (p. 303).

Studying Chinese students' experiences with FYC courses revealed that Chinese students are having some challenges in the curricular settings and the challenges can be stressful; however, from the interviews, we can see that the participants are making

deliberate efforts to overcome their challenges, and these efforts are aided by increased contextual familiarity that can lead to opening up of a range of opportunities from which the students can benefit. Some ways include asking teachers and peers for clarification and help, negotiating with teachers for meanings, using institutional resources like writing centers, and relying on their own experiences.

Becoming a confident writer.

Furthermore, on the socio-academic level, most participants felt that they became more confident as a writer. Not only were they able to write longer essays, but they know how to find support and resources on campus (peers, teachers, writing center, teammates, roommates, etc.) to help improve their writing. More importantly, many participants expressed they have grown to a better writer, they could express themselves more freely and confidently in English, and they gradually found their own "voice" in writing. Since the interviews took place in the second half of the semester, many participants expressed a sense of accomplishment in the FYC classes. S16 shared, "Now I don't feel FYC is hard. We already finished two projects, and this third project we already worked on the draft, and I have a clear goal and plan for this project. As long as I follow the prompt and my plan, I don't think I will have any problem." S7 said, "In the past, I can never imagine that I can write a five-page essay, and now I can write essays even longer than five pages. I am literally surprised by myself." Similarly, S15 shared that her writing has been improved the most after she came to the university, "because I need to write a lot, writing 10 pages is common here. Although I am still having some problems with my grammar, but interestingly, I feel that now writing is my strongest subject." S15 further revealed,

> I feel that the FYC class helped me a lot in writing. It helped me to write an essay in a short period of time. In the past, I am struggling with writing a whole essay. I believe many people, especially Chinese students, tend to procrastinate until the last minute. At that time, especially the last night before the due date, you will be really frustrated, and it's likely that you are not going to have a good outcome. After taking this class, I feel that I am more confident in writing, and I can write my paper in a short period of time. Maybe I need to go back to revise, but definitely, the class is helping me to write a paper that meets the teacher's requirements. I probably need four, five hours or even longer time in the past to write a draft, and now it's about two to three hours.

In other words, I think the students recognized where they had begun and how they felt about their writing in English, and now they can articulate their approaches to negotiate and improve their writing and have realized how they developed a stronger point of view as a writer. As a Chinese, a researcher and a teacher, I was particularly touched when these Chinese students talked about their changes after they came to the U.S. university and how excited and relieved they felt when they finished a long paper that they had never experienced before, which gave these students a considerable amount of confidence about conquering the challenges in the future. Undoubtedly, their experiences at FYC classes helped them to move closer into the academic context of the U.S. university.

Chinese students' interactions with teachers, classmates, and tutors

Some research in the past has indicated Chinese students' reluctant participation in classroom discussions and fewer interactions with teachers and classmates. The

assumption is that Western education is based on a dialogic mode of learning, whereas the traditional Chinese classroom is towards the "monologic" mode of learning. The dialogic mode of learning is inquiry-based, requiring interactive and cooperative communication strategies, and emphasizing critical thinking and practical application: "The teacher-student encounter is characterized fundamentally by communication, sharing meaning moment by moment'' (Hammond & Gao, 2002, p. 235). A dialogic approach encourages students to ask questions, challenge the ideas of the teacher and other students, ask for elaboration or qualification of ideas expressed, and express original opinions. Whereas in traditional Chinese classrooms, communication with teachers is not typically considered essential part of the learning process, and thus it focuses more on attentive listening and active thinking. Some participants in this study shared about the "monologic" classroom environment in China that focused on lecturing, taking notes, and memorization, in which the teacher is the heart for teaching the knowledge and information, and the ultimate goal for the students is to learn the knowledge and pass the test.

The findings of this study also provided evidence that Chinese students appreciate the teachers in the FYC classrooms who are willing to communicate with their students. Participants addressed the benefits of interacting with the teachers: as a way to improve their speaking, to negotiate the meaning of the class and assignments, and to build relationship with the teacher. Some participants are surprised to discover that teachers enjoy getting to know their students, and most teachers are happy to see students during their office hours or to talk a few minutes with the students before or after class. Social

capital theory (Stanton-Salazar, 1997) could indicate an explanation for this. Social capital, within the institutional setting, is defined as relationship with individuals who are able and willing to provide institutional resources and opportunities. In other words, especially for international students, these interactions with teachers are quite valuable from which students can access information they need and insight on how to succeed in college, and most importantly valuable emotional and moral support. On the other hand, some participants also shared their unpleasant experience of interacting with the teacher, mostly because the teacher was not very responsive or did not provide the kind of help the student needs. However, Biggs (1996) noted that Chinese students might continue meaningful interactions with their teachers in warm, social contexts beyond the classroom. In general, participants in this study kept an open mind to different teaching and pedagogical styles. With practice and positive experiences, I believe they will become more confident and comfortable to communicate with their teachers, and further exert agency over their learning in U.S. college classroom environment.

The study also highlighted participants' remarks on interactions with their peer classmates. Many participants considered the interactions as an excellent way to start knowing each other in the classroom. From the students' perspective, interactions with classmates from similar or diverse backgrounds potentially leads to increased awareness and understanding of different perspectives, as well as improved English language skills and a greater feeling of belonging to the learning community. In regard to interactions with peers for feedback, most of the participants considered the discussion for feedback as a positive element of the classroom experience, which was one of the surprising

findings from the study. I had assumed that Chinese students would be self-conscious and would not feel comfortable talking with other classmates, especially during the peer review sessions with the task of having to pronounce a judgment on their classmates' writing. I thought they would be reluctant to share their thoughts and be intimidated by the expectation to critique other students' work. While some participants expressed concerns about the validity of the feedback, most students shared that they benefited from discussing with their classmates about their writing, and they developed positive relationships with classmates from peer-review interactions and other classroom activities.

The positive experience of interactions for the Chinese participants also goes to their interactions with writing center tutors. The goal of the Writing Centers at the interviewed participants' university is to "offer a dynamic, supportive learning environment for undergraduate and graduate students at any stage of the writing process. Tutors from a wide range of majors help students hone writing skills and gain confidence in their writing." The writing center experience shows that participants appeared to work out ways to improve their writing and academic learning, and so to maximize their chances of success in FYC classes. As Harris and Silva (1993) pointed out,

> For students whose first language is not English, the writing classroom cannot provide all the instructional assistance that is needed to become proficient writers. For a variety of reasons, these students need the kind of individualized attention that tutors offer, instruction that casts no aspersions on the adequacy of the classroom or the ability of the student. (p. 525)

Furthermore, many participants considered interacting with writing center tutors as a way to communicate with native speakers that have the "insider" knowledge of writing. Chinese students have less difficulty communicating with tutors in the writing center, in part because they consider the tutors as their peers and view them less of an authoritative figure. The writing center is the primary means of support for international student writers. Writing center professionals Susan Blau and John Hall in their 2002 article "Guilt-free tutoring: Rethinking how we tutor non-native-English-speaking students" noted that writing center tutors help students better understand the content, and unlike professors or even graduate-student teaching assistants, who often have the power to give grades, "the tutor occupies a 'safe' middle ground for the [non-native English-speaking] client to express his or her concerns without condemnation or evaluation" (p. 32).

In general, throughout the semester, participants faced challenges in FYC classes, but they appeared to work out ways to understand the environment and maximize their chances of success. The role of agency is growing as a characterizing feature of these Chinese students' experiences in FYC classes. The findings in relation to Chinese students' agency resonates with the work of Shapiro, Cox, Shuck, and Simnitt (2016), who argue that we need to go beyond "appreciation" and "inclusion" of diverse students and begin to recognize and promote their agency in U.S. college classrooms.

CHAPTER 10

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Implications for Existing Literature on Chinese Students

This dissertation study contributes to the booming literature on the mobility of Chinese students in U.S. higher education. The new generation of Chinese students is marked by the new era's characteristics, who are also the largest source of international enrollment for U.S. colleges and universities. Adopting a sociocultural approach, this study presented the history of Chinese students studying abroad, demonstrated the differences of the new generation Chinese students in the U.S. higher education system, explained who these students are, why they came to the U.S., and the pathways they took to arrive in the U.S. The study provided a holistic understanding of this new generation of Chinese students in the U.S. higher education.

This study also provides valuable insights into how Chinese students experienced and understood being part of the FYC courses at a U.S. university through the exploration of the 23 participants. Though the unique experience of these Chinese students in FYC was sometimes tinted with anxiety in writing and confusion about the course, we apparently see these participants negotiate and grow in the foreign course and cultural environment. This was evident in their motivations to study in the United States, in their negotiation of the classroom experience, and in the way they reflected upon what they had felt and accomplished in the FYC course and beyond. Far from being passive learners and writers, these participants were often active agents of their own experiences and I can feel from the interviews and my experience of working with them that these

students have a strong sense of agency and self-awareness, and they believe in their own competence and in their capacity for achievement.

Implications for Pedagogy

The study provides teachers and administrators in U.S. institutions an approach for viewing and thinking about Chinese students and other L2 students in a more holistic way – that these students are coming from a rich sociocultural background and they are not static; they are dynamic and active individuals with rich previous sociocultural experiences. Taking the sociocultural perspective suggests a focus for educators as they think about ways that can impact students' lives in order to create environments where these students can learn, work with each other, and strive, not giving up or hide important features of their lives. This requires more understanding of the cultures that students bring into the classroom where differences are valued.

The findings of this study also raise important implications for teachers in classrooms where there are Chinese students and other L2 students to recognize these students' salient characteristics. The teachers and educators also need to realize the importance of developing and fostering practice that can help these students learn and succeed in the class. With the heavy recruitment of Chinese students into Western educational institutions, teachers, as well as students (both local and international), need to recognize the importance of developing practices that can be fostering the mindset of diversity in classrooms. We should be aware of our L2 students and combine forces to do the best we can for them.

By exploring Chinese students in the curricular context in order to understand how they construct and reveal their experiences in the FYC classes, the study raised questions about the specific FYC curricular requirement and the pedagogies and ways that might be reconsidered to better support the academic needs of L2 writers with various backgrounds and expectations. The FYC has been a staple course in American higher education for more than 150 years and is one of the most required courses for almost every college student. The approach to FYC, at least at this research site, clearly had great value to the participants: The participants' academic writing had been improved, they became more expressive in their needs and more strategic in their negotiation of the weight of the course, and they were proud in managing through the course and in what they had accomplished. Nevertheless, I hope this research can give more voice to these students who are not from the dominant culture and linguistic community, and I hope this research can inspire administrators and educators to reflect on their practices and ways to help these students succeed in the U.S. college classrooms. As Ferris et al. point out in their discussion of working with L2 students,

> It is of paramount importance that professionals in writing programs—administrators, classroom instructors, writing center personnel—share information about all aspects of working with L2 student writers.... Writing professionals should draw on each other's literature or research and practical experience so that the needs of all students can be addressed most effectively (p. 226).

Implications on a Dynamic Sociocultural Approach

This study adopts a dynamic sociocultural approach to explore Chinese students and their FYC experiences. While the sociocultural framework allows us to see how Chinese students are embedded within multiple sociocultural contexts, the approach also helps us understand where the challenges arise from, and how expectations across different contexts overlap or collide with each other. A complex interplay of schooling, societal, and cultural expectations interact to influence participants' experience. For instance, from the participants' past educational experiences, a historically exam-oriented Chinese education system that emphasizes memorization and standardized tests gave participants few opportunities to practice writing original essays or use speaking and writing as a communicative tool; accustomed to the Chinese way of writing, some participants are not familiar with conventions of citations; a more collectivistic society in China that stressed being modest indicated that participants found it hard to speak up and bring attention to themselves in the more individualistic U.S. education system that demands student active classroom participation. Therefore, using the dynamic sociocultural approach that situates participants' challenges contextually provides a more holistic understanding of their experiences and urges us to recognize that different sociocultural background and history possess different expectations, which resonates with Norton and Toohey's (2001) view that students are "situated in specific, historical and cultural contexts," and they may "resist or accept the positions these contexts offer them" (p. 310).

The findings of this study further reinforced the sociocultural perspective that the way people interact with others and the culture they were embedded in shape their experiences. Considering the efforts these Chinese students make in classrooms and beyond to overcome the challenges, it indicates that the students possess agency in actively making sense of their learning, and this awareness and agency reveals that engagement in different educational contexts shape one's abilities, attitudes, and behaviors.

Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

The limitations of the study outlined suggest how the study could have been done differently.

1. This study examined twenty-three Chinese participants, with the aim of exploring their experiences in FYC classes. Future research can include more students' experience-related data, such as classroom observation, interview with their FYC teachers, learning logs, and writing portfolios to gain further insights of students' experiences from different angles.
2. All twenty-three participants in this study were from multilingual FYC classes, and therefore their experiences tend to only reflect the interactions with L2 classmates; future research can include students from regular FYC classes.
3. The study is limited to students of Arizona State University, and a single research site might not be able to show a complete picture of Chinese students' experience in composition classrooms.

4. The interviews were conducted in the Chinese language then translated to English. Although best efforts were made to translate the interviews from Mandarin Chinese to English, some inaccuracies might be created through translation.

Albeit the limitations, from this dissertation study, many opportunities exist for future researchers, who are interested in this topic and would like to move forward from this study on understanding the new generation of Chinese students and their experience in FYC courses to other relevant topics:

First of all, longitudinal studies on Chinese students' FYC classroom experiences can be conducted in future research projects. This could reveal the dynamic changes in Chinese students' understanding and negotiation in U.S. college settings, as well as their changing expectations of American higher education institutions. Furthermore, future studies can look at Chinese students' classroom experiences in other disciplines and compare their experiences in various disciplinary classrooms. This can provide a holistic understanding of Chinese students' experiences in U.S. universities across different disciplines/majors.

Second, regarding Chinese students' experiences, future projects might also conduct a comparison study on different groups such as pre-departure students (their expectations of the upcoming experience in U.S. universities), students who are currently enrolled in U.S. universities, and those who have graduated from U.S. universities. The comparison study could reveal how students' perceptions of experience change over time, and how that influence the strategies they use to negotiate in the curricular settings.

Third, the dynamic sociocultural model, which is developed in this study, can be applied to future research projects in order to obtain a deeper understanding of Chinese students and/or other student populations' experiences in a particular context.

REFERENCES

AFP. (2014, May 14). School pressure to blame for Chinese youth suicides, official study finds. *South China Morning Post.* Retrieved from https://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1512032/school-pressure-blame-chinese-youth-suicides-official-study-finds

Abubakar, B., Shanka, T., & Muuka, G. N. (2010). Tertiary education: An investigation of location selection criteria and preferences by international students – The case of two Australian universities. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 20*(1), 49–68.

Adamson, B., & Morris, P. (1997) The English curriculum in the People's Republic of China. *Comparative Education Review, 41*, 3–26.

Allen-Ebrahimian, B. (2015). Chinese students in America: 300,000 and counting. More Chinese students are studying in the U.S. than ever before. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/11/16/china-us-colleges-education-chinese-students-university/

Altbach, P.G. (2004). *Comparative higher education: Knowledge, the University, and development.* Greenwich, CT: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Altbach, P.G., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *11*(4), 290-305.

Andrade, M. S. (2006). International students in English-speaking universities: Adjustment factors. *Journal of Research in International Education, 5*(2), 131-154.

Associated Press. (2013, November 11). Record number of foreign students in U.S. Record number of foreign students. *Fox News.* Retrieved from https://www.foxnews.com/us/record-number-of-foreign-students-flocking-to-american-colleges-study-says

Astin, A. (1993). Diversity and multiculturalism on the campus: How are students affected? *Change*, *25*(2), *44-49.*

Ballard, B., & Clanchy, J. (1991) *Teaching students from overseas: A brief guide for lecturers and supervisors.* Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Bartel, A. E. (2015). *The evolution of Chinese students' motivations to study abroad in the US* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Mississippi. Retrieved from http://thesis.honors.olemiss.edu/253/1/SMBHC%20Thesis%20Final%20Version.pdf

Bartlett, T., & Fischer, K. (2011, November 3). The China conundrum. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/06/education/edlife/wwwthe-china-conundrum.html

Bates, J. (1997). *The effects of study abroad on undergraduates in an honors international program* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of South Carolina).

Beasley, W. G. (1981). *The Meiji Restoration.* Stanford: Sanford University Press.

Becker, H. , & Geer. B.S. (1960). Participant observation: Analysis of qualitative data In R.N. Adams & J.J. Preiss (Eds.), *Human organization research* (pp. 267-289). Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.

Belay, K. (2018, November 28). China is growing as a university research superpower. Here's how it could affect U.S. universities. *EAB.* Retrieved from https://eab.com/insights/expert-insight/university-research/china-is-growing-as-a-university-research-superpower-heres-how-it-could-affect-u-s-universities/

Belkin, D., & Jordan, M. (2016, March 17). Heavy recruitment of Chinese students sows discord on U.S. campuses. *The Wall Street Journal.* Retrieved from https://www.wsj.com/articles/heavy-recruitment-of-chinese-students-sows-discord-on-u-s-campuses-1458224413

Benson, M., & Boyd, H. (2018). *College for the Commonwealth: A case for higher education in American Democracy.* The University Press of Kentucky.

Bergman, J. (2012, July 26). Forged Transcripts and Fake Essays: How Unscrupulous Agents Get Chinese Students into U.S. Schools. *Times.* Retrieved from http://world.time.com/2012/07/26/forged-transcripts-and-fake-essays-how-unscrupulous-agents-get-chinese-students-into-u-s-schools/

Berman, R., & Cheng, L. (2010). English academic language skills: Perceived difficulties by undergraduate and graduate students, and their academic achievement. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics/Revue canadienne de linguistique appliquée*, *4*(1), 25-40.

Bevis, T.B. (2014). *A history of higher education exchange: China and America.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Biggs, J. (1996). Western misperceptions of the Confucian heritage learning culture. In D. Watkins & J. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese learner: Cultural, psychological, and con- textual influences* (pp. 45-67). Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre. Melbourne: Australian Council for Education Research.

Blau, S., & J. Hall (2002). Guilt-free tutoring: Rethinking how we tutor non-native English speaking students. *Writing Center Journal* 23(1), 23–44.

Bodycott, P. (2009). Choosing a higher education study abroad destination. *Journal of Research in International Education, 8*(3), 349–373.

British Council. (2014). *Integration of international students: A UK perspective.* London: British Council.

Breitenstein, D. (2013, August 4). Asian students carry high expectations for success. *USA Today.* Retrieved from https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/08/04/asian-students-carry-high-expectations-for-success/2615483/

Bogdan, R., & BIklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An Introduction to theory and methods (3rd ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Bongaarts, J., & Greenhalgh, S. (1985). An alternative to the one-child policy in China. *Population and Development Review, 11*(4): 585–617.

Cai, J. (2003). Investigating parental roles in students' learning of mathematics from a cross-cultural perspective. *Mathematics Education Research Journal, 15*(2), 87–106.

Carlson, J. S., & Widaman, K. (1988). The effects of study abroad during college on attitudes toward other cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 12*, 1-17.

Chang, M. (1996). Racial diversity in higher education: Does a racially mixed student population affect educational outcomes? Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.

Chen, A. (2002). Capitalist development, entrepreneurial class, and democratization in China. *Political Science Quarterly, 117* (3), 401-22.

Chen, C.G. (1996). *The external flow and return of talent.* Wuhan, China: Hubei Education Press [in Chinese].

Chen, C., Lee, S., & Stevenson, H. W. (1996). Academic achievement and motivation of Chinese students: A cross-national perspective. In S. Lau (Ed.), *Growing up in the Chinese way: Chinese child and adolescent development* (pp. 69-91). Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press.

Chen, C.G., & Liu, C.M. (2003). *Talents' return and utilization.* Guangdong, China: Guangdong People's Press [in Chinese].

Chen, M. (1979). Birth planning in China. *International Family Planning Perspectives,* 5(3), 92-101.

Chen, Y. (2016). *Chinese parents' perspectives on parenting: Children's education and future prospects*. Retrieved from http://epublications.uef.fi/pub/urn_nbn_fi_uef-20161093/urn_nbn_fi_uef-20161093.pdf

Cheng, D. (2018, June 14). Nine reasons why Chinese students choose to study abroad. *The World University Rankings.* Retrieved from https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/advice/nine-reasons-why-chinese-students-choose-study-abroad

Chitwood, M. (2019, June 21). What a High-Pressure College Entrance Exam Reveals About China. *World Politics Review.* Retrieved from https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/27967/what-a-high-pressure-college-entrance-exam-reveals-about-china

China Education Center. (2014). Education in China. Retrieved from https://www.chinaeducenter.com/en/cedu.php

Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council. (1999). Decision on the deepening of educational reform and the full promotion of quality education. Retrieved from http://www.edu.cn/zong_he_870/20100719/t20100719_497966.shtml [in Chinese].

Ching, Y., Renes, S., McMurrow, S., Simpson, J., & Strange, A.T. (2017). Challenges facing Chinese International students studying in the United States. *Educational Research and Reviews, 12*(8), 473-482.

Chirkov, V. I., Safdar, S., de Guzman, J., & Playford, K. (2008). Further examining the role motivation to study abroad plays in the adaptation of international students in Canada. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 32*, 427-440.

Choudaha, R., Chang, L., & Kono, Y. (2013, March 1). International student mobility trends 2013: Towards responsive recruitment strategies. Retrieved from http:// www.wes.org/ewenr/13mar/feature.htm.

Choukhmane, T., Coeurdacier, N., & Jin, K. (2013). The one-child policy and household savings, October, CEPR Discussion Paper No. DP9688.

Christison, M. A., & Krahnke, K. J. (1986). Student perceptions of academic language study. *TESOL Quarterly*, *20*(1), 61-81.

Chu, T. K. (2004). 150 years of Chinese students in America. *Harvard China Review*. Retrieved from http://www.cie-gnyc.org/newsletter/150_years_chinese_students.pdf

Chua, A. (2011, January 8). Why Chinese mothers are superior. *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704111504576059713528698754

Clavel, T. (2014, January 19). China, South Korea face familiar woes in English quest. *The Japan Times.* Retrieved from https://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2014/01/19/issues/china-south-korea-face-familiar-woes-in-english-quest/#.XgpO_y2ZPRY

Conference on College Composition and Communication. (2009, March). *Writing assessment: A position statement* (Rev. ed.). Retrieved from http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/ positions/writingassessment

Crawford, T. (2018, April 30). Why Chinese students aren't a threat. *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/article/Why-Chinese-Students-Aren-t/243279

Credit Suisse. (2015). Annual Report 2015. Retrieved from https://www.credit-suisse.com › docs › financial-reports › csg-ar-2015-en

Dee, P. (2010). International students movements and the effects of barriers to trade in higher education services. In C. Findley, & W.G. Tierney (Ed.), *Globalization and tertiary education in the Asia-Pacific: The changing nature of a dynamic market* (pp.39-71). Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.

Deloitte China. (2016, May). Golden age of China's education industry. Retrieved from https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/cn/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/deloitte-cn-tmt-golden-age-of-the-chinese-education-market-en-160713.pdf

Deloitte China. (2018, August). A new era of education: China education development report 2018. Retrieved from https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/cn/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/deloitte-cn-tmt-china-education-development-en-report-2018.pdf

Deng, Z. (1990). Brain drain and the Chinese education movement: Causes, implications, and policy options. Ph.D. dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University

Ding, Q.J., & Hesketh, T. (2006) Family size, fertility preferences, and sex ratio in China in the era of the one child family policy: Results from national family planning and reproductive health survey. *BMJ, 333,* 371–373 .

Drews, D. R., & Meyer, L.L. (1996). Effects of study abroad on conceptualizations of national groups. *College Student Journal*, *30* (4), p.452-462.

Elman, B. A. (2013). The Civil Examination System in late imperial China, 1400–1900. *Frontiers of History in China,8* (1), 32-50.

Fam, K.S., & Gray, B. (2000). Asian values and education promotion: an empirical study. *Marketing in a Global Economy Proceedings*, 431-438.

Fang, F.G. (2016). World Englishes or English as a Lingua Franca: Where does English in China stand? *English Today,* 1-6

Farrell, D., Gersch, U., & Stephenson, E. (2006, June). The value of China's emerging middle class. *McKinsey Quarterly.* Retrieved from https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/china/the-value-of-emerging-middle-class-in-china

Farrugia, C. (2014). Charting New Pathways to Higher Education: International Secondary Students in the United States. *IIE.* Retrieved from https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Publications/Charting-New-Pathways-To-Higher-Education-International-Secondary-Students-In-The-United-States

Fenn, W. P. (1976). *Christian higher education in changing China, 1880-1950.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Ferris, D., Liu, H., Sinha, A., & Senna, M. (2013). Written corrective feedback for individual L2 writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*, 307–329

Firth, A. (1996). The Discursive Accomplishment of Normality: On lingua franca English and Conversation Analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *26*(2), 237-259.

Fleming, D. (2014). *From form to meaning: Freshman composition and the long sixties, 1957–1974.* Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburg Press.

Fisher, K. (2010, August 8). Colleges extend conditional admissions to pull in more international students. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/article/Colleges-Extend-Conditional/123783

Fisher, K. (2017, January 29). From China to America. Then what? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/article/From-China-to-America-Then/239023

Fu, Y. (2013, June 19). China's unfair college admissions system. *The Atlantic.* Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/06/chinas-unfair-college-admissions-system/276995/

Gao, H. (2012, March 28). How China's new love affair with U.S. private schools is changing them both. *The Atlantic.* Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/how-chinas-new-love-affair-with-us-private-schools-is-changing-them-both/255154/

Gaokao Net. (2018). Retrieved from http://www.gaokao.com. [in Chinese].

Gareth, D. (2005). Chinese students' motivations for studying abroad. *International Journal of Private Higher Education*, *2*, 16-21.

Geuna, A. 2015. *Global mobility of research scientists: The economics of who goes where and why.* Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Gürüz, K. 2008. *Higher education and international student mobility in the global knowledge economy*. Albany, NY, State University of New York Press.

LaFargue, T. (1987). *China's first hundred: Educational mission students in the United States, 1872 -1881.* Washington, DC: Washington State University Press.

Li, Cheng (ed.). (2010). *China's emerging middle class: Beyond economic transformation.* Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press.

Li, W. (2015). Study abroad waves and China's development. Master's Theses, Brandeis University.

Liu, Z. (1981). Population planning and demographic theory. In Z. Liu & J. Song et al. (Eds.), *China's population: Problems and prospects* (pp. 1-24). Beijing: New World Press.

Haynie, D. (2014, November). Number of International College Students Continues to Climb. *U.S. News.* Retrieved from https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2014/11/17/number-of-international-college-students-continues-to-climb

Hammond, S., & Gao, H. (2002). Pan Gu's paradigm: Chinese education's return to holistic communication in learning. In X. Lu, W. Jia, & R. Heisey (Eds.), *Chinese communication studies: Contexts and comparisons* (pp. 227-244). Westport, CT: Ablex.

Harris, M., & Silva, T. (1993). Tutoring ESL students: Issues and options. *College Composition and Communication, 44,* 525–537.

Hawkins, A. (2019, March 20). How rich Chinese parents get their kids into U.S. Colleges. *Foreign Policy.* Retrieved from https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/20/rich-chinese-parents-are-smoothing-their-kids-way-into-u-s-colleges/

IMF. (2015). *World Economic Outlook Database*.

He, N. (2010, August 5). Rush to learn English fuels quality issues. *China Daily.* Retrieved from https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-08/05/content_11098499.htm

Holmes, P. (2005). Ethnic Chinese students' communication with cultural others in a New Zealand University. *Communication Education, 54*(4), 289–331.

Hu, G. (2005). English language education in China: policies, progress, and problems. *Language Policy, 4,* 5–24.

Huang, Z. (2016, March 29). Chinese students are studying abroad in record numbers – then coming home in droves. *Quartz.* Retrieved from https://qz.com/650511/chinese-students-are-studying-abroad-in-record-numbers-then-coming-home-to-xx/

Institute of International Education (2009). *Open Doors 2009: Report on International Education Fast facts*. New York. Retrieved from https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Fact-Sheets-and-Infographics/Fast-Facts

Institute of International Education (2010). *Open Doors 2010: Report on International Education Fast facts*. New York. Retrieved from https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Fact-Sheets-and-Infographics/Fast-Facts

Institute of International Education (2013). *Open Doors 2013: Report on International Education Fast facts*. New York. Retrieved from https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Fact-Sheets-and-Infographics/Fast-Facts

Institute of International Education (2018). *Open Doors 2018: Report on International Education Fast facts*. New York. Retrieved from https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Fact-Sheets-and-Infographics/Fast-Facts

International Business Times. (2012). 90% of China's super-rich want to send children abroad. *International Business Times*. Retrieved from http://www.ibtimes.com/90-china's-super-rich-want-send-children-abroad-434838

Iskyan, K. (August, 2016). China's middle class is exploding. *Business Insider.* Retrieved from https://www.businessinsider.com/chinas-middle-class-is-exploding-2016-8

Jackson, J. (2010). *Intercultural journeys: From study to residence abroad.* Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jackson, P., W. (1968). *Life in Classrooms.* New York: Holt, Reinhart & Winston.

Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a Lingua Franca: Attitude and Identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jia, H. (2018, January 17). China's plan to recruit talented researchers. *Nature.* Retrieved from https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-00538-z

Jiang, Y., & Ashley, D. (2000) *Mao's Children in the New China: Voices from the Red Guard Generation.* London: Routledge.

Jibeen, T., & Khan, M. A. (2015). Internationalization of Higher Education: Potential Benefits and Costs. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education,* 4 (4), 196–199.

Kehm, B.M., & Teichler, U. (2007). Research on Internationalization in Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11* (3-4), pp. 231-239.

Kennedy, K. (2018, July 11). "Sea turtles" increasingly return to China. *The Pie News.* Retrieved from https://thepienews.com/news/china-experiencing-influx-of-sea-turtles-as-increasing-number-of-grads-return-home/

Kipnis, A. (2011). *Governing educational desire: Culture, politics, and schooling in China.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kirby, W.C. (2018). Why Do So Many Chinese Students Come to the United States? In J. Rudolph & M. Szonyi (Eds.). *The China questions: Critical insights into a rising power.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Knight, J. (2003). Updating the definition of internationalization. *International Higher Education.* Retrieved May 10, 2010, from http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/newsletter/News33/text001.htm

Knight, J., & de Wit, H. (1995) Strategies for internationalization of higher education: Historical and conceptual perspectives. In De Wit, H. (Ed.), *Strategies for internationalization of higher education: A comparative study of Australia, Canada, Europe and the United States of America* (pp. 5–33). Amsterdam: European Association for International Education.

LaFraniere, S. (2009, June 12). China's College Entry Test Is an Obsession. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/13/world/asia/13exam.html

Larmer, B. (2017, February 2). The parachute generation. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/02/magazine/the-parachute-generation.html

Levin, R.C. (2010). Top of the class: The rise of Asia's universities. *Foreign Affairs,* May/June. Retrieved from https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/fora89&div=42&id=&page=

Levin, D. (2013, September 2). Chinese educators look to American classrooms. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/03/science/chinese-educators-look-to-american-classrooms.html

Lewthwaite, M. (1996). A study of international students' perspectives on cross-cultural

adaptation. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling, 19*(2), 167-185.

Li, L. (1993). Chinese students and their lives in United States universities. Doctoral dissertation, Washington State University.

Lieberthal, K. G., & Lampton, D.M. (1992). *Bureaucracy, politics, and decision making in post-Mao China.* Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Lindemann, E. (1993). Freshman composition: No place for literature. *College English, 55,* 311–316.

Lofland, J., & Lofland, L.H. (1984). Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Lu, S., & Hunt, K. (2015, July 15). Fraud frenzy? Chinese seek U.S. college admission at any price. *CNN World.* Retrieved from https://edition.cnn.com/2015/07/12/asia/china-education-agencies/

Luo, J., & Jamieson-Drake, D. (2013). Examining the educational benefits of interacting with international students. *Journal of International Students, 2*(2), *85-101.*

Marcus, J. (2013). Barefaced cheating in China's bull market for student fraud. *International Higher Education*, *Fall*(73), 9–11.

Marginson, S. (2016). The worldwide trend to high participation in higher education: Dynamics of social stratification in inclusive systems. *Higher Education, 72*, 413–434.

Magnier, M., & Bases, D. (2019, June 4). US universities brace for decline in Chinese students after Beijing warning. *South China Morning Post.* Retrieved from https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3012997/us-universities-brace-decline-chinese-students-after-beijing

McKenna, L. (2015, November 18). The globalization of America's Colleges. *The Atlantic.* Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/11/globalization-american-higher-ed/416502/

McMahon, M.E. (1992). Higher education in a world market: A historical look at the global context to international study. *Higher Education, 24*(4), 465-482.

Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G.N. (2002). Push-pull factors influencing international student destination choice. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 16*(2), 82-90.

Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G.N. (2008). *The global market for higher education: Sustainable competitive strategies for the new millennium.* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Meng, C. (1931). The American returned students of China. *Pacific Affairs, 4*(1), 1-16.

Mervis, J. (2014, August 21). Flow of Chinese grad students to U.S. slows. *AAAS Science.* Retrieved from https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2014/08/flow-chinese-grad-students-us-slows

McKenna, L. (2015, November 18). The globalization of America's colleges. *The Atlantic.* Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/11/globalization-american-higher-ed/416502/

McPhillips, D. (2016, October 25). Where in the world Chinese students are studying. *U.S. News.* Retrieved from https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2016-10-25/an-international-education-for-chinese-students-abroad

Morgan, R., & Penfield, K. (2018, November 13). New NAFSA Data: International Students Contribute $39 Billion to the U.S. Economy. *NAFSA.* Retrieved from https://www.nafsa.org/about/about-nafsa/new-nafsa-data-international-students-contribute-39-billion-us-economy

NAFSA: Association of International Educators. (2016). Trends in U.S. Study Abroad. Policy and Advocacy. Retrieved from http://www.nafsa.org/Publicpolicy.aspx?id=6672

National Bureau of Statistics of China. (2015). Retrieved from http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/

Neuby, B.L. (2012). Chinese student success in an applied academic environment. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 18*(4), 683–693.

Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2001). Changing perspectives on good language learners. *TESOL Quarterly, 35*(2), 307–322.

Nylander, J. (2015, July 13). How Chinese students are "cheating" to get into U.S. universities. *Forbes.* Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/jnylander/2015/07/13/how-chinese-students-are-cheating-to-get-into-u-s-universities/#61f04ff729b7

O'Morrow, W. (2017). Texts in context: Textbook choice in an evolving ELT environment. *NYS TESOL Journal, 41*(1), 26–29.

Orleans, L. A. (1988). *Chinese students in America: Policies, issues, and numbers.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Pascarella, E., Edison, M., Whitt, E. J., Nora, A., Hagedorn, L. S., & Terenzini, P. (1996). Cognitive effects of Greek affiliation during the first year of college. *NASPA Journal*, *33*, 242-259.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd edition). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Peng, P. (1997). China's population policy. *Population and Development Review, 23*(4), 926-937.

Phillips, T. (2013, December 3). OECD education report: Shanghai's formula is world-beating. *The Telegraph.* Retrieved from https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/10490225/OECD-education-report-Shanghais-formula-is-world-beating.html

Qian, N. (2002). *Chinese students encounter America.* (Translated by T. K. Chu.). Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Redden, E. (2013) International educators consider the challenges in integrating students from abroad. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/03/04/international-educators-consider-challenges-integrating-students-abroad

Redden, E. (2014, July 8). The younger international students. *Insider Higher Ed.* Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/07/08/new-research-provides-insight-growing-pool-international-high-school-students-us

Redden, E. (2017, November 13). New international enrollments decline. *Insider Higher Ed.* Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/11/13/us-universities-report-declines-enrollments-new-international-students-study-abroad

Redden, E. (2018, August 24). For International Students, Shifting Choices of Where to Study. *Insider Higher Ed.* Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/08/24/international-enrollments-slowing-or-declining-some-top-destination-countries-look

Redding, G. (1990). *The spirit of Chinese capitalism*. New York: Walter de Gruyter.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Scutt, D. (May, 2015). China's rising middle class will create opportunities the world has never seen before. *Business Insider Australia.* Retrieved from https://www.businessinsider.com/chinas-rising-middle-class-will-create-opportunities-the-world-has-never-seen-before-2015-5

Schatzman, L., & A. L. Strauss. (1973). *Field research: Strategies for a natural sociology.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Schneider, B., & Lee, Y. (1990). A model for academic success: The school and home environment of East Asian students. *Anthropology and Edu- cation Quarterly, 21,* 358–377.

Shah, S. (2004). The researcher/interviewer in intercultural context: a social intruder! *British Educational Research Journal, 30*(4), 549-575.

Shapiro, S., Cox, M., Shuck, G., & Simnitt, E. (2016). Teaching for agency: From appreciating linguistic diversity to empowering student writers. *Composition Studies*, *44*(1), 31-52.

Sharma, Y. (2013, October). Asia's parents suffering 'education fever'. *BBCNews.* Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/business-24537487

Siczek, M. (2018). International students in First-year writing: A journey through socio-academic space. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Siddiq, H. (2013, November 12). American universities eye Chinese students. *YaleGlobal Online.* Retrieved from https://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/american-universities-eye-chinese-students

Skeldon, R. (1996). Contemporary China: The consequences of change. *Journal of International Affairs, 49*(2), 434-455.

Stahl, M.L. (2016). Chinese students in United States high schools. Dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo,

Stanton-Salazar RD. (1997). A social capital framework for understanding the socialization of racial Minority children and youths. *Harvard Educ. Rev. 67*(1),1–40.

Stephens, P. (2013, September/October). International students: Separate but Profitable. *Washington Monthly.* Retrieved from https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/septoct-2013/international-students-separate-but-profitable/

Smith, M. (2019, May 31). Institutionalized Inequality: The Gaokao Exam and the Urban-Rural Divide. *China US Focus.* Retrieved from https://www.chinausfocus.com/society-culture/institutionalized-inequality-the-gaokao-exam-and-the-urban-rural-divide

Surdam, J. C., & Collins, J. R. (1984). Adaptation of international students: A cause for concern. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 25*, 240-245.

Tang, R. (2012). Two sides of the same coin: Challenges & opportunities for scholars from EFL backgrounds. In R. Tang (Ed.), *Academic writing in a second or foreign language: Issues and challenges facing ESL/EFL academic writers in higher education contexts* (pp. 204-231). London: Continuum International Pub.

Tardy, C. M. (2004). The role of English in scientific communication: Lingua franca or Tyrannosaurus rex? *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *3*(3), 247-269. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2003.10.001

Teichler, U. E. (2009). Internationalisation of higher education: European experiences. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 10*(1), 93-106.

The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed., (2001). Retrieved from http://www.columbia.edu/~daviss/work/files/_archive/ce_orig.html

Thorniley, T. (2010, July 13). Battle intensifies for $2bn English-teaching business in China. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/jul/13/china-english-schools

Tobin, J. J., Wu, Y. H. D., & Davidson, D. H. (1991). Forming groups. In B. Finkelstein, (Ed.) *Transcending stereotypes: Discovering Japanese culture and education.* Yarmouth, Maine: International Press, INC.

Tu, M. (2016). Chinese one-child families in the age of migration: Middle-class transnational mobility, ageing parents, and the changing role of filial piety. *The Journal of Chinese Sociology, 15,* 1-17.

UNESCO Institute of Education Statistics. (2010). Global Education Digest: Comparative Education Statistics Across the World. UNESCO, Montreal: UIS.

Vandermensbrugghe, J. (2004). The unbearable vagueness of critical thinking in the context of the Anglo-Saxonisation of education. *International Education Journal, 5*(3), 417–422.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Wang, X. (2013). The influences of parental expectations on children's academic achievement: A comparative analysis of the United States and China. Master's Theses, Loyola University Chicago.

Watson, M.M. (2014). Writing and the internationalization of U.S. higher education: The roles of ideology, administration, and the institution. Dissertation, Syracuse University.

Weagley, R.O. (2010, June). One big difference between Chinese and American households: Debt. *Forbes.* Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/moneybuilder/2010/06/24/one-big-difference-between-chinese-and-american-households-debt/#43d7b69522b4

Wheeler, D. (2011, May 19). U.S. and Australia compete for coveted partnerships with Chinese higher education. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from http://chronicle.com/blogs/worldwise/america-and-australia-compete- for-coveted-partnerships-with-chinese-higher-education/28238.

Wing, Y. (1909). *My life in China and America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Wong, E. (2012, June 30). Test that can determine the course of life in China gets a closer examination. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/01/world/asia/burden-of-chinas-college-entrance-test-sets-off-wide-debate.html

Wu, C. (Ed.). (1997). *General report of China's changing population and its development*. Beijing, China: Higher Education Press.

Xinhua. (2017). 43 percent of China's high school graduates admitted to colleges. *China Daily.* Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017-10/17/content_33370581.htm

Xu, J., & Fan, Y. (2016). The evolution of the college English curriculum in China (1985–2015): Changes, trends and conflicts. *Language Policy, 16,* 267–289.

Yan, K., & Berliner, D. C. (2011). Chinese international students in the United States: Demographic trends, motivations, acculturation features and adjustment challenges. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 12*, 173–184.

Yang, J. H. (2006). Has the one-child policy improved adolescents' educational wellbeing in China? Population Research and Development Center People's University of China. Retrieved from https://paa2006.princeton.edu/papers/60804

Yang, M., & Tan, S. (2006). *Haigui* (Overseas Returnees) in China's Nation-Building and Modernization. *EAI Background Brief, 315.* Retrieved from http://www.eai.nus.edu.sg/BB315.pdf

Yao, L. (2004). The Chinese overseas students: an overview of the flows change. Paper presented at the Australian National University 12th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, September, Canberra.

Ybarra, C.M. (1997). Kalamazoo College in Madrid: Study abroad as a rite of passage. Doctoral Dissertation, Stanford University.

Yi, L. (2014). Chinese international students' orientation to a U.S. public institution of higher education. Doctoral dissertation, Indiana State University.

Yin, S. (2013). The economic impact of Chinese international students in the United States. *Yale Economic Review.* Retrieved from http://www.yaleeconomicreview.org/archives/294

You, X. (2010). *Writing in the Devil's tongue: A history of English composition in China*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Zha, Q. (2011). China's move to mass higher education in a comparative perspective. *Compare, 41*(6), 751-768. Retrieved from http://sites.miis.edu/comparativeeducation/files/2013/01/Chinas-move-to-mass-higher-education.pdf

Zhang, M. (2007). Impact of English on Chinese mainland: From historical, educational and political dimensions. *US-China Education Review, 4*(5), 61-66.

Zhang, S. Y., & Carrasquillo, A. L. (1992). *Chinese American students: A review of the literature.* ERIC Document Production Service No. ED369682. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ ED369682.pdf

Zhang, Y., & Hagedorn, L.S, (2011). College application with or without assistance of an education agent: experience of international Chinese undergraduates in the US. *Journal College Admission, 6*, 16.

Zhao, Y. (2014). *Who's afraid of the big bad dragon: Why China has the best (and worst) education system in the world.* San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons.

Zhao, X., Selman, R. L., & Haste, H. (2015). Academic stress in Chinese schools and a proposed preventive intervention program. *Cogent Education, 2*, 1–14.

Zhou, Y. (2018, October 2). The impact of Chinese students in the US, charted and mapped. *Quartz.* Retrieved from https://qz.com/1410768/the-number-of-chinese-students-in-the-us-charted-and-mapped/

Zhou, Y. R., Knoke, D., & Sakamoto, I. (2005). Rethinking silence in the classroom: Chinese students' experiences of sharing indigenous knowledge. *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* 9(3), 287-311.

Zhuang, P. (2017, June 8). Gaokao: how one exam can set the course of a student's life in China. *South China Morning Post.* Retrieved from https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2097512/gaokao-how-one-exam-can-set-course-students-life-china

Zimmerman, S. (1995). Perceptions of intercultural communication competence and international student adaptation to an American campus. *Communication Education, 44*(4), 321-335.

Zweig, D. (2002). *Internationalizing China: Domestic interests and global linkages.* New York: Cornell University.

6574 days countdown to *Gaokao*. (2015). Retrieved from https://www.zhihu.com/question/28634839

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To:	Paul Matsuda LL
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair Soc Beh IRB
Date:	11/05/2012
Committee Action:	**Exemption Granted**
IRB Action Date:	11/05/2012
IRB Protocol #:	1210008470
Study Title:	Chinese speakers' university writing experiences

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1) (2) .

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER (CHINESE)

_____同学您好

我们正在进行一项研究，目的在于了解亚利桑那州立大学生的英文写作学习经验 。本研究 将由英文系教授 Paul Kei Matsuda 指导下的项目研究组完成:Juval Racelis, 刘佳宁、夏静、 吴黛敏与杨雨芹。我们希望您能参加我们的中文采访部分。在您同意的情况下，本研究小 组成员将会跟您联系，约定采访时间地点。

如果您已满 18 岁或以上，我们诚挚邀请您参与此项研究计划。 访谈时间约为一小时(如有需要，会安排后续访谈)，访谈内容主要在于了解您在英语写作课程(WAC 107, ENG 101, ENG 107)的学习经历。我們也可能邀請您分享您在這門寫作課中完成的其中一篇寫 作作業。对于访谈中的任何问题，您都可以选择是否回答。您也可以选择随时中止访谈。 本项研究结果可能会以研究报告、会议、论文及其他方式发表，但您的姓名以及所有相关 个人信息都会被删除。

参加本研究完全基于您的个人意愿。本研究不会引起您的任何不适或给您带来任何风险。如果您选择不参加本研究或在参加研究后的任何时候希望退出本研究，都不会给您的学业或成绩带来任何影响。您在采访中的回答将完全保密。访谈内容绝对不会透露给任何一个研究者之外的人。

采访过程将被录音。录音将会在得到您允许之后开始。在访谈过程中，一旦您觉得某处谈话不愿被记录，请随时告知采访您的研究者。在访谈过程中或访谈結束后，如果您希望更改您的回答，也请随时告知采访您的研究人员。我们将尊重您的选择。所有采访数据将会被保存在密码锁定的电脑文件夹中。在本研究发表后的一年内，访谈内容将会被删除。

如果您对本研究有任何疑问，请联系这些人员中任何一位:刘佳宁:Jianing.Liu.2@asu.edu, 夏静:Jing.Xia.1@asu.edu, 吴黛敏:Tai-Min.Wu@asu.edu, 杨雨芹:Yuching.Yang@asu.edu。 如果您对参加本研究应该享受的权利存在疑惑，或担心本研究会给您带来任何危险，请联 系亚利桑那州立大学研究协会(Research Integrity and Assurance) 自然人研究对象权益保障协会 (Human Subjects Institutional Review Board)主席:(480)965-6788。如果您对本研究感兴趣，请用电子邮件发给我们。回复本邀请函将视作您同意参加本研究。

十分感谢您的时间和帮助!

Paul Kei Matsuda
Juval Racelis
刘佳宁
夏静
吴黛敏
杨雨芹

亚利桑那州立大学英文系

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER (ENGLISH)

Dear (student name),

We are conducting a research study to investigate students' experiences through interviewing students and teachers in English writing courses at ASU. The interviews will be scheduled and conducted by a research team, Juval Racelis, Jianing Liu, Jing Xia, Taimin Wu, Yuching Jill Yang, under the direction of Professor Paul Kei Matsuda in the Department of English.

If you are 18 years of age or older, we are inviting your participation, which will involve asking you to participate in one 1-hour interview (with a possible follow-up interview) in which you will be asked about your experience learning English writing in the class (WAC 107, ENG 101, ENG 107). You may also be asked to share a writing assignment that you have done for your English writing class. You have the right not to answer any question, and to stop the interview at any time. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name and personal identification information will be removed.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty pertaining to your grades. Your interview response will not be shared with anyone but the researchers.

I would like to audiotape this interview. The interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be taped; you can also change your mind after the interview starts—just let the interviewer know. Data will be stored on password-protected computers and in locked file cabinets. The data will be deleted within a year of publication of the findings from this research.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact Jianing Liu, jliu77@asu.edu, Jing Xia, Jing.Xia.1@asu.edu, Tai-Min Wu, Tai-Min.Wu@asu.edu, and Yuching Yang, Yuching.Yang@asu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788. If you are interested in participating in this study, please reply to this email. Return of this invitation will be considered your consent to participate in this study.

Thank you in advance for your time and help with this study.

Paul Kei Matsuda, Juval Racelis, Jianing Liu, Jing Xia, Taimin Wu, Yuching Jill Yang

Arizona State University

APPENDIX D

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Chinese Students' Experience in First Year Writing Classrooms

We are conducting a research study to investigate students' experiences through interviewing students and teachers in English writing courses at ASU. The interviews will be scheduled and conducted by a research team, Juval Racelis, Jianing Liu, Jing Xia, Taimin Wu, Yuching Jill Yang, under the direction of Professor Paul Kei Matsuda in the Department of English.

We are inviting your participation, which will involve asking you to participate in one 50-minutes interview in which you will be asked about your experience learning English writing in the First Year writing classrooms. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name and personal identification information will be removed.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty pertaining to your grades. Your interview response will not be shared with anyone but the researchers. We will provide a $10 gift card as a small compensation for your interest and time.

We would like to audiotape this interview. The interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be taped; you can also change your mind after the interview starts—just let the interviewer know. Data will be stored on password-protected computers and in locked file cabinets. The data will be deleted within a year of publication of the findings from this research.

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please fill in the following blanks: First name (Pinyin): _____
Last name (Pinyin): _____
Home city (Hanzi): _____

Email Address: _____ Thank you in advance for your time and help with this study.

Paul Kei Matsuda, Juval Racelis, Jianing Liu, Jing Xia, Taimin Wu Yuching Jill Yang

APPENDIX E

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE (CHINESE)

出生年份: _____
性别: 男_ 女_
出生地: _____

已学英文的时间(年):_____

哪一年到的美国? _____

哪一年到的 ASU? _____

如何申请的 ASU?

a. 自己申请____
b. 请留学中帮助申請_____

如果你使用了留学中介，请指出是哪家?_____ 请选择你从中介那里得到了哪些帮助?
___考試准备 ___选择学校 ___准备申请材料
___填写申请材料 ___邮寄申请材料 ___其它，请具体说明
_____

9.考试准备和成績:
a. 你有没有参加语言考试补习班?

_____ 基本的英语学习补习班(不包含高中必修英語課程) _____TOEFL考试辅导补习班
_____IELTS考试辅导补习班
_____PTEA考试辅导补习班 _____ACCUPLACER考试辅导补习班 _____其它，请具体说明
_____

b. 考试成绩:
TOEFL iBT__ CBT ___ PBT____ (听___ 说___ 读___ 写___) IELTS_____ (听___ 说___ 读___ 写___)
PTEA_____ (听___ 说___ 读___ 写___)
ACCUPLACER___ _____我申请到条件式入学，语言能力测验成绩由ASU的AECP豁免
_____我没有任何考试成绩，直接就读ASU的AECP
_____ 其它其他考试(请具体说明)_____

10. 学位类别:交换学生 ___ 本科学位 _ 资格证书 __ 其它__

APPENDIX F

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

1. Year of birth: _____
2. Gender: _____
3. City of birth: _____
4. How many years have you been learning English? _____
5. When did you come to the United States? _____
6. When did you come to the current university? _____
7. How did you apply to the current university?

   a. I applied on my own _____
   b. I applied through a study-abroad agency _____

   i. Please indicate which agency you used _____
   ii. Please select in which of the following ways the agency helped you (Check all that apply)

   ___Prepare for the tests
   ___Decide which university to apply
   ___Prepare the application materials
   ___Fill out application forms
   ___Mail out the application materials
   ___Other, please specify_____

8. Language test preparation and scores

   a. Did you take any test preparation courses in order to apply to the current university? If yes, please check all that apply
   ____General English language courses (not including required courses in high school)
   ____SAT Preparation courses
   ____TOEFL Preparation courses
   ____IELTS Preparation courses
   ____PTEA Preparation courses
   ____ACCUPLACER Preparation courses
   ____Other, please specify _____)

   b. Test scores:
   TOEFL iBT__CBT__ PBT __ (Listening __ Speaking __ Reading __ Writing ____)

   IELTS_____ (Listening ___ Speaking ____ Reading ___ Writing ____)
   PTEA____ (Listening ___ Speaking ____ Reading ___ Writing ____)
   ACCUPLACER_

___I got a conditional admission and have proficiency test waived through the IEP ___I do not have a test score. I attended the IEP at the current university Other (Please specify) _____

9. Which degree/certificate program are you in? (Please check ONE from the following options)

___ Undergraduate at current university ___ Exchange program
___ Certificate program ___ Other (Please specify _____)

10. Major: _____

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS (CHINESE)

1. 你为什么会选择来美国呢?
2. 你为什么会选择来 ASU 呢?
3. 可以告诉我你申請 ASU 的经过吗?
4. 如果使用了留學中介，能聊聊你使用中介的过程吗?
5. 在 ASU 读书读得如何?
6. 你以前在中国是如何锻炼自己的英语听、说、读、写能力呢?
7. 你会怎样评价自己目前的英语听、说、读、写能力呢?
8. 你对这门课的总体印象怎么样?
9. 你修这门课时觉得最困难的地方在哪里?
10. 你觉得这门课对你帮助最大的地方在哪里?
11. 这门课跟你以前在中国所学英文课程有什么相同和不同?
12. 你觉得这门写作课和你在 ASU 修的其他的课有什么相同和不同?
13. 你与这位写作老师互动得怎样?
14. 这位老师和你在中国的英文老师有什么相同和不同?
15. 这位老师跟你在 ASU 其他课的老师有什么相同和不同?
16. 你在这门课的学习过程中，你有印象特别深的跟老师的一次互动经历吗?
17. 在你选择的这次写作任务中，可以给我谈谈你从始至终的具体的写作过程吗?
18. 在这次写作任务中，你有觉得有一些特别有意思的经历吗?
19. 在这次写作任务中，你有碰到一些觉得特别难处理的问题吗?
20. 在这次写作任务中，你跟你的老师有什么口头或书面的互动吗?
21. 在这次写作任务中，你跟你的同学有什么口头或书面的互动吗?
22. 根据你目前的英文程度，你认为这门写作课对你而言合适吗?

有沒有其他关于你自己，这位老师，或是这门课的想法，想要补充?

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS (ENGLISH)

1. Could you tell me why you chose to come to the United States?
2. Could you tell me why you chose to apply to the current university?
3. Could you tell me about the process of applying to the current university?
4. If you used a study-abroad agency, what was your experience in working with them?
5. What is your overall experience as a student at the current university?
6. How did you practice your English language proficiency in China, including listening, speaking, reading and writing skills?
7. How would you assess your current English language proficiency, including listening,
   speaking, reading and writing skills?
8. What is your overall impression of this writing course (FYC 99, 100, 101)?
9. Could you tell me what you find most challenging in this course?
10. Could you tell me what you find most helpful in this course?
11. How would you compare this course (FYC 99, 100, 101) with other courses you took
    when you were in China?
12. How would you compare this course (FYC 99, 100, 101) with other courses you are
    currently taking here at the current university?
13. What is your overall experience with your current writing teacher?
14. How would you compare this teacher with the English teachers you had when you were in China?
15. How would you compare this teacher with the teachers in other courses here at the current university?
16. Can you describe one major interaction you have had with this teacher?
17. Please tell me about the process of completing this writing project--from the beginning to the end.
18. What are some of the most interesting experiences you have had during the project?
19. What are some of the challenges you faced during the project?
20. Could you tell me about the interactions you had with the teacher during the project?
21. Could you tell me about the interactions you had with your classmates during the project?
22. Given your language proficiency, do you feel your current writing course is appropriate for you?
23. Is there anything else you'd like me to know about yourself, this teacher, and this writing class?