Teach Chinese from Cultural Roots to Local School Culture: Developing the Chinese Teacher’s and Australian Students’ Intercultural Competence

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I
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Being a ROSETE member, is my great honour.

This is the journey that I will never regret nor forget.
Declaration

I declare that except where due acknowledgement has been made, this research proposal is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree at any university or other institute of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

...............  
GUAN Erjia  
5 December, 2013
Dedication

For my dearest father and mother:

This thesis brings you a patient daughter.
CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................................................................. I
DECLARATION ................................................................................................................ III
DEDICATION ................................................................................................................... IV
 CONTENTS ...................................................................................................................... V
 LIST OF TABLES ........................................................................................................... VIII
 LIST OF FIGURES .......................................................................................................... VIII
 PUBLICATIONS ............................................................................................................... IX
 ABSTRACT ...................................................................................................................... X

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................... 1
FROM STUDENT INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE TO TEACHER INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE ....................................................................................................................... 1

1.1 THE RESEARCHER’S BACKGROUND: A SHORT AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ................................................................................................................................. 1
1.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS .................................................................................. 6
1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY ........................................................................... 7
  1.3.1 Significance for ROSETE program, UWS and DET ........................................ 7
  1.3.2 Significance for schools and students in Western Sydney region ..................... 8
  1.3.3 Significance for the field of Chinese language teaching ................................. 8
  1.3.4 Reach the national curriculum on intercultural teaching .............................. 9
  1.3.5 Significance for teaching Mandarin in Australia ............................................. 10
  1.3.6 Possible contributions .................................................................................... 11
1.4 RESEARCH EXPECTATIONS .................................................................................. 12
1.5 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY ...................................................................... 12
1.6 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS ................................................................................... 13

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: LEARNING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ................................................................................................................................. 15

2.1 INTRODUCTION: THE DEFINITION OF CULTURE ........................................... 15
2.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ............................. 15
  2.2.1 Culture-centred language teaching ................................................................ 17
  2.2.2 Culturally responsive teaching ...................................................................... 17
  2.2.3 The relationship between language and intercultural competence ............... 18
2.3 THE MOTIVATION AND CULTURAL DISTANCE IN SECOND-LANGUAGE ACQUISITION ................................................................................................................... 18
2.4 TASK-PERFORMANCE IN CLASS ......................................................................... 20
2.5 INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE ...................................................................... 22
  2.5.1 The notion of intercultural competence ...................................................... 22
  2.5.2 The significance of intercultural competence ............................................ 24
  2.5.3 Students’ acquisition of intercultural competence: awareness into action ...... 27
  2.5.4 The assessment of teacher/students’ intercultural competence .................... 28
    2.5.5 Please mind the cultural gap — developing novice teacher’s intercultural competence ................................................................. 30
2.6 PICTURES WITHIN A PICTURE - THE CHINESE CHARACTERS, THE HERITAGE OF CULTURE .............................................................................................................. 32
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ................................................. 47

3.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................... 47
3.2 THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THE RESEARCH PROCESS .................. 47
  3.2.1 Qualitative research .................................................................. 47
  3.2.2 Action Research ....................................................................... 48
3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN ...................................................................... 49
  3.3.1 Research site selection ............................................................... 50
  3.3.2 Participants .............................................................................. 50
  3.3.3 Data collection considerations .................................................. 51
    3.3.3.1 Validity and reliability ......................................................... 51
    3.3.3.2 Generalizability of this research ......................................... 51
    3.3.3.3 Ethical conduct of this research ......................................... 52
    3.3.3.4 Triangulation ..................................................................... 53
  3.3.4 Data collection method ............................................................... 53
    3.3.4.1 Interviews ........................................................................ 53
    3.3.4.2 Self-reflective journal .......................................................... 55
    3.3.4.3 Observations .................................................................... 56
    3.3.4.4 Documents ....................................................................... 57
    3.3.4.5 Audio-visual data-the videos .............................................. 58
3.4 DATA ANALYSIS ASPECTS ........................................................... 58
  3.4.1 Data description ....................................................................... 58
  3.4.2 Data analysis .......................................................................... 59
  3.4.3 Data interpretation ................................................................... 60
3.4 CONCLUSION ................................................................................ 60

CHAPTER 4: THE TEACHER’S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE—
ON THE HOME CULTURE STUDY ...................................................... 62

THE TREASURE WITHIN THE CULTURAL ROOT ................................. 62

4.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................... 62
4.2 DIG INTO THE CULTURAL ROOT .................................................. 63
4.3 LEARN FROM THE CULTURAL ROOT .......................................... 65
4.4 LOCAL LANGUAGE TEACHERS’ VIEWS ABOUT THE GRAFFITI-STYLE
  TEACHING RESOURCE .................................................................... 66
4.5 THE TREASURE WITHIN THE CULTURE OF MANCHU ...................... 67

CHAPTER 5: INTEGRATING TASK-PERFORMANCE WITH
CULTURAL COMPARISON ................................................................. 71

5.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................... 71
5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE TASK-PERFORMANCE IN MY FIRST RESEARCH CYCLE .... 71
  5.2.1 First try in the local high school with the original design .................. 72
  5.2.2 Second go in the other high school with improved research design ........ 76
5.3 DISCOVERIES AND CHALLENGES – INSIGHTS INTO THE FIRST RESEARCH CYCLE .......................................................................................................................... 79
  5.3.1 In-depth interview with the local teacher ....................................................... 80
    5.3.1.1 Interview with the teacher who observed my first lesson in the research cycle ................ 80
    5.3.1.2 Interview with the teacher who observed my second lesson in the research cycle ...... 83
  5.3.2 Group interview with the focus students ....................................................... 86
5.4 CONCLUSION—INSPIRATIONS FROM THE FIRST RESEARCH CYCLE ............ 93
  5.4.1 General conclusion of the first research cycle .............................................. 93
  5.4.2 The Limitations found in the cycle .............................................................. 94
  5.4.3 Expectations for the next cycle ................................................................. 95

CHAPTER 6: TEACHER/STUDENTS’ INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE ................................................................. 96
LEARN GLOBALLY, TEACH LOCALLY: ADAPTATION TO AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL CULTURE ................................................................. 96
6.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................. 96
6.2 AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL CULTURE ..................................................................... 97
  6.2.1 GETTING TO KNOW THE AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL CULTURE ...................... 97
  6.2.2 TRAINING TO ADAPT TO THE SCHOOL CULTURE .................................. 99
6.2 THE GRAFFITI-STYLE BOOKLET ON CHINESE CHARACTERS .. 105
  6.2.1 INTRODUCTION OF THE GRAFFITI-STYLE BOOKLET ............................. 106
  6.2.2 TEACHER-RESEARCHER’S REFLECTION ON THE GRAFFITI BOOKLET PUT INTO USE ..................................................................................... 106
  6.2.3 FEEDBACK FROM THE LOCAL LANGUAGE TEACHERS ......................... 109
  6.2.4 FEEDBACK FROM THE STUDENTS .......................................................... 111
6.3 CONCLUSION—SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT .................................................. 117

CHAPTER 7. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH AND CONCLUSION .............................................................................. 119
  7.1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................. 119
  7.2 REFLECTIVE JOURNAL FINDINGS .................................................................. 119
  7.3 INTERVIEW AND FIELD NOTE FINDINGS .................................................... 121
  7.4 TEACHER’S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE ............................................. 121
  7.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND TEACHER INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE ......................... 126
  7.6 LIMITATIONS IN THE RESEARCH JOURNEY ............................................. 127
  7.7 IMPLICATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH ................................................... 128
  7.8 CONCLUSION .............................................................................................. 129

REFERENCES ....................................................................................................... 132
APPENDIX ........................................................................................................... 139
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.4.4 Basic skills of intercultural competence (Lustig & Koester, 2013)
Table 2.9.2 Intercultural competence scale items
Table 5.3.1.1 Three categories of the first in-depth interview with teacher W
Table 5.3.2 Field notes of the group interview with the students
Table 6.2.3 Feedback from the local language teachers on the designed booklet
Table 6.2.4 (1) Survey results from the students in school site 1
Table 6.2.4 (2) Survey results from the students in school site 2

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.3.6 The relationship between language and culture
Figure 2.2.1 Intercultural competence model (Deardorff, 2006, p. 256)
Figure 2.6.1 Literature on teaching Chinese by pictures
Figure 2.6.2 (1) Examples of Pictographs
Figure 2.6.2 (2) Structure of Chinese characters
Figure 2.8 The Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence, by Deardorff
Figure 4.3 The relationship between the Pyramid Model and the Cultural Root
Figure 4.5 (1) Picture of the written script of Manchu language
Figure 4.5 (2) Example of written language of Manchu and its meaning
Figure 6.2.2 Example of student’s work of the graffiti booklet
Figure 6.2.4 correction rate of the survey in both schools
PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL


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BOOK SECTION

ABSTRACT

This thesis furthers our understanding of the relationship between language and culture in general and of the implication for teaching Chinese as a foreign language in particular. In the field of language teaching, there are numerous metaphors to illustrate the relationship between culture and language. One metaphor is that communication is like transportation; language is the vehicle and culture is the traffic light. Language makes communication easier and faster; culture regulates, sometimes promotes and sometimes hinders communication.

In this action research, the teacher-researcher discovered that to develop Australian high school students’ intercultural competence requires the teacher to acquire the target culture at a high level. The teacher-researcher has to both learn from her home cultural root, and learn through the adaption of the Australian school culture. During the teaching-research process, a graffiti-style Chinese character booklet was designed for the students. The Chinese characters were originally developed from pictographs, so they are more like pictures to Australian students. Further, it seems that for some students in Australian high schools with difficulty in reading literacy, the graffiti booklet provides confidence in learning a foreign language.

This thesis argues that learning cultural knowledge is about knowing how to engage with the culture and the research was devised to demonstrate that this is the case. Deardorff’s intercultural competence model was used as framework for this study. In accordance with the model, the study shows that the teacher-researcher has developed the ability to produce and create the teaching resources that suit Australian high school students, and demonstrates that she has developed a higher level of intercultural competence through the teaching-research process.
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

From Student Intercultural Competence to Teacher Intercultural Competence

1.1 The Researcher’s Background: A Short Autobiographical Sketch

1.1.1. Introduction: My name, my family, and my culture

序：以姓为名

This short autobiography introduces my ethnic minority background, the story of my learning traditional Chinese cultural skills, my understanding of intercultural language teaching, and my views about spreading Chinese culture to the other parts of the world.

My Chinese name is Guan Erjia (关尔佳). Originally, my family belonged to the Manchu, one of the fifty five ethnic groups in China. What needs to be addressed here is that my Chinese name in Hanzi (all three characters) means my family name in the language of Manchu. My native place is Xiuyan Manchu autonomous county, Liaoning province. The Manchus (Jurchen) ruled China and established the Qing Dynasty in 1644. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in Manchu culture among both ethnic Manchus and Han.

The name was given by my father, who is a professor in the field of humanities at Zhejiang University. He considered that in the past, after marriage, girls changed family names to their husbands’ family names in China. On this occasion, my father wished me to keep my beautiful family name forever.

1.1.2. Born: Given, the Gene for keeping Chinese culture

得，传承文化之任

I was born in the beautiful northern coastal city of Dalian, and grew up in the elegant
southern city of Hangzhou from the age of eighteen months. Normally, Chinese children have to attend a routine called 抓周, which means that when children reach the age of one, the parents provide different kinds of items that indicate different future jobs, and let the child pick the one he or she prefers. When it came to me, I picked up the traditional Chinese book titled 弟子规, which has been used as a primer to educate children for hundreds of years. My parents were very happy about this, and they treated it as a sign that I was quite interested in traditional Chinese culture.

1.1.3 Childhood: Inherited, Learning Traditional Chinese Cultural Skills

承, 中华传统技艺

In my early childhood, my father was keen on cultivating me as a Chinese fair lady, so he sent me to a drawing class when I was three. Almost all my friends knew my good drawing skills in those days, because I did some cartoon design in my spare time. But what they did not know is how terrible my drawing works were, at the beginning of my learning. Something else they did not know is that for over ten years, I kept on learning to draw. Meanwhile, it helped me achieve in many national competitions, and I fully enjoyed my every drawing moment. Also, I love doing various kinds of needlework (女红, which the traditional Chinese girl will learn at an early age) in my spare time.

Also, for over seven years since grade one I kept on learning calligraphy, which is regarded as a quintessence of Chinese culture. Through this I was able to get acquainted with traditional Chinese characters as well as ancient Chinese culture. At about the same time, I was introduced to English, and I felt that it was amazing to know another language as well as another culture. I fell in love with English, which entirely changed my course of study, and without being forced to study I experienced a real motivation to learn English.

1.1.4 Teenager and College: Inspired, Seeking better Cultural Blending

启, 找寻更好的文化融合
The topic of my research project for the Bachelor degree was “On the Westernized Chinese Wedding” from the Perspective of Acculturation---the “Ten-Mile Red Dowry (十里红妆)” with the Ningshao Region as an example. The project aimed to encourage the younger generation to learn more about their homeland culture, and recommended that basic cultural knowledge should be introduced to them in everyday life. Given an opportunity to promote Chinese culture, my article introducing the Ten-mile red dowry was published in an English magazine called *Ningbo Guide* (Howard, 2006). Although some negative customs may also be noted, my argument is that from the ten-mile red dowry people can learn about the gorgeous handcrafts of the past. But what people need to do is to pick up the soul of this history, and let the history be a mirror to guide the future. This is our generation’s responsibility, as well as that of the future generations; not only to take the chance to learn Chinese culture but also to spread Chinese culture.

**1.1.5 Postgraduate: Hope, be a real Chinese and spread Chinese culture by heart**

愿，做真正的中国人，用心传播中国文化

Once my father had a talk with me and he asked: “How will you prove that you are a Chinese when you go abroad? How will you not be treated as a Japanese or Korean?”

“When foreign friends ask you about Chinese culture, what can you tell them?”

To learn more about my culture since September 2012, I considered that I was doing an indeed vital task, which is called the “complimentary Chinese course”. As the first student to offer classes to foreign students, I started to learn the related materials about teaching Chinese as a foreign language. I gave my first foreign student Paola, an Italian beauty, a Chinese name so that she could better integrate with the Chinese learning environment.

I was acting as the visual spokeswoman for the “Chinese as a Foreign Language” project (the Complimentary Chinese Course), established by the Ningbo Centre for International Cultural Studies at Ningbo Institute of Technology, Zhejiang University. As a volunteer teacher in this project, as well as the student director, I had a chance to
spread the splendid culture of our nation. I am pleased to have had an opportunity to make progress in English within this process of teaching Chinese. Being an emissary of Chinese culture, I shared this culture with expatriates and used the charm of our language to attract more expatriates to come to China.

For those expatriates who were studying Chinese, insisting on learning was the most important element in their study process. The first thing they needed to do was to try their best to use Chinese to communicate with people around them. The volunteer tutors were also learning about their Chinese culture in order to become better teachers. The program was really a win-win project, benefiting both the learners and the volunteer teachers. This experience resulted in invaluable insights, skills and motivations that have now helped me to devise a research program to analyze a fresh episode of volunteer teaching; this is the subject of the following section.

1.1.6 ROSETE: Challenge, Bringing knowledge to life

挑战，让知识走入生活

At the beginning of 2012, I became one of seven Ningbo volunteers recruited to teach Chinese language and culture in Australia while studying for a Master of Education (Honors) degree course in the Research-Oriented School-Engaged Teacher Education (ROSETE) program at the University of Western Sydney. For my part, this program meant not only a new start in my life, but also a special experience. I believed I can learn a lot from the program and I prepared for the challenge. To be a real Chinese, to spread Chinese culture to the world is my mission, and my great honor in representing China.

After six months training and experiencing the Australian school culture in 2012, 2013 is the year that my journey really began. I am lucky to have had two high schools to teach in, the students were active and eager to express themselves. My mentor in the high school told me one day after my teaching: “I went into the staff room and feel really excited to tell everyone there, the class is loud today, but I can tell Kitty’s (my English name) growing up.” At that moment, everything was worth doing. Unlike most of the volunteers who go to high school and only be a secretary
for the local language teacher, my mentors gave me the whole class and let me manage it myself. This was hard for me at the beginning, but then came to really enjoy having my own class and be able to share my mother tongue with my students. When I was teaching, I was learning Chinese culture at the same time. Once I decided to teach the Chinese kungfu to the students because I knew that Chinese kungfu and food are two major attractions for the students. I had to read two books about the Chinese martial art before I went to the school to teach the students. I even started to learn Tai Chi myself at home in order to teach my students. This might be the magic of cultural distance; one starts to concentrate more on one’s own culture once one leaves the home country.

During the one-year-life in Australia, I went to central Australia with a group of backpackers, which I will never do in China. It was an amazing journey to view the Uluru rock and observed aboriginal culture on the tour. The journey brings the original Australian culture to my life in Australia.

To experience more of the world, I took one school holiday and went to the United States on my own. I stayed at my friend’s place, who is an America-born-Chinese (ABC). Most of her friends are ABC or mix blood and therefore they are all bilingual, or even multilingual. This related to the acquisition of second language from a linguistic perspective. On the intercultural aspect, they gave me a number of ideas because most are a mixture of American and Asian. Bringing my research with me in life is a magic feeling. Through observations of life, one can always find and realize splendid moments that will inspire you.

No matter where I am, I always keep my research in mind, combine every moment I experienced overseas, and contribute to my own study about making Chinese learnable and to develop intercultural competence.

In the second round of my research, I luckily found a way to teach Chinese that is really attractive. Because of the local school culture, for our Chinese teachers it was hard to control the whole class which leads to reduced motivation to teach. Hence, I always think that I need to engage myself first in my class, and then it comes down to
the method of how to engage and teach the students. Therefore, I designed the graffiti-style booklet on the Chinese characters. This was a great milestone in my research journey. At that stage, I felt like I had finally found something that could both engage me and the students. This idea came from the observation that I made in the local schools, where the students prefer to do graffiti all the time on their booklets and worksheet, or even on their desks.

From the graffiti-style booklet (see Appendix), I developed five popular topics in Chinese teaching and used them as in-class worksheets, flash cards and the homework booklet. With dynamic usage, it was suggested by the local language teacher that I need to think about having it published as a teaching resource. I am planning the publication for the end of my research journey.

Upon reviewing my one and a half year journey, I found that not only did I grow up as a better qualified teacher, but I also developed my research skills as a teacher-researcher. This research journey brought me a lot, both in life and in study. It offered me a stage and a space to think about what I want to do as well as what I can do.

1.2 The Research Questions

In July 2012, I started my journey as a volunteer-teacher-researcher in Australia. Experiencing the energetic students in Australian high schools made me feel that it was my duty to promote students’ interests in learning Chinese. As their teacher, I tried to create learning opportunities for them to improve their intercultural competence, and this is what I was keen to achieve during my 18 months of teaching and researching in Australia.

Based on my learning experience, the original reason for students to study a foreign language is to be able to communicate with others. However, students’ proper exchange of ideas with people from another cultures depends on their intercultural competence (Bianco, Liddicoat, & Crozet, 1999; Deardorff, 2006). This is why students should learn the culture as well as the language. For learning Chinese, the
book子弟规 can be regarded as the cultural root of the language (Dunning & Kim, 2007). It has been used as a primer to educate Chinese children for hundreds of years, to cultivate Chinese people’s values, attitudes on various issues and cultural knowledge (Bianco, et al., 1999), and it could be used to help Australian students to understand the Chinese culture.

At the same time, I was seeking a method to use my developed knowledge to teach in the local language class by referring to the local school culture. It is not only the students who need to develop intercultural competence, but also the teacher who need to combine intercultural competence learning in teaching.

Therefore, the main research question was:

How can the teacher-researcher develop the teacher’s and students’ intercultural competence?

The contributory questions to the study were:

1. How can the cultural root (dì zi gui) be used in the development of the teacher’s/students’ intercultural competence?
2. How can the teacher-researcher adapt to the local school culture and teach locally with the students’ interest?

1.3 Significance of this study

1.3.1 Significance for ROSETE program, UWS and DET

For my local cultural adaption in the schools, I designed a graffiti-style Chinese character booklet for the students in my teaching schools with the aim of offering them a deep image of the Chinese characters. This will also be developed into a published teaching resource.

While I first presented this graffiti-style booklet, soon some schools who asked me if they could use it in the Chinese class. I deem that this is a useful teaching resource for the students to practise Chinese characters as well as stimulate their interest for
learning Chinese. The findings in my research happen to support this and this is a great pleasure.

I wish to share this teaching resource with my dear colleagues at school and with the ROSETTE group members. As one of my contributions in my research process, this is also a gift to my university—the University of Western Sydney.

Once this resource has been legally published, I can share it on a bigger platform for more language teachers in this area. Teachers could even order the teaching content that they need to fit their own teaching plan.

1.3.2 Significance for schools and students in Western Sydney region

To raise the students’ interests and to stimulate their motivation to learn Chinese was a main challenge for us volunteer teachers. At the same time, intercultural competence is demanded for an increasingly multicultural Australia.

As I developed my intercultural competence, I could better understand the opinions that my colleagues have and the decisions they make. This benefited the education in the language class at school. Sometimes, knowing a teacher from a different culture is also fun for the local teachers.

The students can more easily establish a rapport with the novice teacher, as the teacher attracted them to listen by using the Australian slang and cultural knowledge the students like.

On the graffiti-style booklet, students demonstrated great passion to do the booklet both in class and outside the class. They accepted this way to become familiar with the Chinese language.

1.3.3 Significance for the field of Chinese language teaching

According to the origin of Chinese language, Chinese characters come from pictographs. This explains why most of the Australian students regard the Chinese characters as different images. At the same time, it is really hard for them to figure out
the differences between the characters. When using the graffiti-style booklet, they finished the pages in the booklet and then tried themselves to write the character. This surprised me a lot.

Usually, we taught the students to write the Chinese characters by telling them to draw a box and to draw a vertical line with a teacher’s tick; which make the Chinese characters look stiff. One can easily tell if the characters are written by foreigners or by Chinese. However, after their colouring, they wrote the characters in a really beautiful way and the strokes look like a Chinese person’s writing and was no longer angular.

1.3.4 Reach the national curriculum on intercultural teaching

The national K-10 syllabus mentions that:

The national Chinese language framework ensures that k-10 syllabuses and curriculum requirements are designed to provide educational opportunities that:

Engage and challenge all students to maximize their individual talents and capabilities for lifelong learning.

Encourage and enable all students to enjoy learning, and to be self-motivated, reflective, competent learners who will be able to take part in further study, work or training.

The broad learning outcomes indicate that students will: express themselves through creative activity and engage with the artistic, cultural and intellectual work of others ("Chinese K-10 Syllabus," 2003, p. 5).

Students who are learning Chinese language will always find it is hard to know how to write the characters, and most teachers aim at teaching the students how to read the related character. By using my graffiti booklet, the students are eager to try to write the characters on the sheet and are not afraid of writing the characters. At the same time, students are self-motivated to learn the characters.

This means that the students start to be motivated in learning Chinese, which will make them begin to think more deeply about cross-cultural communication. They
will try to communicate with the Chinese people around them and become friendly as well as be able to understand their behaviours.

1.3.5 Significance for teaching Mandarin in Australia

In the part of the Rationale in the syllabus ("Chinese K-10 Syllabus," 2003, p. 8):

The study of languages provides opportunities for students to become more accepting of diversity, more respectful of others and more aware of their place in the international community.

Contemporary research and practice have established a clear link between the learning of languages and improved literacy skills for both background speakers and second language learners.

Chinese is the language of communication of approximately one quarter of the world’s population. It is one of the official languages of the United Nations. Chinese is recognized as one of the fastest growing languages in New South Wales and has one of the largest groups of non-English background speakers in Australia. Learning Chinese enables students to gain insights into the contributions that have been made by Chinese-speaking communities to Australian, and indeed, to global society ("Chinese K-10 Syllabus," 2003).

As has long been put forward, learning Chinese builds a window to the world outside Australia for the students. It is precious to teach them how to better adapt the multicultural world around them and to be more tolerant. With more and more Chinese immigrants these days in Australia, learning Chinese also benefits them in their future careers. As they develop their ability to communicate with people from different countries, it will bring them more opportunities in life. My research is to search for a better way to teach students’ intercultural competence, as well as to improve my own, so that I can better teach the students, both about their local culture and the multicultural background in which they live.
1.3.6 Possible contributions

In recent decades, the world has increasingly become a global village and this village requires complex language skills and intercultural knowledge from people (Stier, 2006). The purpose of this study is to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between language and culture, and to improve Australian students’ learning of Chinese language and their intercultural competencies.

For years, in the field of language teaching numerous metaphors have been used to illustrate the relationship between culture and language (W. Jiang, 2000). However, the basic purpose of people studying a foreign language is to communicate, and to start a new journey in gaining intercultural understanding (Dooley, 2009). The following figure presents my understanding of the relationship between culture and language which may contribute to our knowledge of the relationship between language and culture:

![Figure 1.3.6 The relationship between language and culture](image)

This research aims to develop the intercultural competence of high school students’ in the Western Sydney Region by using task-performance in the classroom combined with the key ideas of **The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines**, which includes the essence of the Chinese way of daily communication, learning knowledge, moral education and how to deal with people (Xiao, 1990).
As the research journey moved on, the graffiti-style booklet I designed on Chinese characters was supported by the local language teachers. The booklet not only helps students memorise characters. It also teaches them the value of homework (a general life-skill). Moreover, it is an appealing teaching resource because it is highly inclusive of students of all ability levels, literacy levels and cultural backgrounds (the local language teacher, W, 2013).

This is my contribution to the teaching resources for teaching Chinese in Australia.

On the assessment of teacher’s intercultural competence, I experimented on myself according to Deardorff’s pyramid framework on intercultural competence and obtained some ideas in the process.

### 1.4 Research Expectations

The main objective of this research is, from the teacher’s perspective, learning Chinese from cultural roots, teaching towards local school culture and to use a designed booklet to develop Australian high school teacher’s and students’ intercultural competencies. Accordingly, the expected outcomes of this research are as follows:

1. **The improvement of students’ intercultural competence.**
2. **Achieving an understanding of Chinese language and culture through learning the key ideas of the traditional teaching material *弟子规—The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines.***
3. **The collecting of audio-visual material of the students’ performance to guide future research.**
4. **Improving Australian high school students’ intercultural communication in the Chinese language classroom and to stimulate their motivation in learning Chinese.**
5. **Witness the development of the teacher-researcher’s intercultural competence.**

### 1.5 Overview of Methodology
In general, my research is action research, which indicates the research design is continuously changed and adapted in response to information and results obtained during the research project (Welman, Kruger, & Mitchell, 2005).

This research gained approval through the National Ethics Application Form (NEAF) system and the State Education Research Approval Process (SERAP) to meet the ethical requirements for the data collection.

I chose to use in-depth and group interviews, a self-reflective journal, observations, documents and a designed survey for the data collection. I also used audio-visual data, like the video I took in class of the students’ intercultural performance, but used it only in my self-reflective journal.

To analyse the research data, I chose open coding for interviews, field notes for reflective journals and observations, documents and the survey. I involved several kinds of data in my self-reflective journal, including the audio-visual data, observation from the local language teachers as well as my own comments.

The research methodology guided my way and taught me the direction to go. This was collected from other researchers’ previous experiences, and put into practice in my research.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

Chapter 1: The Introduction
This chapter introduced the research topic, questions, background, significance, and expected outcomes of this research.

Chapter 2: Literature review
The research literature on the acquisition, teaching and assessment of intercultural competence is discussed in respect of theory, definitions, and characteristics. It gives a brief introduction to the framework that the research relies on. This review also provides an historical overview of the cultural position of the Chinese primer—弟子规 and the knowledge of Manchu people.
Chapter 3: Research methodology
This chapter explains the theoretical basis of the research methodology, action research, and specifically the details of validity, generalization, research design, data collection considerations and methods. It also describes the data analysis method.

Chapters 4 to 6: Evidence
These chapters illustrate the analysis of evidence and findings from the teacher-researcher’s self-reflective journal, participant observations and focus group interviews. Data analysis, descriptions and interpretations are detailed in these three chapters.

Chapter 7: Conclusion
This chapter summarises the research process, the delimitations and limitations of the study, the key findings or contributions to knowledge, significant questions recommended for future study, implications for policy and practice, and reflections on what I have learnt as a teacher researcher.
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: LEARNING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

2.1 Introduction: the definition of culture

“文化一词在我国最早见于《周易·贲卦》: “观乎天文，以察时变; 观乎人文，以化成天下(Rutt, 1996)。”

文化二字由此而来，西汉后，多用文化二字。“文”指代文明，“化”指代转化，文化即为向‘文’转化。由此，根据中国古籍记载，文化的字源表达了向文明转化的意思。赋予文化一词更生动的内蕴。

The English version: “The two Chinese characters for the word culture were initially found in the book of changes: ‘observing the astronomical phenomena, as to follow the change of time; looking into the humanistic record, as to change the whole China’” This is where the two characters for culture come from. Since the western Han dynasty, the word for culture became more well-known and widely used. The first character ‘wen’ means civilization and the ‘hua’ means to change; therefore, the Chinese meaning for culture is saying the culture means the whole country changing into a more civilized phenomenon. According to the ancient Chinese records, the scholars gave the two Chinese characters for culture a more vivid birth.

As Clayton (2003) states, culture is the root of our identity which is pervasive, shared, learned and dynamic. On the other hand, Nababan (1974) defines language as a code of (primarily) vocal symbols by which human beings communicate”.

In this research thesis, the culture I talk about in the process is about the history, the custom, the language and the common sense of the world for people from different countries.

2.2 The relationship between language and culture
Language and culture cannot be separated since they exist within each other (East, 2012). As Jiang (2000, p. 328) points out: “Language simultaneously reflects culture, and is influenced and shaped by it ... language is the mirror of culture, in the sense that people can see a culture through its language”. For example, one of the metaphors that can be used to symbolize the relationship of language and culture is the iceberg. The visible part is the language, only a small part of culture is visible; but the greater part, hidden beneath the surface, is the invisible aspects of culture (Hanley, 1999).

To develop target language-based communicative competence it is necessary for learners to engage in the target language culture; this implies that teachers develop target language communicative competence in learners by integrating language and culture (Alptekin, 2002). Thus, combining language with culture in the language teaching process can offer learners the ability to adapt to the target language culture.

When teaching a second language, learners cannot help but think in their first language and culture (Boey, 1970). As indicated in the recently published book entitled *Curriculum: Language Learning as an Intercultural Process*, Aoki explains:

> Gradually, the new language sheds its unfamiliarity as I see more deeply into another perspective of the world and see with my new eyes an already familiar world. Two perspectives dance before me and press forward upon me, and when I find difficulty with one perspective, the other lends a willing hand (Aoki, 2005, p. 243).

The above explanation describes the feeling of learning a second language, which is composed of engaging in an unfamiliar culture. Learning a second language is just like stepping into a new world; this offers learners a new angle from which to look back on their home culture.

Currently, most of the discussion about the production of intercultural competence is focused on this first component of intercultural competence; what knowledge about another culture or, more rarely, cultures more generally, should be included in foreign language education (Bianco, et al., 1999)? What culture should be taught in a language classroom is a very interesting topic for the teacher.
who is developing intercultural competence, and think about the answers could help the teachers to achieve better experience in teaching.

2.2.1 Culture-centred language teaching

Researchers (e.g. Byrd, 2007) argue that offering culture content with language teaching is to provide students with knowledge about, and understanding of, other cultures. Meanwhile, making some comparisons between cultures will develop students’ insights into the nature of language and culture.

However, it is recognised that “We cannot teach everything about culture. What we can do is help learners to develop ways of finding out about the culture they are learning by analysing their experiences and developing their awareness” (A. J. Liddicoat, 2000), since cultural knowledge and engagement with the systems of culture, together with language, provides a basis for understanding and revealing the ways in which users of the language form shared meanings, how they communicate shared opinions and values, and how they understand the world. This knowledge and engagement is fundamental to successful communication (ACARA, 2011).

Brick (2004) declares that in order to combine culture with language instruction, we need to realise that the aim is not so much to ‘teach’ culture as to teach cross-cultural communication skills. I agree with the necessity of developing students’ intercultural competence and, for this reason, the proposed research focuses on intercultural competence through activities generating comparative analysis.

2.2.2 Culturally responsive teaching

The term ‘culturally responsive’ has numerous meanings and explanations. Culturally responsive classrooms are student-centered as well as culture-centered. When teachers are culturally responsive, they may eliminate barriers to learning and achievement, thereby opening doors for students from different cultures to reach their potential (Ford, 2010). Shade et al. indicate that “Culturally responsive teachers are warm,
supportive, personable, patient, understanding, enthusiastic, flexible, and stay on task” (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997, p. 47).

Villegas and Lucas (2002) have argued that in order to prepare teachers in a multicultural society, one needs first to articulate an image of teaching and learning in a diverse society. As for the teacher preparing for culturally responsive teaching, a sense of sociocultural consciousness can be the initial condition; getting to know people’s way of thinking, behaving, and being deeply influenced by factors like ethnicity and language, which will not separate them too far from the students. They also note that culturally responsive teachers not only know their students well, they also need to use what they know about their students to offer access to learning.

Culturally responsive teachers must regard themselves and their students as cultural beings and understand as well as accept the role that culture plays in the process of learning. To be culturally responsive, novice teachers must first become culturally aware and intercultural sensitive (Marx & Moss, 2011).

To obtain a responsive teacher requires the teacher to pursue understanding and continuous learning and to recognize their own biases and the limits of their knowledge (Guillaume, 2012). This points out that the teacher’s own knowledge matters while teaching.

Hence, the proposed research incorporates a design that will afford the teacher to have insights into the everyday culture of the students by means of the performance tasks.

2.2.3 The relationship between language and intercultural competence

The relationship between language and intercultural competence, is an exploration has taken a new and richer turn in recent years (Bianco, et al., 1999). Bianco points out that communicative methods need to incorporate cultural phenomena more explicitly than has been the case. Language is inextricably infused with culture in its deepest and widest forms results in guaranteed intercultural competence.

2.3 The Motivation and Cultural Distance in Second-Language Acquisition
Surveys of Asian cultural studies and language learning have been undertaken over the years. In 2002, scholars concluded that as in New South Wales, the department of Education and Training may be a long way from meeting its languages ‘Other than English’ (LOTE) targets (Hill & Thomas, 2002).

In many foreign language teaching and learning programs all over the world, an initial goal is to develop learners’ proficiency in communicating successfully with first language speakers of the target language (East, 2012). In recent decades, as in East’s paper, the important foreign language learning skill has changed from communicative to intercultural. Traditionally, the development of ‘cultural knowledge’ in the language classroom has been interpreted as the teaching of selected facts, customs and traditions, which the learners need to understand in order to become intercultural competent.

Byram (1997) suggests that real intercultural communicative competence requires more than factual knowledge and proper language use, but he also asserts that knowledge of the language that is appropriate in different contexts is more important to the learners.

Several previous studies have found a positive relationship between motivation and achievement in foreign language. Gardner and Lambert (1972) describe two types of motivation which is said to be most relevant for foreign language learning. They are integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation is describing people who are interested in the language as well as the culture of the target people. Instrumental motivation is about people who wish to study the language for the purpose of career advancement. However, motivation is considered as a vital factor in language acquisition.

Cultural distance is not referred to as the distance between national culture and the foreign culture. Svanes (1987) provides an explanation for the term ‘cultural distance’ and vividly describe the term as the two factors below.

1. Knowledge of /familiarity with western culture
2. Mother tongue and/or proficiency in English or another European language.
Distance between mother tongue and target language is certainly an important factor in the acquisition of a second language.

His findings indicate that western students come to a foreign country to have a new experience, to meet new people, and to see how people live while for the students from ‘third world countries’ it is to get an education.

This notion has also been mentioned in recent studies. Giffard (1990) views a kind of global culture as the modern parallel for speed and level of distribution, would be pop music, or fast food. This is what happened in the 1990’s, and it is the same in more recent years. It is these common things together that connect the entire global culture to reduce the cultural distance. In this description, cultural distance means the cultural difference, the abstract distance. For my part, I regard cultural distance as a geographical real distance between different countries. I notice that when people leave their own country, they will pay more attention to their home culture, and travel produces a certain kind of cultural responsibility.

2.4 Task-performance in class

What is a task?

One of the major developments in language teaching and learning in the 1980s, was the emergence of task-based language teaching and learning. This was an important change that highlighted that students not only need to have knowledge of a language but also need to develop the ability to actually use and engage with it to achieve communicative goal.

Good language learning tasks, involve the wise use of existing knowledge and above all an intellectual challenge (in both content and process) for students; they involve interaction; they appeal to students’ imagination and raise their interests; they develop confidence and provide a sense of achievement; and they contribute to learners’ ever-developing communicative and learning repertoires (Scarino, 2009).”
When the language teachers choose local/target elements in their teaching, most of them will use the local culture as the starting point, because the students will have more examples and will have a lot to say. And they will also use the target culture to some extent because they will understand the topic, or they will understand the structure better (Karabinar & Guler, 2013).

Task performance is the performance of the complete task (Boyce, 2011). Through students’ in-classroom actions, teachers give out messages as to whether they are accepted or not, whether they are competent or not, whether they can accomplish the tasks they are given or not, and whether or not the classroom really ‘belongs’ to them (Shade, et al., 1997). Boyce (2011) argues that a culturally responsive classroom should be student-centred as well as culture-centred. The best way to achieve such an environment is to have task-performance, especially tasks on cultural aspects.

Increasingly, observation of students’ performances in intercultural situations is becoming a way to obtain others’ perspectives regarding students’ behaviours and communication. Therefore, task-performance is said to be strong evidence of students’ intercultural competence.

For measuring task performance, there are many approaches to choose from. Boyce (2011) suggests that a careful task analysis is desired before starting the performance measurements because it will show which task variables decide that performance. Hence, task analysis needs to be emphasized during the procedure. Before measuring, it is necessary to undertake a task analysis before putting the task into use, and even suggesting a possible outcome for the performance. After identifying all the relevant variables, the levels of performance need to be examined and identified. Almost always, multiple performance measurements will be required to develop a full image of even one lighting variable on task performance.

Further, Boyce (2011) indicates that the purpose of mentioning the measurement of task performance is to show that there is already a system for managing the whole procedure of task performance in class. For my own teaching, all the performances
will be recorded by the students themselves in order to make them more engaged in the task.

2.5 Intercultural competence

Alptekin (2002) argues that learning a foreign language has become a kind of enculturation, where one can form a new world view reflecting the target language culture and its speakers. Similarly, Torres (2009) also proposes that, generally, cultural competence or the ability to function in a particular culture, has been regarded as a unique aspect of adaptation. Thus, intercultural competence has been regarded as the ability to adapt to another culture. For years, scholars have put forward several different definitions of the term ‘intercultural competence’.

The emerging modern approach to language education has shifted the aims of language learning from communicative competence to intercultural competence. It takes as its starting point the idea that every time we use language we perform a cultural act (Kramsch, 1993) and recognises that for language learners this involves two cultures, their own culture and that of the target language. As such, on their way developing an intercultural competence language learners need to develop a cultural position which mediates between these two cultures (Bianco, et al., 1999). This requires deeper thinking that guides the language teacher to begin to check their position in both cultures.

In foreign language education, the theory of intercultural competence came to the foreground in the last twenty years. This contributed importance to culture and has led to new demands on foreign language teachers (Karabinar & Guler, 2013).

2.5.1 The notion of intercultural competence

In the 1990s, Meyer (1991) defined intercultural competence as the ability of a person to behave properly in a flexible manner when meet with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures. Later Liddicoat (2000) defined intercultural competence as the ability to communicate with people from other
cultures. He argues that cultural knowledge is not a case of knowing content about the culture; rather, it is about to know how to engage with the culture. Therefore, cultural competence is seen as intercultural behaviour. Similarly, American psychologist Matsumoto offers the following definition of intercultural competence as the general ability to live, work, and rest under environments of the intercultural and cross-cultural differences that exist in everyday life (Karnyshev & Kostin, 2010). In its broadest sense, intercultural competence can be defined as a complex of abilities required to perform effectively and appropriately when communicate with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself” (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007).

Krajewski (2011) argues that intercultural competence is a major resource for successful and effective communication and interchange. However, there are various definitions of, and writings about, intercultural competence and critical voices questioning whether or not such a thing as intercultural competence can be learned and assessed. Deardorff (2006) uses the following figure to explain the relationship between intercultural competence and other concepts:

![Intercultural competence model](image)

Figure 2.2.1: Intercultural competence model (Deardorff, 2006, p. 256)
It is recognised that the “Degree of intercultural competence depends on degree of attitudes, knowledge/comprehension, and skills achieved (Deardorff, 2006, p. 256)”. In contrast, Oberg (1980) divides intercultural competence into different stages:

1. **Honeymoon stage**: fascinated by the foreign culture and has friendly relations with the locals.
2. **Crisis**: differences in language and values reach an edge of disappointment, loss or even anger.
3. **Recovery**: the expatriates start to learn the language and culture of the host country, and begin to understand it.
4. **Adjustment**: accepting the cultural differences and knowing how to deal with them, though still may feel anxious.

According to the above stages, a full intercultural competence cannot be achieved all of a sudden. It does require time to meet with practical situations and develop cultural awareness.

Kim (1991), who has done extensive research in the area of cross-cultural adaptation, views ICC from a systems-theory perspective. Kim goes further to explain that in an intercultural interaction a person’s adaptability is displayed in their ability to accommodate different the ways of new cultures, and in their ability to be versatile in unfamiliar cultural situations (ARASARATNAM, 2007).

Fox (1997) presents another theoretical model where ‘authentic’ intercultural communication is possible. Fox also points out that it is necessary to acknowledge the power dynamics at play in any cultural context in order to truly understand intercultural communication. But how truly can we understand if intercultural communication is the goal of intercultural competence. Let us view the significance and nature of intercultural competence first.

### 2.5.2 The significance of intercultural competence

Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, & Kohler (2003) suggests that intercultural language learning involves developing in learners an understanding of their own language(s) and culture(s) in relation to an additional language and culture. They
indicate that during the process of learning a second language and the capacity of communication, language learners also desire a rich knowledge of their own culture. They argue that learning about one’s home culture is an important part during this process, because we often do not realise that our ‘natural’ ways of behaving are culturally decided.

Culture, however, decides who we communicate with, how we communicate, and what content we communicate (Oberg, 1980). To fit in with a foreign culture requires intercultural competence. Karnyshev and Kostin (2010) point out the influence of intercultural competence on high school students. They indicate that after students’ graduation, their intercultural competence can further build up as they live in the world, at work, study, and travel.

Competence is conceptualized and based on cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude and motivation), and behavioural (skills) approaches (Deardorff, 2009). However, teachers do not really know how to interest the students ‘in other people’, or how to set up practical situations that will encourage them to pursue such knowledge (Karnyshev & Kostin, 2010). This reveals a gap in the practical teaching process; encouraging students to be engaged in real scenes that require their intercultural competence and knowledge of the other culture. There is a need to address the importance of intercultural competence which enables learners to communicate efficiently with others from another culture, equips them with an awareness of difference, and, especially, how to cope with cultural differences (Alptekin, 2002).

Early researchers (in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s) of intercultural competence were specially motivated by perceived cross-cultural communication problems that hampered collaboration between individuals from various backgrounds. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the contexts for intercultural competence research expanded to include study abroad, international business, cross-cultural training, expatriates living overseas, and immigrant acculturation (Sinicrope, et al., 2007).

Some researchers have suggested key issues for research in intercultural competence. For instance, Collier (1989) proposed three key issues on which researchers in
ICC (intercultural communicative competence) need to focus: the definition of intercultural communication, the validity and consistency of the researcher’s assumptions, and the researcher’s choice of theoretical perspective. Even if one can overcome the hurdles involved in conceptualising ICC, how can this phenomenon be measured without facing the problems that arise from relying on self-reports, and from interpretation biases? Researchers of ICC continue to face these challenges (ARASARATNAM, 2007).

One of the most widely used theories in intercultural communication is AUM theory, developed by Gudykunst (1993). AUM theory is based on the premise that a basic cause for effective communication between strangers is anxiety and uncertainty management. Yoshitake (2002) offers three major criticisms of AUM theory. First, the focus of AUM theory is limited to effective communication. Secondly, Yoshitake points out that because it relies on mindfulness as a key element of uncertainty management, AUM theory heavily relies on consciousness. The third criticism of the theory is that AUM theory has a western bias. Yoshitake argues that AUM theory reflects cultural values that are typical of America and that these values are imposed on other cultures by extending the theory to intercultural situations.

When it comes to the topic on future direction, migration patterns and accessibility of global travel are such that it is becoming increasingly difficult for one to pinpoint one’s own cultural identity. Given this, how does one identify an intercultural exchange? Perhaps it would be helpful to start thinking of intercultural communication in terms of cultural distance and its effects on message construction instead of thinking in terms of national boundaries or even in terms of cultural taxonomies.

Given this, it is also beneficial to readdress precisely what we mean by intercultural communication. It is also vital to consider how the advent of new technologies has influenced intercultural communication in a generation to which communicating with someone across the globe is mostly routine. Knowing about one’s own culture and fully realising the importance of keeping up with the pace of this multicultural world is the keys to obtain intercultural competence.
2.5.3 Students’ acquisition of intercultural competence: awareness into action

Language is the carrier of culture; culture is infiltrated into the language. Lack of cultural knowledge affects one’s comprehension negatively. Therefore, intercultural awareness is required when a learner is to achieve intercultural communication competence (Yueqin, 2013).

Liddicoat (2005) suggests a new approach for teaching intercultural competence, which involves opportunities to reflect on one’s own culture, to experiment with the new culture and to decide how one would like to respond to cultural differences. This approach divides language and culture teaching into four stages: awareness-raising, skills development, production, and feedback. The most vital stage is awareness-raising, where the learner is introduced to new knowledge about language and culture. New knowledge should be introduced through participatory tasks which encourage the learners to compare the new culture with their own experiences.

Similarly, Stier (2006) illustrates that intercultural competence can be divided into content-competencies and processual competencies. The former means knowing aspects of both the ‘other’ and the ‘home’ culture, including the history, language, world-views, values, ‘do’s and don’ts’. The latter reflects the dynamic character of intercultural competence. Therefore, knowing the home culture is also a big step in developing the students’ intercultural competence.

Krajewski (2011) asserts that intercultural communication can be learned to a certain degree, but that intercultural competence should be obtained over time and through real-life experiential learning. From a case study, Krajewski found that a practical approach to developing students’ intercultural competence involves intercultural awareness, awareness of their own cultural identity, and openness. In contrast, in intercultural training for business, Oberg (1980) indicates that there are three levels to reach: the cognitive level (giving knowledge about another culture), the affective level (making attitudes towards people from other cultures more positive), and the behavioural level (improving the ability to adapt an individual’s own behaviour).
The importance of assessment in foreign language education cannot be overestimated. Through assessment, students can know whether they are doing an adequate job in the learning process, while the teacher can judge how much the students have actually learnt from the teaching. As Sercu (2004) points out, teachers recognise that all communication in a foreign language is intercultural, so they need to promote the acquisition of intercultural competence. To help teachers to recognise the basic skills related to intercultural competence, (Lustig & Koester, 2013) designed the following table (it contains some changes):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Display of Respect</th>
<th>The ability to show respect and positive reaction for other people and their cultures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to Knowledge</td>
<td>The recognition that individuals’ experiences affect what they know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>The capacity to behave as you understand the world as others do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Management</td>
<td>Skill in regulating conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Role Behaviour</td>
<td>Behaviours that involve the initiation of ideas related to group problem-solving activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational Role Behaviour</td>
<td>Behaviours associated with interpersonal harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of Ambiguity</td>
<td>The ability to react to new situations with little visible discomfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Posture</td>
<td>The ability to respond to others in descriptive, no evaluative, and nonjudgmental ways</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.4.4 Basic skills of intercultural competence (Lustig & Koester, 2013)
Based on the above criteria for intercultural competence, Lustig and Koester (2013) suggest that a suitable table for assessment could be created and put into use to make comparisons between the beginning of the learning process and the end. An alternative however, is use of the assessment called the portfolio, which is being introduced into many educational settings in both primary and high schools. Portfolio assessment was extended by Coleman (1996) and turned to matters of culture by asking counsellors-in-training to assemble portfolios of their own intercultural competence. MacIsaac and Jackson (1994) describe the portfolio as a purposeful collection of a learner’s work assessed over time that reveals one’s efforts, progress and achievements. The most definitive characteristic of a portfolio is that it turns the student into the one who assesses, rather than merely the one who is being assessed. In the process, for instance, students are asked to describe their own experience of, or feelings about, moving between cultures (Jacobson, Sleicher, & Maureen, 1999). Therefore, the portfolio is a possible assessment framework to be explored in this research.

Most of the studies (e.g. Almeida, Simoes, & Costa, 2012) aim to assess the students intercultural competence, but there also exist research on the assessment of teacher’s intercultural competence.

Almeida suggests that teachers use selected and adapted intercultural materials to teach intercultural competence. Narrowing down these materials is a difficult task for the teachers.

In essence, there will always be subjectivity in assessing IC (Almeida, et al., 2012), yet scholarly effort in devising coherent assessment frameworks and sound external assessment instruments cannot be ignored; the risk is as simple as reinventing a wheel that could be much more complicated.

One influential early study, conducted by Ruben and Kealey (1989), highlighted that observable behaviours, not knowledge of other cultures, was a better variable for effective communication. They conducted seven behavioural assessments of communicative competence. These included (a) display of respect (b) interaction
posture (c) orientation to knowledge (e) self-oriented role behaviour (g) interaction management and (h) tolerance for ambiguity.

Deardorff (2011) states that one of the first steps in assessment is knowing exactly what is to be assessed; in this case, in defining the concept of intercultural competence. Too often, this term is used without a concrete definition, especially one that is grounded in the literature. As discussed by Fantini (2009), it is essential to arrive at a definition of intercultural competence before proceeding with any further assessment endeavours.

### 2.5.5 Please mind the cultural gap — developing novice teacher’s intercultural competence

Teacher education study abroad programs are offered as powerful vehicles to transform novice teachers’ ethnocentric mindsets and to foster the dispositions needed to teach in culturally responsive ways. Such kinds of programs may enhance efforts to prepare culturally responsive teachers to promote novice teacher’s intercultural development (Marx & Moss, 2011). Marx and Moss also point out that the teaching abroad experience highlights that the immersion experiences within a different cultural context, such as in a foreign school, can provide significant intercultural challenges for novice teachers. The experience of being the cultural outsider in the immersion experience moved the novice teacher’s intercultural development forward in ways that may not have been possible within domestic placements. This is a vital step in training new beginning teachers to develop their intercultural competence.

Some research has been done on newly graduated teachers’ ideas about diversity and demands of being a global teacher. Second language use in cross-cultural instructional settings is a means of preparing novice teachers for teaching in the 21st century (Ward & Ward, 2003). Student teachers show improvement in language proficiency in terms of communicative competence, and more extensive use and greater confidence to communicate in English during language immersion in the foreign country (Tang & Choi, 2004).
Other studies of international field experience share the view that student teachers develop and try out new approaches to teaching. In the immersion program, student teachers develop a general understanding of the culture of the host country through being an observer of cultural activities. Although the immersion period may not be long, a couple of cases illustrate that student teachers might develop certain attitudes towards cross-cultural differences and insights about their own cultural identities.

Research suggests that second language use may be a bridge for promoting novice teachers’ cross-cultural competencies. Upon satisfactory demonstration of basic communication ability in the second language, novice teachers have some type of a field experience in which they need to rely heavily on their second language. This not only develop in them an awareness of differences and similarities between cultures, but they also gain new ideas on how to teach more effectively (Ward & Ward, 2003).

The student teaching experience is considered the ‘capstone’ of teacher education programs; the time when the student teacher applies theories, practises management, and develops effective teaching strategies. In addition to pedagogical skills, current teacher education programs also emphasize developing in teachers a rich understanding of diversity, and a broad world perspective with a commitment to multicultural education (Clement & Outlaw, 2002). Living in a foreign country makes learning about the culture an everyday experience.

Sercu (2006) put forward the notion of a FL and IC teacher (foreign language and intercultural competent teacher). One of the conclusions of the study is that the majority of teachers are willing to integrate intercultural competence in their teaching. The researchers only investigated the attitude of the teachers, but the more important issue is how to make the attitude possible with the teachers’ teaching. How about the teachers’ intercultural competence? Are they able to teach intercultural competence?

For the development of an interculturally competent foreign language teacher, Sercu (2006) points out that teachers should know their own culture well and possess cultural general knowledge that can help them to explain similarities and differences between cultures to learners.
With respect to knowledge, we said that foreign language teachers should be familiar with the foreign cultures associated with the foreign language they teach and that the contacts they have with these cultures should be both varied and frequent. The findings above also suggested that teachers knew what stereotypes their pupils held.

However, “Lack of cultural confidence may impact where teachers teach, as well as how they teach” (Walters, Garii, & Walters, 2009, p. 152). Walters declared that these attitudes may be due to current and prospective teachers’ lack of experience with different cultures and lack of knowledge of their own background. This is what I realised in my research journey; that if the new beginning teacher wants to teach culture to the students, they should learn more about their own culture.

Walters (2009) indicate that prospective teachers who taught abroad attained higher levels of confidence in their intercultural and professional competence, thereby growing their self-efficacy. They confront new and different situations, perhaps even frightening ones, and having to act and make choices overseas. However, international experiences are not always positive. The experience overseas in many ways is similar to the first year of teaching, no matter how hard and efficient the previous training has been, the new teachers need to experience the process of growing up. The teacher must deal with classroom management, instruction and communication, without the benefit of another teacher in the room, and with a host of personal issues related to being on one’s own without an active professional system.

The skills needed ‘to go sensitively and gracefully’ into a new culture, which the prospective teachers acquire during their international placement, allows them to become both cultural brokers, and to serve as a resource for colleagues (Walters, et al., 2009).’

2.6 Pictures within a picture - the Chinese characters, the heritage of culture

2.6.1 A Brief View of Teaching Material for Chinese Characters

Ancient Chinese characters are a large accumulation of pictographic characters. In other words, they express their meanings by resemblance to objects. The characters,
either single or ones in combination, have been readjusted and standardized since the Qin Dynasty, and have evolved into today’s characters (zhengyu, 1997).

These characters have been the carriers of the Chinese language and culture during its long historical development and inherited the meanings and pronunciations from their ancient counterparts. Now, the character  pil (sun) no longer looks like the sun, and 水 (shui - water) does not show ripples, however, they can not only record the basic elements of the Chinese language, but also structure the sound theory of other words with their own pronunciation and meanings.

In Shi’s book (1997) it is argued that pictographic characters unify form and meaning. The unity, representing a historical concept, has been accepted universally in the long historical development of the characters. So her book shows the inside meaning of the characters, which is accepted by the Chinese people, but is not suitable for the new learners in Australia. Here I have an example to show different books on pictographic Chinese characters, with pictures guiding the learners.

They all express the same character in the pictures, which is 王, it means the king.

Figure 2.6.1 Literature on teaching Chinese by pictures

As is shown on the left, Shi uses a man who looks like the ancient Indian king to express the character’s meaning, but actually did not link readers strongly back to the modern characters.

The picture in the middle is from a book designed for young students to learn Chinese characters. Shi uses a person who is holding a king’s stick, with sky on the top and grass under the person. This time, the structure of the picture does look like the
character: “王”. But it still need further thinking, whether the students could understand the king’s stick, or could they know that this person means the king.

In the picture on the right three horizontal plane represent heaven, man and earth. Connected by a vertical structure, it forms the character for king; one vested with power between heaven and earth, to rule over man. Originally Wang was the pictograph of a string of jade which the royalty could afford; it eventually became the symbol for king. This book took great effort to collect all those information about the change of the characters and the meaning of the original character. It tells a little bit of the story.

However, are these pictures easy and vivid for the high school students to accept and remember? Many books like this are on the market, and they are try to use this kind of method to teach readers how to remember the Chinese characters. However, it is hard to say that all the characters in their book have been put into practice, especially for teaching the foreign students. How can the authors mentioned above be sure about the result of their teaching material? Is there any evidence that can show the effectiveness of their material? These are the questions that these authors need to think about before publishing these kinds of books. The books only show around 100 characters, so how about the other characters readers might meet in life? What is suitable content for this kind of books?

However, another limitation of these teaching materials is that they have not been put to use in the school cultures abroad. They aim to teach the Chinese children how to remember the characters, and they think it might be helpful for the foreign learners as well as for the students whose mother tongue is Chinese.

**2.6.2 The Nature of Chinese Character**

“The origin of Chinese script is shrouded in mystery, and various legends exist to explain its creation. One such legend tells how Cang jie, a minister of the Emperor Huang Di, observed the footprints of birds and animals. He noticed how each one was distinct and recognisable. Inspired by this, Cang Jie drew pictures of objects, simplifying them by reducing the number of lines. These were the first pictographs, called xiang xing by the Han lexicographer Xu Shen (30 A.D. - 124 A.D.)” (Peng, 2003, p. V).
Firstly nature appeared in what we called the Pictograph:

“Certain items could be represented very well by pictograph. As the development of a particular character is traced, we can see that, over time, it tends to lose some of its resemblance to the original” (Peng, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Pictographs</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>日 ri sun</td>
<td>水 shuǐ water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>月 yuè moon</td>
<td>火 huǒ fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>山 shān mountain</td>
<td>木 mù wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.6.2 (1) Examples of Pictographs, (Peng, 2003, p. V)

Secondly, the Ideographs: the characters which represent abstract concepts are like the following: －, －, － (means one, two, three in Chinese).

Another is the Determinative-phonetic character. These characters have a determinative part to convey the meaning, and a phonetic part to show pronunciation.

The Structure of characters: the characters are written within the framework of a square, and there are several parts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>基本结构 Basic structure</th>
<th>形式 Form</th>
<th>左 - 中 - 右 Left-middle-right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>左 - 右 Left-right</td>
<td>左 - 中 - 右 Left-middle-right</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>上 - 中 - 下 Top-middle-bottom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>上 - 下 Top-bottom</td>
<td>左右对称 Symmetrical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.6.2 (2) Structure of Chinese characters. The picture above is from Peng’s book p. V.

This is what the experienced language researcher concludes for the Chinese characters. Knowing the characteristics of Chinese characters could help the teacher obtain an overview of Chinese characters.

2.7 The cultural roots of The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines (弟子规) in China
The traditional education for the elementary level has a long history in China. Primers such as *The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines* are the cultural roots of Chinese learning. Recently, scholars (e.g., Li, 2011) in the field of education have become increasingly interested in this kind of cultural treasure (Xiao, 1990). Regarding its content and format, *弟dì子zǐ规guī* is definitely a precious Chinese cultural heritage. Li argues that necessary work should be done to help the present generation to understand and embrace it. In terms of its content, it is stressed that children need to be filial and respectful to their parents, and to be honest and friendly to brothers and sisters. It teaches children to care about others and be well adapted to society. Meanwhile, the cultivation of children’s minds also plays a vital role in life and tells them the right way to follow when studying.

*弟dì子zǐ规guī* is recognised as a selection of the basic ideas of Confucianism, composed by a Chinese scholar named 李毓秀 (Xiao, 1990). Since *弟dì子zǐ规guī* is easy to understand and recite in Chinese, it was quite popular in the Qing dynasty. At the end of the Qing dynasty, the government recommended *弟dì子zǐ规guī* as official teaching material for schools. In public areas, such as teahouses and memorial temples, it is also used for public education. Since most papers related to *弟dì子zǐ规guī* are written in Chinese, here I translate a paragraph from one of these papers into English.

《弟子规》的中心思想围绕《论语, 学而》中的‘弟子, 人则孝, 出则悌, 谨而信, 泛爱众, 而亲仁, 行有余力, 则以学文’而阐发。除总叙外, 其余四部分的标题亦取之其文 (Xiao, 1990, p. 21).

The English version: The main idea of *弟dì子zǐ规guī* centres on the key ideas of *The Analects of Confucius* “learners should be obedient at home and regulated in public; be honest and careful in life, and love all the people around you; have energy to spare, and choose to study”.

36
Li (2011) points out that although the study of Chinese tradition is quite popular today, few teachers use 畢子規 in their classrooms, and that this is a loss of Chinese cultural roots. It is argued (S. Jiang & Li, 2011) that to teach the students how to talk about the cultural roots of China is far more important than dealing with the exams.

To sum up, all the literature reviewed for this study provides a theoretical framework for my research. However, this review has also identified a gap in second language teaching practice; educators have recognised the importance of developing students’ intercultural competence, but there is a lack of attention to the use of realistic scenes in the classroom to enable learners to communicate efficiently with others from another culture, to equip them with an awareness of differences or, especially, how to cope with the cultural difference. Therefore, the research intend to develop Australian high school students’ intercultural competence by using the method of task-performance in the classroom combined with the key ideas of the traditional Chinese primer - *The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines* (弟子規). Students were required to perform a short scene in their real life. Thereafter, the teacher-researcher showed the students how Chinese people would behave in the same situation. This set the stages for enlightening and encouraging them to think about cultural knowledge by themselves. I argue that learning cultural knowledge is about knowing how to engage with the culture. In order to help Australian students to develop a better understanding of why and how Chinese people act at home and in the class, it is essential to introduce key ideas from *The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines* to explain the cultural roots of Chinese language.

### 2.8 Framework for Intercultural Competence

My research for developing the intercultural competence of the novice teacher is based on the intercultural competence model from Deardorff who pointed out the aspects that are vital in developing intercultural competence.

**Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2009):**
Figure 2.8 The Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2009, p. 13)

This pyramid model represents motivational (requisite attitudes), cognitive (knowledge and comprehension), and skills elements, and incorporates context within these components. Unlike many of the other conative approaches, however, this model attempts to represent figuratively a conception of foundational elements and an implicit ordering of elements with the resulting external (visible) outcome being the effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in intercultural situations. Knowledge and skills presuppose some attitudinal dispositions and, collectively,
attitudes, knowledge, and skills are likely to produce outcomes that illustrate the recursive nature of competence-outcomes are the result of elements that produce them; in this case, attitudes, knowledge, skills, and resulting behaviours. According to Deardorff (2009), the specific attitudes, knowledge, and skills outlined in the model can be used to derive specific indicators and criteria in each of those domains.

Deardorff determined a research methodology called the Delphi technique (Root & Ngampornchai, 2013); an iterative process used to achieve consensus among a panel of experts. Specifically, this model focuses on internal and external outcomes of intercultural competence based on development of specific attitudes, knowledge, and skills inherent in intercultural competence. The overall external outcome of intercultural competence is defined as effective and appropriate behaviour and communication in intercultural situations, which again can be further detailed in terms of indicators of appropriate behaviour in specific contexts.

First, intercultural competence development is an ongoing process. Thus, it becomes important for individuals to be given the chance to reflect on and assess the development of their own intercultural competence over time. Secondly, critical-thinking skills play a crucial role in an individual’s ability to acquire and evaluate knowledge. Thirdly, the attitudes, particularly respect, openness, and curiosity, serve as the basis of the model and have an impact on all the other parts of intercultural competence.

2.8.1 On the aspects in the framework

The framework is comprised of the following:

**Attitudes**: Based on Deardorff’s (2009) study, several essential attitudes emerged: those of respect, openness, curiosity and discovery. Openness and curiosity imply willingness to risk and to move beyond one’s comfort zone. In communicating respect to others, it is important to demonstrate that others are valued. These attitudes are foundational to the further development of knowledge and skills required by intercultural competence.
**Knowledge:** In regard to knowledge necessary for intercultural competence, intercultural scholars concur on the following: cultural self-awareness (meaning the ways in which one’s culture has influenced one’s identity and worldview), culture-specific knowledge, deep cultural knowledge (including understanding other world views) and sociolinguistic awareness. The one element agreed upon by all the intercultural scholars is the importance of understanding the world from others’ perspectives.

**Skills:** The skills that emerged from Deardorff’s study were ones that addressed the acquisition and processing of knowledge: observation, listening, evaluating, analysing, interpreting, and relating.

**Internal Outcomes:** These attitudes, knowledge, and skills ideally lead to an internal outcome that consists of adaptability and empathy. These are aspects that occur within the individual as a result of the acquired attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary for intercultural competence. At this point, individuals are able to see from others’ perspectives and to respond to them in the way they desire to be treated. Individuals may reach this outcome with various degrees of success.

**External Outcomes:** The aspects of the attitudes, knowledge and skills, as well as the internal outcomes, are demonstrated through the behaviour and communication of the individual, which become the visible outcomes of intercultural competence experienced by others. This then becomes the agreed upon definition of the intercultural scholars; that intercultural competence is the effective and appropriate behaviour and communication in intercultural situations. However, it is important to understand that this definition is predicated on the elements highlighted in this thesis.

These five overall elements can be visualized through the following model of intercultural competence, thereby providing a framework to further guide efforts in developing intercultural competence in our students. Culture is defined as values, beliefs and norms held by a group of people. Culture shapes how individuals communicate and behave or how they interact with others.
2.8.2 Discussion of Intercultural Competence Framework

This framework illustrates that it is possible for an individual to have the requisite attitudes and be minimally effective and appropriate in behaviour and/or communication, even without further knowledge or skills.

Adding the necessary knowledge and skills may ensure that an individual can be more effective and appropriate in one’s intercultural interactions. With the added flexibility, adaptability, and empathy, one can be even more effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions.

“This framework also illustrates that intercultural competence is a process – a lifelong process – there is no one point at which an individual becomes completely intercultural competent (Deardorff, 2009).”

Thus, it is important to pay as much attention to the development process – of how one acquires the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes – as one does to the actual aspects of intercultural competence and, as such, critical reflection becomes a powerful tool in the process of intercultural competence development.

It is interesting to note that the intercultural scholars mentioned in this study are unable to agree on the role of language in intercultural competence development, citing that language alone does not ensure one’s competency in the culture.

Thus, language is a necessary but not sufficient skill for intercultural competence. Language, however, can be a noted vehicle through which to understand others’ worldviews, which is crucial to intercultural competence development.

Intercultural competence unfortunately does not “just happen” for most; instead, it must be intentionally addressed. Intentionally addressing intercultural competence development at the post-secondary level through programs, orientations, experiences, and courses – for both our domestic and international students – is essential if we are to graduate global-ready students. Moving from post-secondary students to secondary
students, this competency will, as they become familiar with the interaction with people from other cultures, offer them a better prepared future.

2.9 Novice Teacher Professional Stance

2.9.1 Build-up Your Teacher stance

“Your stance tells you who are you and what you are hoping to accomplish (Guillaume, 2012).” A stance can help you remember to maintain your focus on the big picture of what we hope our schools will accomplish and to reflect over our efforts. Guillaume (2012) described the teacher as a cultural broker, shaman, leader, learner, and archetype of spirit. He also mentions that teaching today can be overwhelming, especially for the novice. A stance on education provides a compass for decision making.

Guillaume provides ideas on how to develop a novice teacher’s stance by asking the following questions:

1. What is good? Who is the good person living in the good society? Consider your own upbringing and list ten core values that you think a good person or good society must possess. Honesty/respect/equality/tolerance/unity
2. What is the purpose of education? Consider carefully how it is that society brings its people to ‘the good’. The purpose is to transmit the best of our society to the next generation
3. What should everyone learn? Why? Think about what things matter that is important enough for everyone in the society to learn
4. What is the nature of learning? This includes the nature of knowledge, the nature of the learner, and the process by which we learn.
5. What is excellent teaching?
Think about how teaching is different from other endeavours, which is contained in an excellent teaching

6. What do school do?

Need to remember that school is just one type of education and there are other types like home-schooling or no schooling

Use your stance to guide your short-term and long-term instructional decisions. Keep seeking and improving your stance as your thinking changes as it develops with professional experience.

At the beginning of the teaching-research journey, my professional stance formed as follows:

As a novice Chinese teacher, I regard my stance on teaching as three different aspects.

Teaching is a learning process. As a novice teacher, I could learn how to be a better teacher from the mentor and colleagues at school. During the class, I can also learn from the students. I get to know how to guide them to give me splendid explanations of new Chinese words. This can let them better understand the teaching content. I want to teach the students the way to learn, and not only the knowledge.

Teaching is performing. To be a better teacher, I should believe I am the best actress in front of my students. This is to develop my personal confidence in teaching. Always remember to be clear about the teaching content and try to know about every student.

Teaching is reflecting. Reflecting on one’s own work means progress. Only via reflecting can I find my own performance in teaching and know what needs to be improved. Welcome other experienced teacher’s suggestions on my teaching because this can be a treasure in my growth as a professional teacher.

With great passion for teaching language, and with enough patience and confidence, I will be keen to improve my professional knowledge while at the same time, developing my own ability to communicate with the students and getting to know what they require for learning language. For one year and half as a volunteer teacher, I fully experienced the Australian school culture and progressed in every single lesson.
2.9.2 Towards Professionalism

In the process of building a novice teacher’s own stance, one important element in teaching is to develop professionalism as a teacher. This could be guided by some principles (Thompson, 2009).

The first principle is to commit yourself to the well-being and success of every student in your care as you need to treat all students with dignity and respect. Honour your students by having high expectations for their academic and behavioural success.

Principle two: commit yourself to maintaining rigorous standards of professional performance. Accept responsibility for what happens in your classroom.

Principle three: commit yourself to delivering the most appropriate instruction for your students. Differentiate instruction to meet the individual need of all learners.

What is expected of you: understand how students learn and use that knowledge to reach your students.

How to build your confidence: learn your students’ names as quickly as you can.

Reflection: the key to becoming a successful educator.

Even though teachers often informally mull over their successes and failures, wise teachers have learned that a systematic approach to reflection can play a key role in helping them grow professionally. Use reflection as a strategy for professional growth.

Some (Karabinar & Guler, 2013) suggest that in the process of teacher training, the teachers need to be trained to know how to reach the culture and more professional activities including necessary culture teaching methods and techniques should be organised.

In the multicultural education environment it is most important to cultivate a teacher’s intercultural competence (Dejaeghere & Zhang, 2008). In Dajaeghere and Zhang’s paper, they also mention that less attention has been given to the process by which teachers develop cultural competence and, in particular, the various factors that may contribute to effective in-service programs that focus on teachers’ cultural competence. They use a table to illustrate some intercultural competency scale items:
Table 2.9.2 Intercultural competence scale items (Dejaeghere & Zhang, 2008, p. 260)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own culture awareness</td>
<td>I have become more aware of my own culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different culture awareness</td>
<td>I have become more aware of culture differences in my classroom/school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDI impact on teaching</td>
<td>I have thought about how my own intercultural development impacts my classroom teaching/learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum plan change</td>
<td>I have made changes to my curriculum planning (objectives, lessons, activities, assessment) to address cultural differences in my classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching change</td>
<td>I have made changes in how I teach in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective teaching</td>
<td>I feel more effective in teaching students who are from a different cultural background than me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>In my classroom, I use materials (texts, artifacts, etc.) that have content related to the cultural backgrounds of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote understanding</td>
<td>In my classroom, I promote intercultural understanding among students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching techniques</td>
<td>In my classroom, I use teaching techniques that are adapted to the learning styles of my students from cultural backgrounds different than my own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
<td>I utilize classroom management techniques (e.g. collaborative learning, discipline, homework) that are supportive of the different cultural backgrounds of my students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>When interacting with parents, I use communication styles that are appropriate to their cultural perspective.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.10 Summary

With an increasing number of education abroad programs, teachers are required to be intercultural competent and at the same time to think about how to do pre-departure and post-departure training (Root & Ngampornchai, 2013).

Intercultural competence can help students deal with current states of diversity and globalisation (Root & Ngampornchai, 2013). As Root and Ngampornchai state, intercultural competence was conceived as mainly a cognitive phenomenon with the emphasis placed on culture-specific knowledge.

Scholars (Lough, 2011) have long asserted that international volunteering and service should be encouraged to promote international understanding, shared knowledge across cultures, global engagement, international cooperation, and peace. All the above suggest that, based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes, international volunteers are in a unique position to acquire intercultural competence and the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations.

In this chapter, I have mainly discussed about the notion of culture and intercultural competence and introduced the pyramid model from Deardorff. In order to develop
the notion of intercultural competence I also reviewed a number of books about the Chinese cultural root - my home culture knowledge combined with a traditional primer. With regard to the local culture that I am concentrating on, I considered some books about the changing style of teaching people Chinese characters; however, they do not really make connection with the local culture and which may lead to a boring resource for the learners. All this leave a space for my research to carry on searching for a better way to teach Chinese characters.
Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this Chapter, I first introduce the theoretical basis of the research process. This is followed by the research design in which I illustrate my data collection method and associated considerations. Then I present my data analysis method, which led to the research findings and results.

3.2 Theoretical Basis for the Research Process

3.2.1 Qualitative research

As mentioned before, the main purpose of this study was to explore how the teacher-researcher can teach Chinese language and culture to students in NSW high schools by integrating task-performance and the key ideas of子弟规 to develop their intercultural competence. To achieve this purpose, a qualitative research approach was used in Chinese classes at Western Sydney high schools. Uwe (2009) argues that the qualitative research process can be represented as a path from theory to practice, and another path from practice back to theory. “The intersection of the two paths is the collection of verbal or visual data and their interpretation in a specific research design” (p. 4). The purpose of this study is for task-performance to interact with the theory of intercultural competence and make full use of the data collected at Western Sydney schools. Uwe suggests that qualitative research is based on researchers themselves as the research tool, and the researchers’ own reflective diaries about their research process. Knowledge production is through the interaction with research objects and by applying the theory and ideas from the original materials to the research objects, in order to explain the facts later.

It is widely acknowledged that qualitative research and quantitative research are two types of research approach that are related to each other but are different. Flick (2009) indicates that qualitative methods can work very well without the use of quantitative
methods. Compared to quantitative research, qualitative research is the one that is able to provide the actual scientific explanations of facts (Uwe, 2009).

Having adopted a qualitative research approach, I began to form the structure of this research through my own understanding. To start with, qualitative research offers me the chance to get closer to the relevant theories and to learn to analyse the data more scientifically and efficiently. Linking the facts taken from the research process back to the theory is the charm of doing research; knowing a theory from books is easy, but to fully understand it and relate it to reality is challenging for a beginning teacher-researcher.

3.2.2 Action Research

To put theory into practice under the umbrella of a qualitative approach, the best choice for the teacher-researcher is the action research method:

Action research is any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counsellors, or other stakeholders in the teaching/learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn (Mills, 2011, p. 5).

Mills (2011) argues that action research is normally done by teachers for themselves, which means that the teacher-researcher needs to be fully engaged in the process. According to Mills, the basic process to conducting action research consists of four steps:

1. Identifying an area of focus
2. Collecting data
3. Analysing and interpreting the data
4. Developing a plan of action

Other scholars (e.g. Mertler, 2009) summarise the characteristics of action research as follows:

Action research is persuasive and authoritative, since it is done by teachers for teachers; action research is participative, since educators are integral
members - not disinterested outsiders - of the research process (Mertler, 2009, p. 18).

In action research, the goal of all researchers is to improve students’ learning. This addresses the importance of action research, as well as the reasons why I chose to use it in my study:

1. It is an opportunity to find out and solve one’s own problem; it also offers the teacher-researcher new ways to examine oneself.
2. It is quite timely; it can be started whenever you need and it provides immediate results.
3. In the process, the teacher-researcher can establish better relationships with colleagues. Teacher-researchers can have the opportunity to plan their own research and obtain information from practice, while efficiently making progress.
4. It provides the perfect time to get to know the students and hear their voices and makes a better research plan (Mertler, 2009).

Based on the principles of action research, I regard research as the process of putting theory into action. Within this process, the teacher-researcher can learn research design and the analysis of data. Doing action research will make my research journey worthwhile and meaningful in my study life.

Some researchers (Johnson, 2009) claim that to use action research in education has the potential to change education: to keep our teaching practices evolving. Change is the natural order of things. Change, however, is not always easy. To leave the safe confines of what is known, to go into the new and unknown, and to allow ourselves to be transformed is to take the heroic journey described so aptly was said by Joseph Campbell (1968).

3.3 Research Design

In this section, I will outline my research design in four parts: site selection, participants in my research, research data collection considerations, and method.
3.3.1 Research site selection

My research sites are two high schools in New South Wales. One is a high school in Parramatta; the other in Seven Hills.

a) Site 1

Number of Mandarin classes: one
The population of students who are in the mandarin class: thirty
The language background of the students: Half of the class are boys, the other half are girls. Only one student is a background speaker, who came to Australia three years ago. She is able to type and speak Chinese, but rarely writes in Chinese.

b) Site 2

The number of Mandarin classes: ten
The population of students who are in Mandarin classes: up to 300
The language background of these students: most of the students are native English speakers, but some are from small islands on the Pacific Ocean. One of them is a Chinese background speaker from Fujian, China, but his ability to speak and write Chinese is very limited. It is also difficult for him to write down a Chinese character such as Xi (喜).

3.3.2 Participants

The participants in my research fall into three categories:
1. I participated in this research as a teacher-researcher, using self-reflection on my teaching experience in two high schools to record my experience of the research process.
2. The students I taught were invited to participate in my research. Because I used group-based task-performance in class to help them improve intercultural competence, I interviewed them in focus groups as well as individually.
3. The local language teachers were asked to observe my classes, and they were interviewed about my teaching.
3.3.3 Data collection considerations

Five issues, including validity, reliability, generalizability, ethics and triangulation, were carefully considered before the collection of the data for the study.

3.3.3.1 Validity and reliability

Validity depends on whether the exact solution to a problem actually solves the problem (Mills, 2011). According to Mills, reliability is the degree to which a test firmly measures what it purports to measure. Mills emphasises that during the action process, the researcher needs to concentrate on the validity of the data.

The following are the criteria I followed to ensure the validity and reliability of my research:

a) Begin writing early (Mills, 2011): make time to write down self-reflections on teaching episodes or observations beforehand, leaving questions for myself to answer the next day or to identify what the focus of my observations should be.

b) Plan classes and interview questions in detail: before going to teach in class, I arranged the teaching unit and lesson in detail, according to my teaching goals. For the unstructured interviews, questions were considered from many perspectives since they can be flexible.

c) Record observations accurately: make a list of main focuses for the observations for me to fill in. For the task-performance in class, I recorded them with a video camera and used these videos to check the details of what happened in the classroom.

3.3.3.2 Generalizability of this research

Mills (2011) points out that generalizability means that the researcher tries to explain the behaviour of a wider group of people based on the behaviour of a small group of individuals. In considering different approaches to generalizability, it is interesting to address the responsibilities of researchers and readers of qualitative research. Unlike cases of probabilistic-statistical generalizability, it is expected that the reader of the
research is responsible for establishing the generalizability of the research (Chenail, 2010).

### 3.3.3.3 Ethical conduct of this research

Research ethics plays a vital role in doing one’s research. It has a lot to do with reflection and sensitivity. Failure to deal carefully with ethical considerations may lead the researcher into trouble and cause dilemmas. Flick (2009) declares that the way you select your participants raises the issue of how to inform them about your research purpose and expectations.

For the research participants:

1. To get consent: In this research process, high school students were definitely the main participants. Therefore, guardians (parents or family members) were asked to give consent so that the process could move forward.

2. Avoid harm for participants in collecting data (Uwe, 2009): Within the interviews, sensitive questions affecting privacy or views about sensitive issues were avoided. Participants’ real names were not be used and it was important to give them respect and thanks for joining the research.

3. Being just to participants in analysing data: When analysing the data, I needed to ask question of myself such as, what if my participants read these results? Hence, in analysing documents like interview statements and so on, the interpretations really need to be objectively grounded (Uwe, 2009).

With the teacher-researcher:

1. Keep the researcher’s eye on the guidelines that need to be followed to protect the participants.

2. Pay attention to the researcher’s own words when analysing the data and writing self-reflections.

3. Avoid bias towards any phenomena. Report everything correctly and use collective data properly (Kumar, 2005).
3.3.3.4 Triangulation

The definition of triangulation:

Triangulation means that researchers take different perspectives on an issue under study or - more generally speaking - in answering research questions. It refers to combining different sorts of data on the background of the theoretical perspectives, which are applied to the data. It should allow a principal surplus of knowledge (Uwe, 2009, p. 445).

Triangulation is regarded as a way to offer valid results from research (Uwe, 2009). My study required several methodological approaches: interviews, self-reflections and audio-visual data. Meanwhile, I had several theoretical perspectives on this issue to guide my research. The various aspects were put together to inform and lead my research journey, according to the principles of triangulation.

3.3.4 Data collection method

Action research is a dynamic process, thus, it is common to abandon certain forms of data collection and adopt others as you are conducting the study (Johnson, 2009, p. 9).

During my research data collection, I used the following instruments: interviews, self-reflective journal, observations, documents and audio-visual data.

3.3.4.1 Interviews

Interviewer can be described as a traveller on a journey that leads to a tale to be told upon returning home. The interviewer-traveller wanders through the landscape and enters into conversations with the people he met. The traveller explores the many domains of the country, as unknown territory or with maps, roaming freely around the territory. The traveller may also deliberately seek specific sites or topics by following a method. The interviewer wanders along with the local inhabitants, asks questions and converses with them. However, the journey may not only lead to new knowledge; the traveller may change as well. The journey might witness a process of reflection that leads the interviewer to new ways of self-understanding, as well as uncovering
previously taken-for-granted values and customs in the traveller’s home country. The traveller metaphor refers to a postmodern constructive understanding that involves a conversational approach to social research, into the vicinity of the humanities and art (Kvale, 1996).

In the research process, interviews are the most common method used for data collection. They are divided into two major types: the unstructured interview, and the structured interview (Kumar, 2005). Here in my research, I chose the unstructured interview because it allowed more flexibility in interview contents, questions and structure.

There are also several different kinds of unstructured interview such as the in-depth interview, the focus group interview, and narrative. I decided to use focus group interviews and in-depth interviews for my interview plan.

In terms of in-depth interviews, these involve face-to-face, repeated interaction between the researcher and his/her informant(s) and seek to understand the latter’s stance on life, experiences, or situations as expressed in their own words (Kumar, 2005). Especially for my research, I encouraged students to think about cultural comparisons after task-performance in class. The classes were planned as action groups, with editors, camera persons, characters and script writers. Afterwards, I had a group interview. As is introduced by Kumar (2005), group interviews provide a broad framework for discussion, and members of the group express their opinions during the process of discussing issues.

Compared to other approaches, the interview has its advantages. Interviews are better for complicated situations as they give interviewees the chance to prepare a response, they are useful for collection of in-depth information, and the interviewer can derive information from respondents via non-verbal reactions. Furthermore, interviews are suitable for any type of person, from children to older people (Kumar, 2005).

**Focus group interview with student-performance group**

In the first term of 2013 I taught and used task-performance in class. For the first circle of data collection, I chose one group in each of the two high schools to have an interview after their performance and cultural comparison.
**In-depth interview with local language teacher**

In my research process, the local language teachers acted as my guides in teaching language and managing the students. The purpose of interviewing them was to know the limits of my culture-centred teaching and the way for students to perform in class; did my teaching really improve students’ intercultural competence, and how can I improve my method to be more efficient?

3.3.4.2 Self-reflective journal

By recording what events are storied by novices, especially over time, it should be possible to gain insights into what they know, how their knowledge is organized, and how their knowledge changed with additional experiences of watching and doing teaching (1993, p. 7).

Teaching diaries can be analysed by teachers themselves. As “conscious verbalizations of what we think we know” (Seliger, as cited in Bailey, 1991, p. 63), “they can serve as a means of furthering new teachers’ reflection about their emerging role as teachers (Bailey, 1990).”

Diary studies can also be used to get at those aspects of classroom teaching that more external forms of research, such as observation and interviews, cannot reach (Bailey, 1990; Gaies, 1983).

Teacher journals can provide records of classroom life in which teachers write observations and reflections on their teaching over time. Journals offer teachers a way to evaluate and analyse their experience, and journals can be regarded as windows on what goes on in the school and on the teaching process through the teacher’s eye (Mills, 2011). As for the journey of my research, it demanded self-reflection on my own progress. Take my self-reflective journal entry in the beginning days of my research journey for example:

Today we had the class from Mrs S, who is from the education community. I don’t know why and how, I got inspired a lot in the class. One of her words moved me: I felt shamed and sad to know little knowledge of the Aboriginal culture. This goes the same in China, I think. People sometimes ignored the
most precious heritage get from the time and history. For my Manchu ethnic group, few people can speak the language these days and people should try something to save the culture from disappearing, so does the Aboriginal language. Mrs Smith points out that people now are trying to protect the Aboriginal culture and restart class of Aboriginal language (Reflective journal 2012-7-23).

The above vignette indicates the origins of my idea of moving between cultures and addresses the importance of the home culture. Having an awareness of the home culture is the foundation to teaching and learning about a foreign culture. However, I was not here to teach Australian students Australian culture; on the contrary, the intention was to introduce my home culture and language to them. Hence, what I encouraged the students to make comparisons between cultures while learning the second language.

Reflection is crucial to regaining equilibrium when disorienting dilemmas associated with experience are most acute. Mentoring the reflection process may be most influential for those in the initial phases of culture shock, when cultural differences are most tangible (Lough, 2011).

3.3.4.3 Observations

Observation in this research refers to participant observation, especially the teacher-researcher’s and teachers’ observations.

Participant observation will be defined as a field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection (Denzin, 1989, pp. 157-158).

Spradley (1980) points out the three phases of participation observation. The first is called descriptive observation, which offers researchers an orientation to the field of the study. Secondly, focused observation narrows down the researcher’s perspective in the process, and picks up the essentials for the research question. One more phase is selective observation, which aims at reaching further evidence for, and examples of, the practices found in the second step. Classroom observations, which I used in my research, were usually recorded in the form of
Field notes. Field notes are written observations of what is observed to happen in the classroom.

3.3.4.4 Documents

Documents related to a study should be regarded as a means of communication. Other elements one needs to be concerned about are about who produced the document, for what purpose, and for whom (Uwe, 2009). For assessing the quality of documents, Scott (1990) suggests four criteria which can be used for deciding whether or not to reference a specific document:

- Authenticity; concerns about the unquestionability of the origins of the evidence.
- Credibility; relying on the accuracy of the evidence.
- Representativeness; making sure of the typicality of this type of evidence.
- Meaning; the clear and comprehensive nature of the evidence to be used.

I was keen to combine my research with some official documents, such as the K-10 Chinese Syllabus. My first contributory research question was to find a way to make the material that I wish to use in my teaching suitable for the syllabus. Before reaching this goal, analysis of documents was necessary.

3.3.4.4 Survey

For the second round of the research, I inserted survey into my research process.

Survey research is sometimes regarded as an easy research approach, however, with other research methods, it is easy to produce a survey of poor quality instead of a high quality and valuable one (Kelley, Clark, Brown, & Sitzia, 2003). Therefore, it is important to know how to design and check the quality of a survey.

Design the survey according to the person who takes part in the survey, for the children, the signs in the survey might be adjusted to their age. It is the same with the language we use in the survey.
A quick view of the literature will reveal various definitions of what a survey is. It is most often said that a survey describes a method of gathering information from a sample of individuals. Considerations of question wording, questionnaire flow, question context, and choice of response categories have been the focus of using surveys (Leeuw, Hox, & Dillman, 2008).

3.3.4.5 Audio-visual data-the videos

The audio-visual data, beyond single photos, shows another aspect of everyday life. Videotaping has become a popular everyday technique to record experience, and it is used as a research resource for analysis (Uwe, 2009). In my research, I recorded the task-performance in my class for the purpose of cultural comparison. When arranging the students to participate in the performance, I will chose one of the group members to be the camera person. This means that it was a student who took the video. I showed the video to the class during the next lesson, to remind them of a sense of achievement as well as to revise what they had done last time. After the video, I showed my own video, which was prepared to indicate the same situation as it would happen in China; to show what Chinese people would do and why.

3.4 Data analysis aspects

Inductive analysis means to look at a field or group of data and try to induce or create order by organizing the things observed into groups. Similar things should be coded and moved into initial categories (Johnson, 2009, p. 21).

3.4.1 Data description

Data description involves developing in-depth and comprehensive descriptions of the participants, the setting, and the phenomenon researched in order to reach the rich complexity of the research, based on the collected interviews, observations and artefacts. The purpose is to provide a narrative picture of the setting and events taking place in it so one has an understanding of the context in which the research is taking place. The descriptions of the research context, meanings and social relationships can be presented in a number of forms, and notes can be made of how interactions and
social relations among the participants may have changed during the study (Mills, 2011). To ensure the validity of the collected data, I created an exact description of my research purpose and method at every step of the process. Efficient descriptive data can benefit the data analysis later on by helping with the categorisation and classification of the data.

3.4.2 Data analysis

Data analysis is an attempt by the teacher-researcher to summarize the collected data in a reliable and accurate manner (Mills, 2011). Of various qualitative data analysis techniques, inductive analysis is the most familiar method with which to do analysis (Mills). Having gathered the potential qualitative data, the teacher-researcher will meet the challenge of trying to reduce the volume of information that has been collected. Identifying and organizing the data into important patterns and themes is required, in order to construct a scheme for presenting the findings.

In coding qualitative data, the steps introduced by Kumar (2005) include four phases. Step one is to identify the main themes after going through each descriptive response. Afterwards, one assigns codes to the main themes when going through the interview transcripts by using keywords to classify responses under the main themes. Next, one integrates themes and responses into the text of the report.

In this research, I expected the most valuable data to emerge from the interviews. Therefore, here I show how I processed the analysis:

- The interview was recorded by voice recorder and transcribed word for word
- A theme was identified for the transcript of the interview content.
- Responses were classified under the main theme when going through the interview transcripts
- The responses were assessed in relation to the content of my report.
3.4.3 Data interpretation

According to Mills (2011), the process of interpretation is important since it can challenge the teacher-researchers’ assumptions and beliefs about the educational research they are involved in. Mills notes that data interpretation is an attempt by the researcher to explore the meaning in the data, and to answer questions about the implications of research findings. Accordingly, Mills introduced several interpretative techniques. The first level of interpretation is to extend the data analysis by creating questions about the study. On another level, teacher-researchers may make links between the data analysis and their personal experience. Thereafter, they might find people critical of their analysis, and who point out limits. Lastly, for action research, theoretical direction provides support, so one can return to the theory when analysing the collective data.

In theatre production, a folk saying goes: “Plays are not written - they’re rewritten.” A comparable saying for qualitative researchers is, “Data are not coded - they’re recoded” (Saldana, 2013, p. 3).

Linking with my research process, data interpretation worked as a tool to help understand my collected materials. It was used in the analysis of interview transcriptions, field notes and comments on the video data.

3.4 Conclusion

This research was action research, the reason action research was chosen is because the teacher-researcher can make changes herself at different stages in the research and change from the first research cycle to the second research cycle and put the research actions into practice. The researcher can make necessary changes based on the research findings in the process.

The research was carried out in two local high schools in year 7 language classes. Research data was collected by; in-depth and group interviews, self-reflection,
documents, surveys and audio-visual data. Interpretation and analyse of the data was by open coding. Due to the nature of qualitative research, data should be real and reliable so that the research analysis is trustworthy.
Chapter 4: The Teacher’s Intercultural Competence—on the Home Culture

Study

The Treasure within the Cultural Root

4.1 Introduction

Teachers are usually able to narrate their vivid awareness of their racial identities; however, they also seem to be unaware of their culture and the cultural beliefs and values they constructed through their socialization. They tend to confuse culture with historical experiences. Because they cannot connect to an experience or story, they feel cultureless (Ukpokodu, 2011). When it comes to teaching the culture within language, teachers need to obtain a high awareness of home culture beforehand.

弟子規 (The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines), is regarded as the Chinese cultural root in this thesis. To foreign people China has a mysterious history, where all those culture comes from some basic materials that contain key concepts in the culture.

弟子規 (The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines) is one of the greatest primers in Chinese history. As a primer that educates the learners, it does have some negative opinions, which are treated as ridiculous rules for modern world. However, what we need to do now is to reject the dross and assimilate the essence. The primer was widely used at the end of the last dynasty of China and was the official teaching material for the whole country.

I planned to learn Chinese culture myself from this traditional Chinese primer, experiencing my home culture in the book and to further develop my intercultural competence. Because knowing one’s home culture is the first step to learning about intercultural communicative skills and competence.
4.2 Dig into the Cultural Root

The English version: “On general, the learner’s rules and discipline, instructed by Confucius: first, the learner should be respectful to the elders, and secondly is to be honest and cautious, learners should love all and be friendly with those who are virtuous. When they have time and opportunity after doing all the things mentioned above, they should be in a good study.”

This has been inherited for years, as the core for educating learners from a young age. The oldest generation in the family has the highest respect in the whole family. This is why for important occasions the oldest generation sit in the middle and come first in every step. In China, if you take the bus, everyone needs to give their seat to those who need help. If the young do not do this, they may be blamed for being selfish and disrespectful.

1. 入则孝，出则悌

The English version: Be respectful to the elders when at home, be honest to one’s elders when outside.

父母教，须敬听。父母责，须顺承。

The English version: One must listen to what the parents say, with great respect.

Whenever parents scold you, you need to accept it.

This expresses the position of parents in a family. When it comes to the relationship between the parents and the child, the child will definitely need to respect and listen to the parents.

The first time when I presented my research design in a conference in 2012, the chairman said that: “You should teach the students here how to respect. They need it.” This is a great cultural difference. Because in western countries, parents always treat their children as good friends and the relationship between them is fairly equal. The
students have been cultivated under this kind of educational environment, but when they become teenagers, some of them do not prefer to show respect to the teachers in school. I interviewed students about respect and one of the students told me that the reason why he thought he needed to respect teachers is that they have more life experience and knowledge.

2. 谨而信

The English version: Be cautious and honest.

Chinese people have long focussed on cultivating children by teaching them to be honest. A Chinese saying goes: “一言既出，驷马难追 （whenever you say something, even the strength of four horses cannot get it back）”. From this, you can tell how much Chinese people care about honesty.

3. 泛爱众，而亲仁

The English version: Love all the people around, and be friendly with other people.

Big signs you can see in schools in Australia, even in university, say that: “no bullying is allowed in school/on campus.” This is another key for educators in schools. When I asked the students in a primary school to write letters to Chinese students, one of the boys wrote “do you have bullies in Chinese schools?” I saw this question but I did not know how to respond. This was the first time I felt bullying behaviour so close to me but I did not witness any in the schools here. I do realise that this is a serious topic that I need to pay attention to in my teaching; protecting the students from being bullied.

“凡是人，皆须爱，天同覆，地同载.”

The English version: All human beings need others’ love and care because it is the same sky overhead and the same earth underfoot that they share.
This is, actually, the same idea that is emphasised in harmony day in the schools in Australia. As the world become increasingly global, schools in Australia aim to educate the students to be tolerant of the different cultures around them.

For hundreds of years in China, people have been telling the learners to be friendly and harmonious with all kinds of people in life. This made me have a common feeling about the cultures. As Australia is becoming multicultural, the students need to develop their intercultural competence. Because they need to communicate with people from different countries even in their own living area, it is vital for them to know that every ethnic group is equal in the world.

4. 行有余力，则以学文

The English version: When you have spare time beyond performing all the things above, you should settle down to your study.

Traditionally, Chinese people believe that it was more vital to be a better person than to have a great academic performance. As people learn how to communicate with each other and know how to survive in the society. The next step is to study, learning that knowledge is useful to help one understand and have a better life.

However, this is just a traditional Chinese educational concept. In modern China, parents are worrying about their children’s academic performance all the time and fill their children’s holidays with all kinds of Saturday schools, while in Australia, study is encouraged by the schools. What the teachers need to obtain is the ability to make the students like the subject and learn to do self-study at home.

4.3 Learn from the Cultural Root

“Once the students had identified how they understood their own culture, and what that meant to them, they were ready to go on to appreciate who they were in interaction with the other (East, 2012, p. 66).”
Figure 4.3 The relationship between the Pyramid Model and the Cultural Root

The picture above illustrate the relationship between Deardorff’s pyramid framework and the Chinese cultural root - *Di zi gui*. According to Dearforff, the first thing to change in the process of development of intercultural competence is attitude. This requires the cultural awareness of one’s home culture. Then it leads to the external outcomes and internal outcomes, with the key ideas mentioned in the *Di zi gui*; that children start to learn standards for speaking and doing. Afterwards, they will change their attitude towards speaking and doing as their intercultural knowledge develops. With better understanding of cultures, learners become more able to comprehend different values for communicating with people around them. This leads to another attitude, the attitude towards learning. As one reaches a new stage of attitude towards different cultures and the world, then the cycle will start again. That is why the development of intercultural competence is a life-long process.

4.4 Local language teachers’ views about the graffiti-style teaching resource

A local language teacher W stated: “Teach culture through languages. What you proposing is more culture by itself, but the difficulty with that is the time on task, we
simply do not have enough time, and I am afraid that I can’t let you teach this in school, it is much time out of the language class.” What the local language teacher found exciting is that the Chinese primer may be changed into a better teacher training resource for the new beginning teachers.

Teacher W has had a well organised Chinese teaching yearly plan running for more than ten years, so in her school. Teaching time is very important and is addressed very carefully. What I was trying to teach actually requires a very experienced teacher with a high level of intercultural competence to control the whole class. However, this is what I am lacking at the moment. But what she suggested was to develop this into teacher training material. This inspired me as I discovered treasures in the book and used them to improve my own knowledge so that I could better teach the key concepts in my class.

Another language teacher, V, is a younger teacher teaching Chinese as her second subject. In the interview, she told me that I could try the *Di zi gui* as the main teaching material in class. Because she is always seeking better aids to teach Chinese, she prefers to try different things and accepts a challenge. Actually, she is teaching at a very fast pace, while the more experienced teacher W teaches at a slow pace in order to make sure every student knows the material.

It needs to be mentioned that the students in teacher V’s school are much harder to control as they are learning very fast. But they require a lot of time to practise the knowledge. I tried to teach the key concepts of the book, which they are quite interested in, using task-performance, but they find it difficult to control themselves.

In general, the teachers supported me to use the material, but the way that I teach needs more consideration. Also, I started to think that maybe it is better to teach this material to year 9 or 10, rather than to the first-year learners of Chinese.

4.5 The Treasure within the Culture of Manchu

When people see ladies wearing cheongsam, they will regard them as from China. But actually, cheongsam is typical clothing for the Manchu minority. China has fifty five
minority groups and Han Zu (the ethic group of Han). Manchu once ruled the whole of China and led the fifty six ethnic groups. Manchu is the ethnic group where my family comes from and, as mentioned earlier, my family name comes from the Manchu language, which is translated back to the language of Han. Usually, Chinese people have one character for the family name, sometimes two, but for my Manchu family name, we have three characters; but when it is translated back to Han language it becomes one character only. After the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, the government started to push people to use the Mandarin language, which is simplified Chinese.

Most Manchu people now live in mainland China. There are about 10,410,585 Manchu people, which is 9.28% of the ethnic minorities and 0.77% of China's total population. Of the provincial regions, there are two provinces, Liaoning and Hebei, which have over 1,000,000 Manchu residents. Liaoning has 5,336,895 Manchu residents which is 51.26% of the Manchu population and 12.20% of the provincial population. Hebei has 2,118,711 which is 20.35% of Manchu people and 70.80% of provincial ethnic minorities (Crossley, 2002; Elliott, 2001).

Manchu has its own language. Mandarin is said to be mainly from the official language of Manchu (Coblin, 2000; Wadley, 1996). I heard my grandfather call my great grandmother “ne ne”, which is different from the Chinese for “mama”; my grandfather and great grandparents spoke Manchu language.

The Manchu language (Manchu: ᠲᠤᡝ ᠬᠣᠰᠢᠭᠤ manju gisun), also called Man language, is the most important of the Manchu-Tungus languages (a subfamily of the Altaic languages) formerly spoken by the Manchu people in Manchuria. In 1995, fewer than seventy Manchu, all of whom were over the age of 70 and living in Heilongjiang province, were believed to still speak Manchu. Several thousand people, however, speak Sibo (Pinyin: Xibe), a closely related language found in the Yili region of Xinjiang (2013).
For the Manchu language, vowel harmony, in which vowels are divided into two or three classes (with the restriction that suffixes added must use vowels of the same class), is generally typical of the Altaic languages but is not as strictly observed in Manchu as in, for example, Mongol.

The Manchu verbs, like those in Chinese, distinguish neither person nor number. Manchu has no relative pronouns and expresses relative clauses by means of participles and gerunds. A peculiarity of Manchu is the indication of masculine and feminine, or strong and weak, in certain group of words by the alternate of the vowels $a$ and $e$; thus, *ama* ‘father’ becomes *eme* ‘mother’.

Manchu has been a written language since the 17th century and uses a script borrowed from the Mongol alphabet (Li, 2000).
Figure 4.5 (2) Example of written language of Manchu and its meaning

The character in the left part of the picture means the whole name of Manchu in the written Manchu language; it looks like a running horse, which tells people that Manchu was an ethnic group that relied on hunting. This is true about Manchu, who first came from the northern part of China where there is a huge land area. Their written characters are like the pictograph characters; basically drawing the pictures. However, the language of Manchu still exists today but with few people able to use it.

I meant to learn the language, but did not have a proper chance to do so it because my grandfather, who was able to speak the language of Manchu, passed away. I think I will start to learn it right after my research journey, when I have time to head back my hometown which is a town of Manchu people.
Chapter 5: Integrating Task-performance with Cultural Comparison

5.1 Introduction

When it comes to the development of intercultural competence, most language teachers choose the method of cultural comparison (Byram, 2009; A Liddicoat, 2008) to teach the students. It is evident that this method can activate students’ thoughts about different cultures and to make comparison themselves. At the same time, students can also develop some interest in self-study. Therefore, I support this kind of teaching method by using my own style of teaching.

When I first came into an Australian high school class, I noticed that the students always like to perform in front of the others. Hence, I decided to give the students a chance in my Chinese language lessons to act out the cultural comparison they were required to write down. I first guided them to introduce the local culture to me, by using a concept map and asking them to work in groups to act out a situation according to the topic we were working on, for example ‘the birthday’. After this, I led the class to make conclusions during a discussion. On the core of foreign language study, I deem that the study is to inspire the students to cherish their own culture and develop adaption and understanding of the other cultures.

In the process, I arranged research classes in two high schools. Through my own reflection and with interview of the teachers and the students, I found that students do love the way of acting out to do cultural comparison. However, the local language teachers had some concerns the available class time, because the task-performance lessons took two to four times the time required by normal Chinese lessons. Thereafter, I started to think about where the problem was occurring and what obstacles might be making the lessons less efficient. Finally, I realised that my own intercultural competence still required developing; that was why I was unable to properly guide the students in cultural comparison classes. The details will be provided in the following sections.

5.2 Overview of the Task-performance in my first research cycle
This includes my research lessons in two different high schools. Due to the available time and each school’s learning schedule, I changed some lessons in the second cycle of my research lessons. My aim was to integrate task performance in the Chinese classes and to enlighten the students to do cultural comparison by themselves.

5.2.1 First try in the local high school with the original design

In my first research cycle, and in accordance with my original research design, I carried out a series of lessons doing my cultural comparison context through the means of task-performance. The main topic for the students to learn and discuss was about the Australian and Chinese birthday party. The process for the lessons is described in the following, together with the data (which is the self-reflection journal of the researcher) collected during this time.

**Teacher:** Erjia Guan

**School:** School 1, the high school with a local language teacher and a good exam system to check the students’ Chinese learning standard.

**Duration:** 4 lessons

**Time:** First class/week 4/ October 31st

**Class presentation:**

1. Using the PPT to introduce myself and a little more about China.
2. Introduce the task performance to the students (on the birthday celebration).
3. Make the students into two large groups and fill in the character form.
   
   At the end of the lesson, two directors state their performance plan for each group.

**Teaching materials:**

1. The PPT I made to introduce myself.
2. Forms of the task-performance for the students to complete.

**Reflection:**
This was the first class in the research cycle, so I thought it had to be well prepared. Thanks to the local language teacher who gave me some useful suggestions in controlling the class and the content that I needed to tell the students and how to make it clear to them.

In the class, students were not quite sure about what they needed to do. I explained the activity again and again until they seemed to understand it. When organising the groups I noticed that one boy was crying alone in the first row (before the class he had had a fight with his classmate) I talked to him but he still needed time to calm down.

What I learnt very importantly in this lesson is to know my students better and for year 7, clear instructions in class are the key to a good lesson.

Feedback from the teacher:

The feedback here focusses on my development as a novice teacher.

“Improved volume; showing greater awareness of the time and the need to get packed up at end of the lesson. Developing the ability to do the routine at the end of the lesson; showing evidence once a lesson of waiting for student attention and telling the students you’re waiting. A good start, keep developing; now, work on consequences for misbehaviour clearly; also work on knowing your students and how they learn (local language teacher, 31/10/2012).”

Time: Second class/Week 8/ November 26th

Class presentation:

1. Start with writing the script
2. Rehearse outside the classroom, in the courtyard.
3. Get one group perform and videoed.

Teaching materials:

Printed materials (pictures of necessaries needed for a birthday party) for the students to better rehearse their performance.
Reflection:

Today’s class gave me a great shock and decreased my confidence in doing the research. I even thought that I was not suitable to be a teacher.

On the whole, it took three times longer than I had thought they needed to finish the script.

Students with the script to perform, even when they only had to say ‘happy birthday’, needed to look for it on their script. This was a surprise to me. Later on, the language teacher told me that this was mainly because they were only year 7 students - they are more likely to be worrying about whether the performance would be scored or not, and were nervous to perform in the class.

Feedback from the teacher:

The local language teacher was helping with one of the groups’ rehearsal. She followed the suggestion that the number of members in a group should be reduced if doing such an activity in class. Some students do not deal well with the group members once the groups have more than ten students.

Time: Third class/ Week 8/ November 28th

Class presentation:

1. R’s group go down to rehearse & discuss Australian birthday with T’s group
2. The group to perform and be videoed
3. Show the video from last time (the other group’s performance)
4. Summary of the task-performance
5. Collect three questions on the Chinese birthday celebrations

Teaching materials:

1. The video camera from the school.
2. Blank sheet of paper for students to fill in.
Reflection:

During the discussion with T’s group, I asked them about their own way of celebrating birthdays. Coincidentally, most of them remember the best birthday present was a surprise trip to Fiji. This is also a small cultural phenomenon here. Chinese are getting used to give children money and expensive gifts, while Australian people are more fascinated in experiences such as an enjoyable trip.

Upon the topic, the result of my collected questions about the Chinese birthday, the top 3 are: the food, presents and how to celebrate. All the other questions are like what will they wear or where would they celebrate the birthday.

Feedback from the teacher:

“Still developing ability to handle class discussions and manage student questions/comments.”

Time: Fourth class/ Week 10/ December 12th

Class presentation:

1. Show the video of the other group’s performance.
2. Ask the students the question that was collected from them and introduce the Chinese birthday.
3. Guide the students to fill in the comparison table.
4. Watch the birthday video
5. Learn to sing the birthday song.
6. Question time

Teaching materials:

Birthday song script (from the Treasure box-a Chinese teaching material)

The video I made on Chinese birthday celebration (mainly about the celebrations for one month, and one year and some typical occasions)

Reflection:
The last lesson I was on my own, without the local language teacher, and I felt a little more relaxed.

The last lesson is easier to deal but also the most important lesson in my whole research cycle. In this lesson, I mainly talked about the significance of my research. I guided the students to think about their own cultures and to make comparisons between the Australian and Chinese cultures.

I spent a lot of time making a proper video about Chinese birthdays. Via this process, I also discovered that Chinese people do not know much about the traditional Chinese birthday; what they are doing now is more like a western type of birthday celebration. Where has the Chinese tradition gone? China has always been known as a country with great heritage; the heritage needs to be protected and cherished. It is the same with Australian culture, the birthday customs here and the explanations of each step in the process.

Feedback from the teacher:

“Need to deconstruct pronunciation of words and letter combinations first before expecting students to follow along with songs; give more clearer instructions on what you want them to reflect you; needed to bring a sense of closure to your own research and student learning by getting volunteers to share some of their answers to last section (local language teacher, 12/12/2012).”

5.2.2 Second go in the other high school with improved research design

After my first try in the local high school, I interviewed the local language teacher as well as five students who were involved in the research lessons. I received creative ideas from the students and experienced suggestions from the local language teacher. Therefore, I undertook the second try in another high school with the same cultural topic - the birthday.

Teacher: Erjia Guan
School: School 2, which has more than 80% of boy students in the school. The students are fairly excited and eager in the Chinese class. Class management is also very challenging. This is especially the case when giving the student too much freedom.

Duration: 2 lessons

Time: First lesson/ March 8th

Class presentation:

1. Walking into the class and telling the students that the day is my birthday, ask them to celebrate the birthday with me in class.
2. Use the concept map to guide the students to think about their local birthday party.
3. Give the students time to draw the birthday necessaries, such as birthday cakes and cards.
4. Organize the whole class to celebrate the birthday with me, give out the gifts, and sing the birthday songs.

Teaching materials:
Blank sheets of paper for the students to draw on.

Reflection:
In the first round of lessons, I asked the students to perform a local birthday party. At that time, I was new to the country. I didn’t know much about the Australian birthday, so the lesson was a little out of control. So in this school, I began with my birthday, and had more control of the whole lesson.

In order to let the students know what to draw about the Australian birthday (the local birthday party), I started with a concept map to guide the student about what to do. In this lesson, the students behaved well at the beginning; most of them were so excited about celebrating a birthday in class. But when they started to do the task, their
behaviour changed and I lost control of the class. The local language teacher was busy helping me with the order in class and did not even have time to write the observation form for me. This was a pity for the class that day.

The students in this second school consist of many different minority groups both from inside and outside Australia. When I was discussing the Australian birthday with them, I felt like this was more like a local birthday party. However, even in Australia, there will be different ways to celebrate birthdays. Afterwards, I decided to use the word ‘local’ instead of Australian.

**Feedback from the teacher:**

You carry out activity with the paper and the students drew out things for the birthday party, which is very good. But I think the first lesson need something more visual on the type of things a Chinese birthday celebration would have. And you asked them to draw things that they might give to people for a birthday, during an Australian birthday, which I found really useful for them to start off (Miss V, 10/05/13).

**Time:** Second lesson/ May 3\(^{rd}\)

**Class presentation:**

1. Discuss the Chinese birthday elements with the students and let them make guesses about the Chinese birthday.
2. Show them the video of the Chinese birthday on the smart board.
3. Hand out the cultural comparison form to ask the students to fill in.
4. Teach the Chinese birthday song

**Teaching materials:**

The video of the Chinese birthday.

Cultural comparison forms to fill in.

The script of the birthday song. (from the Treasure box-a Chinese teaching material)
Reflection:

For the second lesson, I introduced the Chinese birthday to the students. The video attracted their attention, but they just spent few minutes on it. They were easily back to doing their own stuff. When they were doing the cultural comparison form, I walked around the classroom, making sure every student is writing something. But when I collected the forms back and started to look at them, I surprisingly found that six students out of twenty two students wrote nothing about my last question, which I regarded as the most valuable information to be collected from the students.

They are good at dealing with the teachers, and pretend that they are doing something, but actually not. For this type of learning style in the class, I realized finding something worth doing is the key to a good lesson with the students in school site 2.

Feedback from the teacher:

I will actually start with that video you made for the birthday introduction. I really like your second lesson on the cultural comparison, something visual for them to do. Basically, with lower behaviour issues, it would be better (Miss V, 10/05/13).

5.3 Discoveries and Challenges – Insights into the first research cycle

The following research question guided the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting the data.

1. How does integrating task-performance with cultural comparison between China and Australia in the classroom influence students’ level of comprehension of the local culture?

The data consisted of:

- One in-depth interview with the local teacher (including teachers’ feedback on my research lessons)
- Group interview with the involved students
- Comparison form done in the class (which is attached in the appendix)
Teacher’s self-reflection journal (which has been mentioned above)

5.3.1 In-depth interview with the local teacher

An in-depth interview with the local teacher gave me a chance to understand how I behaved in my research lesson and what the problems were during the lesson. Besides, the interview helped me to improve and to know what was good about my research lessons.

5.3.1.1 Interview with the teacher who observed my first lesson in the research cycle

Interview with Miss W (local language teacher, 27 March, 2013)

Purpose of the interview:

To check how everything was going in the first research cycle and to determine the problems and to receive suggestions to benefit the next research cycle.

Discoveries during the interview:

The key idea from this interviewee was to develop the traditional teaching material into teacher training material.

W is an experienced local language teacher teaching Chinese at school 1. Normally, she teaches year 7, year 8 and the selective year 9 classes in the school. Each time I taught in the school, she observed my class and gave me feedback on my teaching practice.

As well, she is quite a successful Chinese language learner and learns about the Chinese culture.

The interview is categorized it into three themes

- Positive and negative comments and suggestions
- Possible contributions to my research idea
### Argument on the research ideas within the interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On the research idea</td>
<td>“I like the idea of showing the students a video of what Chinese birthday is about.”</td>
<td>“I think the method took too long for a small amount of learning that we are doing, it was not a large sort of outcome we getting out of it and it took longer than it required.”</td>
<td>1. <em>Change the cultural comparison to written reflection.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the tasks</td>
<td>“Using the scaffolding in the other school when doing the second try in the research cycle.”</td>
<td>“It was too broad and one of the problems is in Australia we are multicultural.”</td>
<td><em>Make sure the instructional language is clear to the students. Then the students feel safe and they can think of ideas easily.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Ideas</th>
<th>Field notes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On the Intercultural Competence</td>
<td>IC is the ability to identify how another culture is different from your own culture; the ability to compare the two cultures in detail and the ability to change your behaviour according to what is suitable in either culture.</td>
<td>I agree with this three-step definition of IC. As I met problems when trying to develop the students’ IC, the reason was that I am still growing my own IC; I am not confident in myself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On teaching culture through language</td>
<td>It takes so much effort to teach the language that what we do is we just mention a couple of culture as we going along</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>Argument</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On cultural comparison</td>
<td>Within China there are many different customs in different regions.</td>
<td>Cultural diversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I think the things you’ve learnt through the process are that the teacher needs to have a very strong knowledge of their content before they can teach IC effectively and that’s a resource of your research.”</td>
<td>Local culture instead of Australian culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On training the teachers</td>
<td>For local teachers teaching IC in their own country, they would have strength. A non-native speaking teacher has a little bit less work to do; they only have to research one side. But the Chinese overseas students need to research both sides.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>Argument</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Learner’s rules and disciplines (弟子规)</td>
<td>“Teach culture through languages. What you are proposing is more culture by itself, but the difficulty with that is the time on task. We simply do not have enough time, and I am afraid that I can’t let you teach this in school, it is too much time out of the language class.”</td>
<td>For the children in ancient China, they learnt this primer by listening to it first. And they could even recite the content before they understood the concept of characters. However, for the students who learn Chinese as a second language, this might be different.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the teacher training</td>
<td>What the local language teacher found exciting was that this Chinese primer may be changed into a better teacher training resource for the new beginning teachers.</td>
<td>This is a very good suggestion for my ideal material. It is obviously too hard for the students to learn, in the learning environment in Australia. By making it into a teacher training material, for both Chinese and Australian teachers, they could learn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.3.1.1 Three categories of the first in-depth interview with teacher W

5.3.1.2 Interview with the teacher who observed my second lesson in the research cycle

Interview with Miss V (V, the local language teacher, 10\textsuperscript{th} May, 2013)

Purpose of the interview:
To examine my improved research lessons in school 2 and to receive suggestions on developing students’ intercultural competence.

Discoveries and Challenges during the interview:
This time, I received a challenge - students with behavioural issues. How could we improve their intercultural comparison ability in class?

V, she is a local language teacher whose first language is Cantonese. She has been a mathematics teacher as well as a Chinese language teacher for a couple of years. She is a young teacher, so she used some software to teach Chinese with the technological facilities in the school 2. Miss V is really a nice and friendly teacher and she respected my ideas about teaching and supported me a lot. Even when my lessons were not successful, she encouraged me. She took control of management of the class for this year because the class was always beyond my ability to control.

The interview is categorized it into three themes:

- Comments on my research lessons
- Exchange of ideas on developing students’ intercultural competence
- On the behaviour issue in class

On the research lessons:
“So, if I was go about the Chinese cultural comparison on the birthday, what I will do is, I will start actually with that video, that you carried out the second lesson, I really like your second lesson on the cultural comparison, something visual for them to do (local language teacher V, 10/5/2013).”

This again pointed out that I need to emphasize the knowledge of the Chinese birthday, not to struggle with how to organize their performance.

“I think the first lesson needed more visuals; similar to the type of things that a Chinese birthday celebration would have. You did do that, but using a visual material, you had a hands-on activity with the paper and they drew out things which are also very good. Because what you use is their background knowledge, which is very positive, and you asked them to draw things that they might give to people for a birthday, during the Australian birthday, which I found is really useful for them to start off.”

Drawing things or writing characters are all both method to calm the students down, and this is needed for an active class like this. Using students’ background knowledge to finish the task also gives me confidence. But the students performed too eagerly when celebrating the birthday and the teacher nearly stopped the lesson from going on.

“On the birthday comparison and you also did ask them to act out a birthday celebration which was… very difficult to manage, not because of your context, your context is very good. So that lesson would work. Basically, with low behaviour issues, it would be better.”

The behaviour problem in this class has been my big problem when teaching. Sometimes, I felt upset about my own teaching, and regretted not being able to manage the class.

- Exchange ideas on developing students’ intercultural competence

“One thing that intercultural learning activity is allowing them to do is not
only give them an insight under the language and culture, a different language, but also it allows them to relate to their personal, culture and feel that their personal language and culture is among those as well. It is not us the isolated culture, cause most of our kids, they are minority groups in Australia. I think allow them to know that there are different cultures, let them, give them a sense of, they are not alone, there are other cultures also, aside from the Australian culture and their minority group opens up, their intercultural read of the world.”

This is one of the specialties of this school. In this school, there are a many different students who are from different part of the world, and also aboriginal students. They need more cultural understanding. Learning about other cultures through a language is good for their growth as they are developing their communication ability with peers.

- **On the behaviour issue in class**

  (1) “We actually have had excursions in the past, when the students are much more manageable. Not only food, in the past, I also took them to do the performance on Taichi. But this year, the class I want to say, is very challenging. This is the most challenging class I have had for Chinese.”

This is a big challenge for my teaching in this school as well as for conducting my research in class. Two reasons cause this to be a great barrier. One is that, as a novice teacher, I still need time to develop and gain experience. The other is that the local language teacher has a reward system in the language class, which I am not in charge of, so the class is not totally handed over to me. This is good on one side, because she can control the class for me; the pity is that I lost the chance to practise my own class management.
5.3.2 Group interview with the focus students

For school 1, I interviewed five students who did a good job in finishing the cultural comparison form in class during their tutorial time. When the task-performance on the cultural comparison topic - birthday - was mentioned, they all started to smile. Looking at their happy faces, I knew this is worth doing, but I needed to be more prepared.

Purpose of the interview:

- To find out the results of my research lessons.
- To check if they had improved intercultural competence.

Discoveries during the interview:

Surprisingly the student who did well on the cultural comparison form could not remember what was learnt in the birthday lesson. On the other hand, the students who are not doing so well can remember a lot, and even had a discussion about cultural shocks they experienced.

It is evident that the students love this kind of performance. When I mention this in the interview, I saw the smile on their face. At that moment, I knew that what I want to do is worthy. The students do have great potential to explore in language classes.

The words in the colour red are the words that I regard as the providing the most meaningful information the students offered.

1. What did you like best about the role play last year?
2. Did you enjoy doing the role play in the language classroom?
3. Do you think it helped you to think about the cultural comparison between China and Australia?
4. How are the birthday celebrations different in both countries?
5. Do you think you could attend a Chinese birthday celebration

Here are my questions for the students.
and know the reason for things people do there?

6. Can you give any suggestions on how to improve the cultural comparison?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G: Miss Guan</th>
<th>student 1: A</th>
<th>student 2: E (two boys)</th>
<th>Interview participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

[Show the students the video of last year’s performance]

G: “why is he doing that?”

A: Because the birthday punches, we meant to do it because whenever someone has a birthday, every person has to punch him the exact age, so we made him, he sounds scared so he run through the door.

G: okay, got it. So this is quite different from the Chinese ones. We don’t do the birthday punch, right? Did you enjoy that performance?

A & E: yes!

A: yeah, I just say scene two change to the house, scene three change to the…

G: yeah, but that is also important, you connect each scene together. So, do you like doing a role play in a language classroom? (yep…) or because this is in English, you are good at it.

A: yeah, if it is in Chinese, it is much harder. E: yes

E: **we prefer in English and a Chinese scene, and an English theme in Chinese.**

G: you mean in a Chinese situation but in English (in English so that can be understood)? And then learn about the conversation. Yes, that’s a good idea! Well, how much do you still remember, about the Chinese birthday?

A: I remember my role to say change the scenes.

G: so that is the Australian birthday, and how about the Chinese one?

| | | | They like the performance. By showing the video of the performance and by asking questions to guide this answer to the second question. |
| | | | Answer to the first question, which part of the performance they like best, is using the English to perform. |
| | | | Recall memories of the birthday in China. To check how much they remember because the goal of the cultural comparison is to |
A: quite a lot. The video.
E: uhhh, I remember bits.
G: so how is that?
E: I think I am in the different group, but I remember roughly what we did.
G: okay, can you tell me how are Chinese people celebrating their birthday?
A: the children got a lot of money. Australian get presents.
E: and they also get clothes, not sure.
G: so, what do they eat for the Chinese birthday?
E: the Chinese food.
G: ok, let’s see what you have written on the comparison form last year, I think you all write something that is typical. A, you wrote about the Chinese cake which looks like a giant peach, it is for the elders.
A: oh, I remember!
G: and for you, E, one year olds catch.
A & E: yes, they go for that thing, they have objects, like spoons, what the baby choose is like, sometimes, means what he will do in the future.
G: yes, good, you remember it, is that interesting?
E: It’s quite cultural.
A: **Australian let the person choose what he wants, and Chinese makes you a present.**

G: do you think this kind of, you know, you first do the performance in English, and then I show you how Chinese people do it in the same situation, like celebrate the birthday. Do you think this helped you to do a cultural comparison?
A & E: yeah, the Australian always let the child choose and the Chinese baby one year old.

Teach them the Chinese birthday.

To indicate the performance is to do with the cultural comparison; let the students be clear about the task goal.
| **G:** do you think this helped you? | **A:** yes, if I go to China. |
| **G:** so what if Chinese people invite you to his birthday party? You know what to do? | **A:** yeah, if they are one year old. The elders, the giant peach. |
| **G:** if you go to a teenager’s birthday. You cannot give him a giant peach, that’s not good. | **A:** that’s calling him old. |
| **G:** so do you have any suggestions about how to do cultural comparisons, for example, just on the birthday. | **E:** if we don’t know the Chinese knowledge, then we may say the language and may offend some people. We need to show respect to the elders. |
| And do you prefer if I teach the Chinese way and ask you to perform in English? | **G:** and in China, you cannot say a teacher’s full name. |
| **A:** yeah | **A:** cause she is a teacher, a higher position. |
| **G:** do you think teachers are higher position? | **E:** yes. And they got like more experience, and has go through all the training |

**Summary**

Two boys were very talkative and gave me a lot of information and new ideas for my next cycle.

**11:30 am**

**Interview time and participants**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student 3: M</th>
<th>Student 4: C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>G:</strong> so, do you like to do this kind of performance in a language classroom?</td>
<td>They both like the performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M &amp; C:</strong> yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G:</strong> you mean you like it because it is a performance or you like it because it is in English?</td>
<td>They regard the performance is fun and it is easier in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M:</strong> it is fun.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G:</strong> so what if I asked you to perform in Chinese, to do a role play in Chinese?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M:</strong> yeah, it would be a bit harder.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G:</strong> it may be not so enjoyable, right?</td>
<td>Still remember some of the Chinese birthday celebration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well, do you think this helped you to know the Chinese culture, because you performed the Australian birthday party? Do you still remember the video? How much do you remember?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C:</strong> the grab things.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G:</strong> you mean the one year olds catch? Yes, you love that? That's quite different.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M:</strong> and they eat, sort of…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G:</strong> the food? Chinese people eat noodles on birthdays, but you eat cakes, right?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think you could go to a Chinese birthday celebration? Like, they eat noodles, they give out red envelopes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M &amp; C:</strong> yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G:</strong> good! Do you have any suggestions about how we could change the way to do a cultural comparison?</td>
<td>Suggestions on how to do the cultural comparison. The girls suggest that students can bring family photos or videos to show the Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because this is a cultural comparison between China and Australia. Do you have any good ideas?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually, what did you do? You filled in forms and write feedback.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So you prefer the way of performance?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

90
Or do you have any questions about the performance? Not everyone is contributing?

C: **not really. So we just acting out, not sure what we really is doing.**

G: so any other ways to show what you do on a birthday celebration in Australia?

   Have family videos?

C: **yeah, take a video of your birthday party or something.**

G: you think there will be someone in the classroom that will be willing to do that?

C: I don't know - it depends.

G: where do you usually have birthdays?

M: at home.

G: and you also have a party or something.

M: no, cause last year I was in Queensland. I had the birthday up there.

G: so you have your birthday celebrated there.

M: yeah, sometimes not at home.

G: that's great. Maybe bringing a family video is one idea that we may try later on.

M: photos.

G: how about, telling you beforehand, and asking some of you to do a presentation on your birthday? Do you want to do it?

M: it depends on different people.

C: I only have the pictures.

G: yeah, maybe just photos are fine, you remember the video, that's easier for you to understand the Chinese one.

So my interview is mainly about checking how you think because of the performance last year and what you learnt about the cultural comparison, your answers give me a support.
Do you think it takes too long?

M: no, it’s fun, and you can really work with someone that you may not hang out with.

G: the group work. So I just interviewed the boys last period, and they said they liked to learn the Chinese one first and act the Chinese one in English; that sounds good, right?

C & M: yes. (the girls agreed)

Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The girls are quiet and do not prefer to offer too much information. But they do indicate that they enjoyed the performance and remember some of the target knowledge that I wished to teach.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.3.2 Field notes of the group interview with the students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the focus group interview, I received some interesting and amazing ideas for my research from the lovely students. Apparently, the boy students had a lot to talk about while the girls’ group was quiet.

The students gave the suggestion as I should teach the Chinese situation first and then they will try to act it out in English. This will emphasize their memory about the Chinese culture part. In the first lesson, I believed that to remind them of their home culture was very important, but I ignored that the more vital task for me was to teach them about the Chinese culture by introducing the Chinese culture to them. Also, the girls suggested that students could bring their own pictures on the topic and do a short presentation to introduce the local culture.

The focus group interviews gave me a warm environment for discussion with the students; it is really meaningful to get ideas from the students. The students are my super treasure in this one year and half journey.
5.4 Conclusion—Inspirations from the first research cycle

5.4.1 General conclusion of the first research cycle

Overall, from the first research cycle, I experienced the very beginning stage of being a novice teacher. I was learning how to survive in the classroom, how to improve myself and to learn better ways to make Chinese learnable in Australia.

As a novice Chinese teacher, I regard my stance on teaching from three different aspects.

Teaching is a learning process. As a novice teacher, I can learn how to be a better teacher from the mentor and colleagues in school. During the classes, I can also learn from the students. I can learn to know how to guide students to give me splendid explanations of new Chinese words; which can lead them to better understand the teaching content. I want to teach the students about the way to learn and not only the knowledge.

Teaching is performing. To be a better teacher, I should believe I am the best actress in front of my students. This is to develop my personal confidence in teaching. Always remember to be clear about the teaching content and try to know every student.

Teaching is reflecting. Reflecting on one’s own work means progress. Only via reflecting, can I find my own performance in teaching and know what needs to be improved. Welcome other experienced teacher’s suggestions about my teaching; this can be a treasure in my growth as a professional teacher.

With great passion for teaching language, enough patience and confidence, I will be keen on improving professional knowledge. At the same time, I want to develop my own ability to communicate with the students and to get to know what they demand in learning language. For one year and a half as a volunteer teacher, I fully experienced the Australian school culture and progressed in every single lesson.
During my teaching in NSW high schools, I have found that students are always eager to perform. This provides the possibility of devising classroom task-performances in their mother tongue - English. Unlike their drama class, in the Chinese class, I will ask them to perform a short scene in their real life. Thereafter, I will use the key ideas of 玖子规 to show them how Chinese people would react in the same situation. Students will be required to make comparisons between their own everyday experience in Australia and what people actually do in China. This will set the stage for them in class, enlightening and encouraging them to think about cultural knowledge for themselves. Cultural knowledge is not a case of knowing information about the culture; rather, it is about knowing how to engage with the culture (A. J. Liddicoat, 2000). In this learning process, students can also learn about their own culture. By watching the task-performance, the students will touch on both the home and the foreign culture. The purpose of cultivating them in this way is to enhance their intercultural understanding and competence.

5.4.2 The Limitations found in the cycle

In the class, I am only a volunteer teacher. The local language teachers remain more like the teachers of the class; they are in charge and have the authority to give out prizes to the students. For most of the time, I could not control the whole class. Moreover, to arrange the task performance in class was a big challenge, and sometimes it may even be difficult for some experienced teachers.

I was keen on developing students’ intercultural competence in the two classes in my first research cycle,. But I didn’t realize that intercultural competence is something that I am also developing. Right from this moment, I started to look into my own ability as a teacher to teach language and intercultural competence.

I am also learning intercultural competence. This is a great reason for me not to try to teach the Chinese primer to the students but just pick up the main ideas to combine into my lessons. On one hand, this is a good way to introduce the primer as teaching material for language teaching. On the other hand, it was suggested to me to use it as intercultural training material for use by novice teachers.
5.4.3 Expectations for the next cycle

In the second research cycle, I started to focus on the novice teacher’s training by getting experience from the teacher training projects. Afterwards, I checked if this also helped the students’ intercultural competence.

I tried to have some time to change myself as a novice teacher in Australia, and looked for suitable ways to adapt to the local school culture. In this way, I could teach more efficiently and stimulated the students’ interest in learning Chinese and encourage the students to create more opportunities for self-study of the Chinese culture. This is the teaching goal of my research journey. Not only teaching the language, but also teaching them the skills to learn a language.

The Chinese language is difficult to learn, compared to the English language. But every country has different characteristics, culture, and people. Learning language is not only copying and reciting; it has other aspects for the learners to explore.
Chapter 6: Teacher/Students’ Intercultural Competence

Learn globally, teach locally: Adaption to Australian School Culture

6.1 Introduction

Teachers, who are trying to introduce more cultural knowledge, particularly in the junior years, with a view to enhancing learners’ motivation and enjoyment, need to know the school culture among the students (East, 2012).

I found that to develop the intercultural competence of Australian high school students requires the teacher to have a high level of intercultural competence. This is something I am still developing as a novice teacher. I thought hard about how to make myself acceptable for teaching in high schools.

One of the contributory questions to the study is “how could the teacher-researcher adapt to the local school culture and teach locally with the students’ interests in mind?” Here in the second research cycle, the answer to this question is hidden in the lines.

In the first place, the research I did was to attract the students to learn Chinese through my own development as a teacher-researcher. Being in a different country and teaching one’s mother tongue requires a high level of knowledge about the home culture as well as that of the foreign culture. During my stay in Australia, I observed and experienced the Australian school culture, especially the high school culture. Teaching the high school students is challenging.

What the high school students need is motivation to learn the second language. Once they have the motivation, they could be able to start self-study for themselves, which will definitely bring them a lot of fun.
6.2 **Australian school culture**

School culture is part of my focused on local culture. The school day for students in China last from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm, while it means 9:00 am - 3:00 pm in Australian students’ eyes. To me, the Australian school system has a lot of difference from the one we have in China. The reason for the difference might be the population. Students here are able to receive free education from primary to secondary school.

6.2.1 **Getting to know the Australian school culture**

In the area of teacher education, some contributors (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012) highlight that the local cultural imperatives influence and shape the preparation of quality teachers and makes change both possible and problematic. In other words, becoming familiar with the local culture is urgent for the teachers, especially new teachers, because it will impact their professional development. For the teacher-researcher involved in the international teacher education program, school culture has been addressed through the process for quality teaching.

*School hour and class time*

School hours in Australian schools are from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and five days a week, while the Chinese school hour is from 7:30 to 5:30 perhaps six days a week. In Australian high schools, students do not have a stable class, they move between the classrooms to go to different classes. The class time vary from forty five minutes to seventy five minutes depending on the school. Chinese high schools have forty five minutes for one lesson and sixty minutes for some quizzes and tutorials.

*Class size*

The normal size of an Australian high school class is around thirty students; sometimes it is about twenty five students in one class. However, in china, we usually have more than fifty students in one class. Although there are more students in Chinese classrooms, every student is studying for their own future so they are well-behaved in class.

*Homework*
I have to admit that most of the Australian students’ homework is novel. For the higher grades in high school, they do have some more academic homework to do. But the homework, if done carefully, can actually help them study efficiently. The homework in China is sometimes a tool to make the students study longer.

**Peer support**

Every new Year 7 student in Australia experiences peer support all through the first term in high school.

Year 11 students take a group of year 7 and guide them to learn how to communicate and understand their peers. Students support each other, getting to know what the school is like and how to make new friends in the new environment.

Australian students have a great change moving from between year 6 to year 7. They change from the highest grade in primary school to the lowest grade in high school and this means they need to get attention from others to prove their identity at school. Thus, Year 7 is always a hard time for both the students and the teachers.

**Harmony day**

I experienced two Harmony Days in two different schools. Because Harmony Day depends on the official school calendar, it is normally on March 21th, but different schools can have different plans and ways to celebrate.

In the primary school, the teacher told the students that Harmony Day is to teach the students that while we belong to the same school we are different, and we need to accept the difference among peers.

In high school, Harmony Day focuses on multicultural issues. Students from different cultural backgrounds perform on the same stage, and share their culture with the peers.

**Messenger**

A messenger is a student who uses a normal school day to do a messenger’s job, and take notes from the front office to different places. Every student in the school will have a chance to do this, even students with disability. Usually, two students will be messengers for one day, and all the students in the school take turns to do this job.
Students take this job very seriously and it is very a responsible job.

*Coffee shop serves by the students at school*

Those students who choose to be part of the coffee shop at school can have a certificate when they graduate from high school. They may be able to find a job in coffee shops straight away.

*Special days around the school*

Primary schools have special events during the year – such as cake days and pyjama days. Everyone in the school enjoys and take part in the events and this reflects a students’ attitude to life. This really develops a sense of happiness in students.

*Melbourne cup*

This happens on the first Tuesday in November in Australia. On this day, all the ladies wearing a flower hat on the head, and the men dress like gentlemen. It is surprising for me to see all the teachers in the school wearing a hat on the head and dressed like fine ladies. After school, all the staff stay together to watch the race and check their own bets.

The Australian school terms are new to me, and this is what I experienced in my teaching in local high schools.

6.2.2 Training to adapt to the school culture

The local language teacher (W) provided feedback to my every lesson and discussed the lesson with me after class. This helped me a lot when I was first struggling to know how to teach the Australian high school students. The first day I went to the high school, the teacher told me: “Do not smile before Easter.” Teachers in a different country really need to learn a lot, and I had the greatest experience ever in this program.

Here is the checklist given to me by my mentor teacher at school 1 for my training as a novice teacher:
• Be punctual to class
• Settle the students down when lining up outside
• Follow a routine at the beginning and end of lessons
• Mark the roll
• Introduce lesson content/outcomes clearly
• Communicates instructions clearly
• Communicate expectations of behaviour/consequences for misbehaviour clearly
• Deal with misbehaviours effectively, using a range of discipline strategies
• Uses loud and clear voice
• Engaged in positive interactions with students
• Develop a good rapport with students
• Clarify student questions effectively
• Command the attention of whole class effectively. Wait for all students to listen
• Walks around, checking students’ work

The mentor teacher gave me written feedback every time I finished teaching my lesson. The following are the key points from the feedback recording my development as a novice teacher.

2012.10.16 First time teaching after one term of observation

√ Engaged in positive interactions with students

× Need to work on: use loud and clear voice; make instructions clear; set up routines for the class; wait for all the students to listen.”

**Instruction language**: 1. Clearly 2. Repeat

The students in year 7 need very clear instructions in class.

For me, I have to write down the instruction language that I need to use in class beforehand and practise saying that. Because English is not my mother tongue, using English as the language of instruction is new to me and I need to practise a lot.
2012.11.14

√Improved questioning techniques

×Work on: ask more leading questions; develop how to handle class discussion.”

Questioning: a very useful way to get the students engaged and involved in the class.

On my part, I need to get used to asking questions instead of giving out the answers to the students.

2012.11.21

√Using warnings and consequences to deal with misbehaviour; good knowledge of the students

×Work on: explain ‘what’ you want students in do in each part of the lesson and ‘why’ more clearly; lesson pace.

Deal with misbehaviour: this might be the most difficult thing to deal with for a novice teacher. For me, this is also the biggest difference between Chinese and Australian school cultures. In China, students all behave very well in class; only one or two students in one class may cause trouble often. There will not be a class full of loud noise with students doing their own work, because their high school life is competitive. Australian high school students have more freedom; they are told to respect the teachers, but the teacher also needs to respect the students’ right.

Knowledge of the students’ names: this will gives me a sense of achievement for being a teacher. Once you get the students’ names, they feel that you like them and they may react to you more eagerly. This is a fundamental step of establishing rapport between teacher and student.

Getting to know your students is fairly important (Guillaume). Here is an example from the local language teacher: for most of the time, I will not be so harsh to the students who behave very badly in the first period in the morning because I know, some of them come from poor or single families and do not have anyone to prepare the breakfast for them. Therefore, they need to have something to drink with a lot of caffeine to keep them excited in the morning. And this leads to the consequence that
they might behave very excitedly in the first one or two lessons in the morning, which always causes a trouble. But once you know the situation, you get to know the students and their families and you will change the way you treat the naughty students. Their behaviour become understandable; a letter home could solve the problem. So sometimes, you must show more tolerance in class for these students actually they like to learn something. Teachers need to use teaching skills to let the students focus on the class and other class activities, so that the students can get through the morning more comfortably (21/11/2012).

2012.11.28
√Improved volume; greater awareness of the time; wait for the students to listen
×Work on: make consequence for misbehaviours clear.

**Awareness of the time**: Australian students have to change classrooms after every lesson, so knowing about the time is very important for a novice teacher. The students need five minutes before the bell to pack up, and the teacher needs to give the students some time to cool themselves down till the bell ring and hope that this will let them behave better in the next period.

2013.2.5 new year 7 class
×Work on: the importance of modelling for year 7; importance of pinyin to enable students to attempt the task

**Modelling for year 7**: the new year 7 enrolled into the school. When they are trying to get used to the high school life in the first term is the best time to train them to be better behaved students. However, their behaviours change a lot from year 6 to year 7. So, for me, I have to do a lot of modelling in order to let the students know how to do the task in class.

Modelling and demonstration are regarded as the foundation for effective instruction in class (Culp & Chepyator-Thomson, 2011).

2013.2.12
√Warned students for misbehaviour: giving warnings but not following up;
×Need a seating plan.

**Seating plan**: this is a strategy for calming down the students and separating those chatty students. Let them know that there are certain rules in the classroom and they need to follow them carefully.

2013.2.19

√Explained the significance of lesson content today; explain strokes within characters.

×Work on: consider praising students more when they are working quietly to give them encouragement to meet your expectation of behaviour.

**Significance of the content**: at first, I thought I did not need to mention this kind of significance, but actually this will affect students’ attitudes. By knowing that they are learning something useful and significant, their attitudes improve.

2013.3.12

√Followed up on seating plan consequence; drilled pronunciation

×Need to break the pronunciation down; use of communicative approach; always have visual cues (pinyin version) + oral

**Follow up on the seating plan**: I sometimes provided warnings and consequences to some misbehaviour, but I usually did not follow them up. Therefore, students start to ignore my words. So, this time, according to their behaviour when lining up outside the class, I put the seating plan into use. The seating plan was designed through my discussion with my mentor teacher, via our knowledge of each student’s characteristics and behaviours.

2013.3.19

√Communicated expectation that everyone must participate

×Questioning techniques: give students questions to answer in order to engage their interest and get them to think

**Question techniques**: continue improving. Not only teach the students the knowledge, but also how to study.
Demonstrated greater patience when waiting for students’ answers of questions.

Further develop the skill of questioning; think about prodding for deeper analysis in students’ through problematizing. Use different approaches to deal with different students”

**Different approaches to different students:** knowing each student well helps in managing the class more effectively.

Seating plan, move the students; noticing the back rows

**Keeping an eye on the back rows:** lifting my eye sight to know about everything that is happening in the classroom, not just in the front rows. Learning how to be a teacher is like learning how to drive; you need to lift your eye sight from the first row in the class to the whole class

Pacing of the lesson: too slow

**Pace of the lesson:** this has been a big issue that I am dealing with. You can easily notice that the students start to make noise when you stop for too long or when you have insufficient for them to do. At the moment, what you need to do is make the students focus on you again and speed up the following sessions, which requires the students to think quicker and give you their full attention.

Deconstructed pronunciation: good improvement in confidence with this; now using your own examples

**Using teacher’s own example:** this makes links to the teacher; and sharing your own example helps the students with the pronunciation of the words and makes them remember longer.
√ Instruction language well; Excellent design of new homework reading resources; needed a bit of support with instructional language; improved pacing in teaching new words

× Still need to work on pacing in activities; work on classroom presence

**Pacing in activities**: A great classroom management skill is to organise activities well. During the activities in class, a lot of things may happen and the teacher has to keep order in the class. Providing very clear instruction language is the first step, and never begins the activity till the students know about the rules and what they need to do.

2013.7.30

√ Keep the class working together with you by keeping the pace going along fairly quickly

2013.8.6

√ Revision well done; improved use of classroom presence was very effective in engaging students

√ On the homework booklet: some handed in, very well received by children who had attempted it. Very pleasing to see low-literacy students keenly complete their homework each lesson and pleasing to see you give help to a new student to gain confidence in learning the Chinese characters.

**Teaching resource**: Creating and choosing proper teaching resources for the class is very important.

6.2 The Graffiti-style booklet on Chinese characters

This is the teaching resource that I developed according to the experience in teaching language in Australian high schools. Through teaching and observation in schools, the
teacher-researcher found that to attract the students to learn a second language I may need to start from their world.

As one influential early study conducted by Ruben and Kealey (1989) highlights, observable behaviours, not knowledge of other cultures, is a better variable for effective communication. The graffiti booklet is from one of my observable behaviours.

6.2.1 Introduction of the Graffiti-style booklet

In Australia, the most popular type of street art is definitely graffiti. People can find graffiti everywhere: along the train station, under the bridges, and on the wall outside the houses. Students are excited about that cool art style outside the classroom; most of the students will choose to do graffiti in their booklet. Graffiti is full of freedom and those bright colours catch people’s eyes. Here, the graffiti-style booklet on the Chinese characters brings those cool elements into the language classroom, and let students enjoy the time learning language as well as to appreciate and create the art style that they like.

In the two school sites I put my research into practice. I used the graffiti booklet as a homework booklet, in-class teaching material, and as revision material for the characters.

6.2.2 Teacher-researcher’s reflection on the graffiti booklet put into use

Self-reflections:

26/07/2013 the students in school 2, after I hand out the booklet on the graffiti in Chinese characters, said to me: “you should use this more often. Because it is cool.” In this school, the students have 75 minute-Chinese class, so they can do the booklet in class. Therefore, I can directly see their reaction on the booklet, which give me a lot of encouragement in doing this.
The first day I put my research material into practice, I was nervous and looked forward to the effect. When a girl in year 7 told me that she liked it, I was so pleased and felt that I am doing something right.

26/07/2013 the same day, for the students in school 1, they have a Chinese class with the local language teacher, not me. And the teacher check their homework booklet for me, 26 students in the class, only 8 of them finish and bring it back to get a reward. Wondering why this happens, I am waiting to have a discussion with the language teacher in school 1 to see what could do to help this situation.

Sometimes, things will not happen as you wish. A problem occurred in the other school, in which the booklet was used as homework. Australian students do have homework, but Chinese is not their main subjects. Another possible reason is that for them, the graffiti booklet is attractive in class, compared to the language booklet. But when they go back home, compared with the computer, the TV, the booklet is really not so attractive.

30/07/2013 I am teaching the class to which I give out the homework booklet, only few students finish the homework that they should have done. I am wondering if this is a good idea for them to take this booklet home. Therefore, I need to figure out what is wrong with the booklet. Is it my teaching method, or the booklet itself? Also, the local language teacher hand out this booklet to the other classes that she is teaching, I am looking forward to see how those students are going with the booklet.

At this time, I start to check my teaching resource. It should be suitable for the students, but what happened to the booklet as a homework booklet? The students even received a reward for finishing the homework.

06/08/2013
The local language teacher told me that one of the students had just hurt his wrist, and he has to wear a brace around the wrist. As he really wishes to do the booklet, his mother agreed he could take the brace off for ten minutes so that he could do the colouring of the characters. This student was not always well behaved in class, but on this occasion, it really showed us his potential for study. Every student has an ability to study and one of the teacher’s great responsibilities is to find out what the special ability of the individual is.

Students always have much more potentials than we thought. I really appreciate their passion within the booklet.

14/08/2013 Student who was always naughty in my class did his homework—the graffiti booklet, and he excitedly show me that he has done the work, which surprise me a lot. Some of the students told me that they took it home and forgot to bring it back. Also, some asked me if they could restart it. This proves that they like it; they do not treat this booklet as a burden.

Interestingly, in the final survey, he chose “dislike” for the booklet. It seems like that the students often do not want to make the teacher happy with the results of surveys.

28/08/2013 I start to use this graffiti booklet in the primary school I teach, with Year 6 students. I found that my students all be able to write the characters for the sport word correctly, because usually some of the students will miss any part in the characters. Compared with another class who has also learn about the sport (taught by another teacher), the students who did not have the chance to use the graffiti booklet, having some problems in writing
the characters correctly. They will write only half of the character without realising it. This strengthened my belief in doing this booklet.

6.2.3 Feedback from the local language teachers

In this cycle, I designed a survey for the local language teachers to fill in for me as I used my graffiti booklet in the two schools and hoped to get their feedback on my booklet and to receive some useful suggestions.

The teacher from school 1 was the first to introduce the booklet in school, and used it as a homework booklet for the students.

The teacher from school 2 was the second to use the booklet and used it as an in-class teaching resource.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions in the survey</th>
<th>Local language teacher from school 1, W</th>
<th>Local language teacher from school 2, V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The significance that the booklet brings to the students.</td>
<td>Students relate to the booklet easily because the use of street-art style appeals to them as young people. It draws upon their familiar youth culture. It makes character learning more interesting for them. It also encourages them to view homework more positively.</td>
<td>The booklet allows students to recognise the character through colouring contemporary art. It is also a good task for lower ability students to keep on task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The significance that the booklet brings to the language learning.</td>
<td>The booklet helps students see the components of the characters as pictographs of meaning. This helps them develop strategies for remembering the characters in their long-term memory. They see the picture in the character and remember the narrative explanation associated with it.</td>
<td>Students have an improved character recognition though colouring in the characters or trying to draw the graffiti character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your observation</td>
<td>The students are very enthusiastic about the booklet, in general. Even those who</td>
<td>Student found the contemporary design of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

109
Some of the students were able to finish our homework booklet and bring it back to class. But some of the students forgot to bring it back to class. The ones who brought it back were able to get a fortune cookie from the teacher. Some of the students who forgot are more disorganised in their own study and need time to develop their own study abilities.

As an in-class colouring resource, students spent twenty minutes in each lesson while learning the new words. The local language teacher told them to finish the booklet in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General comment on the booklet</th>
<th>The booklet not only helps students memorise characters. It also teaches them the value of homework (a general life-skill). Moreover, it is an appealing teaching resource because it is highly inclusive of students of all ability levels, literacy levels and cultural backgrounds.</th>
<th>The creativity of the characters is very impressive. It would be lovely to see you teach the students how to draw these characters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any possible suggestions on the booklet</td>
<td>The booklet is best used in conjunction with regular reading quizzes to test student memorization of the characters. When used in this way, students receive further encouragement to continue with their Chinese studies because they can genuinely see their own progress.</td>
<td>Have the students do a dot to dot in Chinese Characters to produce the outline of these characters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2.3 Feedback from the local language teachers on the designed booklet
the term. The students were willing to do it; even some of the naughty boys. How did they go with the booklet? The results were seen in the following student survey.

As revision flash cards, the booklet reminded them of the characters. It was also a good way for them to do a self-study check; once they remember; they receive a sense of achievement.

6.2.4 Feedback from the students

I handed out a little quiz with some feedback question at the back for the students to fill in. I was planning to give the quiz to the students who finished the booklet, but the local teacher suggested giving the quiz to all the students whether they had finished or not. This was a better way to see how the booklet works for the students.

Student survey finished on 10 Sep 2013 in school 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student name</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Because it teaches me sports that I play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I like it because it was fun to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The reason why I liked the book was because I was able to do some colouring in and understand the Chinese characters for sports a bit more. And we were awarded with fortune cookies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Because I learnt a different language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>Like I could sort of recognise some of the characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Like Because we learn how to speak Chinese and know what the symbols are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Like It is easy, understandable and enjoyable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Like It was very fun. It helped me understand/remember the characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>Like Cause now I have learned how to say the names of the sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Like I like it because I like colouring in things and you got fortune cookies for it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Like Because I got to know the characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>Like I like the booklet because I like to draw and there are so many different sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Alright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>6/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some of its good, some of its not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don't like it. Because it is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Because it is boring. It also wasn't educational.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Because I don't know the characters well. And it took me a while to decide which to answer and I don't know much about Chinese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I just don't like it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don't unedsent it. (the student spell the word “understand” wrong)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J2</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am not good at Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I don't like it because I didn't learn anything from it, but I like Ms Guan. I also don't like it because I don't want to learn Chinese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J3</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because it is not educational or very fun.

Table 6.2.4 (1) Survey results from the students in two high school sites

It was not very surprising to find that in this class, those students who said they do not like the booklet showed their dislike for studying the language, but actually, they did not even try to use the booklet. Two of the students who said they disliked the booklet in fact, excitedly showed me their work every time they finished one page. The reason why they said they disliked the booklet probably because they want to act cool.

For instance, a boy J said he disliked it, but he loved the booklet. In his feedback, he did not know how to spell the word ‘understand’ correctly, but he scored 8 out of 10 in the quiz, which is really good for him. He always moves in his seat and, sometimes, he cannot control himself and he will stand up and walk around in class. He is the kind of student that has difficulty in learning English literacy. He showed his work to me several times and was really excited to share it with me.

Another student, U, has a great talent for learning language, but he always acted out as though he does not like Chinese. In fact, he studied really hard in class and did the tasks carefully. He is also naughty. He scored full mark in the quiz, showing me that he has done his study, and I am really appreciative.

At school site 1, the topic for the students was sports words, twenty two students took part in the quiz. One student said either like or dislikes the booklet, he scored the full mark.

Nine of the students ticked “dislike”, and their correct rate is 81.1%. While twelve other students like it, and their correct rate is around 15% higher than those do not like it, which is 96.7%.

It was excellent to find that the students could recognize most of the Chinese characters on sports. This proved the effectiveness of the booklet.

Student survey finished on 13 Sep 2013 in school 2:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student name</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>7/7</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I like it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I like it so much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Because it taught me Chinese characters and meanings, even when at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I loved it because it is awesome and I love colouring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I liked it so much because I like to colour sometimes and it is nice!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>7/7</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I like it as it is fun and I love colouring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>2/7</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Because it is fun and easy to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I dislike it because it’s sometimes hard to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Because I think I done a bit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sixteen students took part in the survey (the total number of students was around 25, but some students were absent). Thirteen students liked it 74.7%, while three disliked it 76.2%.

The students in this school had seventy five minutes for their Chinese class, so they were required to finish the booklet by the end of the term. However, some of them were randomly away from the class.

Student, A, the first day I handed out the booklet, this student told me that she liked it very much and wished to have more booklets like this.

(Table 6.2.4 (2) Survey result from the students in school site 2)
From the survey, I found that most of the students love colouring, and some boys especially like graffiti very much because in their heart graffiti is ‘cool’ and they wish they could do it.

The difference between the two schools can be shown in the figure below

![Figure 6.2.4 correction rate of the survey in both schools](image)

The figure above illustrate that the general correction of each school and the students who choose like and dislike. Apparently, the students in school site 2 do not like to make the teacher satisfied, because the students who choose dislike score higher than those who said like the booklet.

### 6.3 Conclusion—Sense of Achievement

During the second research cycle, I put more of my own ideas and experiences into the teaching. This made the process more achievable than it was in the first cycle. I found a combination of what I like to do with the challengeable teaching in Australian high schools.

When learning something, the students need to achieve something in the process so that they will be motivated to learn. After thinking about the motivation of Australian students to learn Chinese, I know that it is necessary to let the students do something
that can develop their motivation. What brings a sense of achievement in language study? Be able to communicate in the target language, or writing the written symbols. Therefore, I chose something visual for them to do.

I was surprised to find that although students from school 2 were more naughty and harder to control than those in school 1, more students expressed their like for the booklet. The booklet calmed them down in class, and even students who do not like it did well in the quiz.

Referring to the history of Chinese pictograph, turning Chinese characters into picture drawings is seen to be helpful for the students who are beginning to learn Chinese. Students said that they find it difficult to learn a foreign language, especially Asian languages, but the booklet helped them to overcome the scariness of the language. On the other hand, new students who transferred from other schools gained confidence by doing the booklet. Students with literacy difficulty preferred the booklet and are able to try the characters.

By using the survey, students offered a number of positive comments; which is good. Both the students and I had a sense of achievement, which suggests my adaption to the school culture accounts for a part of my success in teaching Chinese in Australia.
Chapter 7. Discussion of the findings of the research and conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarise the findings of the research and suggest contributions of the study to the language teaching field.

Because of the findings in research cycle one, the study switched focus to the teacher’s intercultural competence and away from student’s intercultural competence. Cycle one showed that the ability and knowledge of a teacher does affect the students. If the teacher does not have sufficient competence, it will be hard to teach the students. Intercultural competence is not like language skills; it forms during the process of teaching and learning and every detail matters.

By thinking about how to motivate the students, I came up with the idea of designing a graffiti-style booklet for teaching the Chinese characters. This turned out to be the turning point in my research journey, I felt like I had finally found something that was meaningful and attractive to do. I devoted great passion and effort in this teaching material.

7.2 Reflective Journal Findings

Critical reflection is essential for developing a learner’s intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2011).

On reading though my reflective journal from the beginning of the journey to the end, dynamic changes occurred to me.

I was asked to scan one form by my friend, I went to the librarian while realize that I need to pay for my use of scanner. He was quite glad to pay that for me because I just got one sheet to scan. This is what I find a big difference between Chinese people and Australian, Australians are always eager to help others, they cherish every chance to communicate with other people, maybe this is because the population here is quite small, but I do
believe this is because the social environment. In china, there are always too much people, people can only able to protect one’s own right and nearly lost some nature of human beings (reflective journal by Erjia, 20/07/2012).

It is really interesting to look back at my first reflective journal after my arrival in Sydney. I first started to view the things that were culturally different; even from the aspect of social environment. I found myself quite interested in the cultural differences. I could understand the differences, but once I began to do the research, I automatically thought about the reason for the difference.

When talking with home culture aphasia, which I used in my thesis before, teacher W told me that the children in Australia also face this kind of problem. What they’ve been told is the surface of the culture, there are lots more to explore by themselves. It is very important for them to realize that culture is not only about customs but also values for the world and the home culture. What they need to learn from my Chinese class, I hope is more than the Chinese culture, but a sense of intercultural communication ability (reflective journal by Erjia, 28/07/2012).

This is the day when I happened to consider my thesis writing. My initial goal is to teach the children to focus on their home culture before they learn any other cultures, so that they can easily make comparison between the cultures.

Student who is always naughty in my class did his homework—the graffiti booklet, and he excitedly show me that he has done the work, which surprise me a lot. Some of the students told me that they took it home and forgot to bring it back. Also, some asked me if they could restart it. This proves that they like it; they do not treat this booklet as a burden (reflective journal by Erjia, 14/08/2012).

The graffiti booklet was a way to teach Chinese characters, not just by telling the readers about what the characters mean, but to let them be familiar with the characters by using their popular signs. This was accepted by the local students who were learning Chinese as a second language.
Findings are not only about my own teaching, but also my own changes while being a teacher. It is amazing to see the difference in myself; I can see the development of my intercultural competence. From the cultural comparisons I can see my cultural self-awareness, alternating the attitudes about being abroad and trying to adapt to the social life and school culture around me.

7.3 Interview and Field Note Findings

Teachers and students are two major groups of people in my interview. Teachers gave me suggestions about future teaching content and skills, and also shared comments on my research. Students showed me their potential for learning, offering me great ideas about my research. Some students perform differently from how they are in the language class.

In the first research cycle, from the interview with the students I found that some students who are fairly good at taking notes did not remember too much about the content. On the other hand, the students who were naughty and wrote down less can talk a lot more about the content. Although they acted as though they did not listen to anything, they did. They marked the knowledge in their head, which is better than taking ten pages of notes. From this, I learned that every student has a different learning style and, sometimes, students will not act in the way that we imagine they will.

In the second research cycle, in the interviews the local language teachers pointed out the two sides of my designed booklet. Luckily, they support my materials very much and this means that according to the experienced teachers I had identified the key to motivating the students. They had grown up from learners to teachers and therefore they could better understand the minds of the students. But the teachers also gave me suggestions such as after finishing the booklet, I should conduct a quiz to test the effect of my booklet. This happens to help me with analysis of my data.

7.4 Teacher’s Intercultural Competence
Karabinar and Guler (2013) showed a survey that half of the interviewees who answering about the question: “what are the outstanding benefits of having cultural information includes in foreign language teaching?” half of them consider raising cultural awareness among students is one of the outstanding benefits of having cultural information.

Scholars had affirmed that, unlike many other types of tourists and travellers, international volunteers are in a unique position to acquire intercultural competence. This ability is considered increasingly important in today’s global society (Deardorff, 2006; Lough, 2011).

The important first step in assessing intercultural competence is to define the concept itself by using the existing literature and work as a basis for the definition and framework (Deardorff, 2011).

**Defining intercultural competence through my research:** Intercultural competence is an ability to have cultural self-awareness and to understand other cultures in order to adapt to the local culture.

The teachers’ background is simply that, it is the culture which informs their worldviews. Raising their cultural self-awareness encourages them to engage in critical reflection (Root & Ngampornchai, 2013).

Intercultural learning must become a critical engagement with cultural practices and integrated with language in use (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000). According to the pyramid model of developing intercultural competence, here is the teacher-researcher’s own check table for the development of intercultural competence.
The bottom column of Deardorff’s model is about the attitudes. Overall, through my experience I can show respect to the other cultures as well as learn to follow some of the custom while I am broad. I do have the curiosity, but I think I need to communicate with the local people more often, in order to know their culture better, not only reading and searching online. I should take good advantage of being abroad.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The stage from the framework</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Need improved</th>
<th>Require more knowledge</th>
<th>Evidences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and comprehension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural self-awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ever since I take part in this program, I begin to review my home culture, and even learn more in Australia. E.g. I learn how to play Tai Qi in Australia, what I will never think to learn in China, because I think it is kind of grandparents' sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep understanding and knowledge of culture (other’s worldviews)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I do respect the other’s worldview. But I am still learning more about the other culture knowledge so that I will not defence others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture-specific information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am still in the process of developing the specific information. Such as study the Bible, this is the culture root of western countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociolinguistic awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Need to obtain more knowledge about this concept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen/Obsere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As I observe the local language class and create the teaching resource to suit the students here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpret/analyse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Need to learn more skills to be able to interpret cultural phenomena to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Better system need be developed to evaluate, otherwise, it is just my own opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I could relate a lot of situation according to my experience to the cultural difference, and think interculturally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The assessment table above is the third stage in the model. It is about the culture knowledge and comprehension and skills. With good cultural self-awareness, I need to learn more about the culture and some get specific information. I did not even think about the concept of sociolinguistic awareness before. This is what I need to learn and improve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The stage from the framework</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Need improved</th>
<th>Require more knowledge</th>
<th>Evidences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desired internal outcome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I showed my adaptability in teaching in the local schools and adapting the school culture in Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(adjust to new cultural environment)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>When dealing with culture situations, I will respect the other’s culture and try to adjust to the local culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviours)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethno relative view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I regard this as a future goal in my study, and I need to obtain more culture knowledge about this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thinking deeper for the cultural issues, because I don not to hurt anyone due my little knowledge of their culture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above is the second stage, which is approaching the final stage of intercultural competence development. The model requires about the desired internal outcome with adaptability. To my eyes, I think that living without any conflict in the nearby environment is a kind of evidence that shows that I am adapting the new cultural environment. On flexibility; I know about the popular topics to chat with my local neighbours and colleagues, and can my own behaviours, including the way I dress and eat and spend leisure time.
I could give myself a star in the very good column, but because I have been outside my home country for only one year and half I am not able to fully live as the local people do. At the same time, what I have concentrated on is the school culture. In general, as Australia is becoming multicultural it demands an increasing number of teachers who are intercultural competent. Therefore, teachers themselves also need to observe the environment around them and achieve a better understanding of teaching goals for the high school students. Because high school students start to form their worldviews about different cultures they need more effective guides in their high school life.

7.5 The Relationship between Student Intercultural Competence and Teacher Intercultural Competence

Teachers bring their own knowledge and their abilities to their students (Guillaume, 2012).

Scholars assert that the teachers will have an impact on the students' world when teachers become knowledgeable about students’ cultures - also called their “funds of knowledge” (Gonzalez, 1995). The funds of knowledge for teaching project. Practicing Anthroplogy 17(3) 3-6), which can help the teacher to make effective communication and instructional decisions.
Howard (2006) spoke about the significance of knowing students and building rapport with them as the teacher obtain that: in the class, the teacher acknowledge the student’s presence in the classroom. The teacher knows the student’s name and can pronounce it correctly, the teacher respect student’s life experience and intelligence.

When interviewing my students, I tried to ask them the reasons for cultural phenomena. For example, I asked one student what she thought is the reason why Chinese people are always very noisy in public places. To my surprise, she offers me the answer goes like “maybe because of the population, they need to talk loud so that they could be heard”. This is quite a good explanation. We do need to notice some cultural differences that are due to the social environment. I do not think we should skip or fail to admit the bad behaviours in another cultural environment.

After I finished my second cycle, I found myself more confidence when facing the questions from the students. I was able to think about their questions about my home culture, even though I did not think about them before. However, I will seek further answers to the question. For example, the student may ask me if Chinese people are really smarter than us. I will say that they are not smarter, but the Chinese schools pay more attention to the student’s academic performance than their other abilities and that this is also because of the competitive environment of China.

7.6 limitations in the research journey

As the ROSETE program is a teacher-researcher training program we were doing volunteer teaching in the local schools. For most of the time, we do not really have the authority that other teachers have. Also, we do not really have a class that belongs to us and so it is hard to establish a rapport with the local students as we just appear once a week in their class.

For example, when giving out rewards in class, different schools have different rewarding system. The local teacher usually took over this part and so the students relied on the local language teacher for encouragement. Although we were teaching in
the local schools, we were not full-time teachers; we still looked like a visitor in the students’ eyes.

Another limitation in my research is that I relied mostly on my self-reflections. Although it is very important for me to analyze my own changes, others’ reflections can also be a great treasure.

The third limitation is that sometimes students in high school will perform eagerly in the class but they will also give up participating in the class when they feel down. Classroom management is difficult for volunteer teachers who are regarded more like visitors to the school.

During my time doing literature review, I found that most of the educational research data and papers are from the United States. There are few Australian papers illustrating Australian students and teachers’ examples in teaching language or intercultural competence.

Finally, we are research master students, so we just have workshops every week with the supervisors and the research fellows. We do not really have a chance to meet the local students of our age. We could learn about the local culture from them. I hope that the future groups could have more chance to exchange ideas with the local students, or even local students who are learning Chinese at our age.

7.7 Implication for future research

The assessment system for novice teachers can be better improved with an assessment survey for the novice teacher at the beginning of the training and then at the end of the training. Include the areas of attitude, knowledge, and internal and external outcomes of intercultural competence.

The student members of the ROSETE group students have the chance to teach in local schools. But as far as I know, most of the high schools with a language teacher will not allow the teacher-researcher to take control of the whole class and just lets the researcher act as a teaching assistant. Therefore, I suggest to those students who do not have the opportunity to manage a whole class try to talk with the language teacher in the school, and learn from their classroom language. This is an opportunity for the
researcher to establish a relationship with the students and this can support one’s teaching. Take the chances to teach the class using your own management style.

Future research on teaching Chinese characters could move the focus from how to make Chinese more interesting to ways that make it more acceptable to the local students. One can try to understand more about the local culture among the students, especially year 7 and 8 students. Not just about the popular culture, but also about the way that the teenagers communicate with each other.

Also, as I combined language study with arts, some local teachers suggested that I should talk with the staff of visual arts. For future research, cross-curriculum methods could be examined so that contributions could be made to the fields of both language teaching and art teaching.

7.8 Conclusion

During this one year and half research journey, I have experienced the local school culture and have gleaned some fresh ideas about teaching Chinese language and culture to non-Chinese Australian students.

A great confidence has been gained in this process. Looking back, to the first lesson I when I stood in front of a class still feels like yesterday. Time flies; usually the first year for a novice teacher can be one of suffering and it is all about surviving. I am glad that I went through the first year and stepped into the second year while creating my own teaching material.

Back to my research; I designed two research cycles according to my research questions and Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 mainly answer the research questions. As for the first cycle, to answer the first research question regarding: “How can the cultural root (Di zi gui) be used in the development/acquisition of teacher/student intercultural competence?” when I started to try to teach the cultural roots to the students here, I found that even I was still becoming familiar with this material so how would I be able to teach the students in a motivated way, so that they could better receive the
knowledge. Therefore, in the first cycle, I did the task-performance on the realistic cultural situations according to the main cultural idea of *Di zi gui*. As the data analysis results suggest, in order developing students’ intercultural competence, I should develop my own intercultural competence ahead of the students. Being involved in the ROSETE program, I had the chance to observe the local culture as well as learning my home culture at the same time, and the opportunity to develop my intercultural skills, both in teaching and learning.

Hence, in the second research cycle, the data answers for the question: “How could the teacher-researcher adapt with the local school culture and teach locally with the students' interest.” In this cycle, I studied the *Di zi gui* to learn of my home culture, and I also studied about my own ethnic group - Manchu. This apparently improved my knowledge about my own country. While observing the school culture in Australia, I came up with the idea of use the graffiti style to teach the Chinese characters. This idea was supported by the local language teacher as well as other colleagues and gave my great confidence. Now, my idea has already come true. What I have now is a graffiti-style booklet on Chinese characters with five popular topics in Chinese teaching. Besides, I am still producing more of this material, and plan to get it published so that I could share it with my dear colleagues in Chinese teaching groups.

This also answers my main research question, which is how to develop the novice teacher’s intercultural competence. The first step to teach intercultural competence is to develop the teacher’s cultural awareness of both the home culture and the local culture. Secondly is to observe the local culture, looking for a combination that the students are interested in and that can be used to teach language. Afterwards, once you find the bridge to the combination, you will find that you can create teaching materials to suit your own students; it will be more suitable than any other teaching resources. The novice teacher needs to use the check tables to note down examples to prove one’s own progress and development of intercultural competence. As Deardorff points out, the development of intercultural competence might be a task that will take a life-long time to pursue. This is true, culture is everything in life, and the ability to
communicate with people from other cultures is becoming demanding in this multicultural country of Australia.
REFERENCES


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Beijing, china: NEW WOELD PRESS.
APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 SAMPLES FROM THE GRAFFITI BOOKLET

jiǎo zi
饺子
dumpling

miàn tiáo
面条
noodle
游泳
Swimming

足球
Soccer
APPENDIX 2 SAMPLE WORKS FROM THE STUDENTS

Choose one of the following sports in Chinese, and try to draw the characters in the style of street art.

篮球 排球 网球 板球 乒乓球 橄榄球 足球 游泳 跑步

足球

游泳
APPENDIX 3 SAMPLE WORK OF MY PUBLISHED PAPERS

EDUCATION

Giving it Away:
Book Donations by the Ningbo Institute
of Technology Impacts
Ningbo’s Educational Service to Local Expats

写给石玉洁和朱建利
浙江师范大学文学院 文学博士 朱建利

What do titles like 'The ABC’s of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language', 'A Course in TCM', 'The Boys Chinese' and ‘Fisher’s Help to Learn Chinese’ have in common? These and hundreds of other text books on teaching Chinese as a foreign language have recently been part of a donation programme aimed to improve the teaching quality of the programme. The project, called 'you choose the book, we pay for it', sees the library of the RIT donate books in order to promote the Complementary Chinese Course for Foreigners Project and elevate its service to new heights.

S
ince NIT and Ningbo Centre for International Cultural Studies launched the Complementary Chinese Course for Foreigners Project, it has attracted a lot of attention nationwide. According to an ongoing survey, so far, there are about 80 media outlets nationwide reporting on the Complementary Chinese Courses, amongst which, Ningbo Focus, the first bilingual magazine in Ningbo, was the first to report on this programme in their October issue. Up to now, 20% of the expatriates that signed up for the complimentary course read about it on Ningbo Focus. This denotes a bright future for the continuing development of Ningbo’s public service system.

The elevation of the city’s system for serving and educating its public are major aims of the Complementary Chinese Course for Foreigners Project. Prior to the donation project organised by the NIT library, teaching materials were circulated on a shared basis amongst the various study groups. With the increased need for quality curriculum, the donation of new text books provides a boon to participating Ningbo expats studying Chinese as a foreign language.

The Confucius Institute has already become a world brand for introducing Chinese culture to the TCM. The global demand for learning the language and culture of China has resulted in the rapid expansion of the Confucius Institute in several countries. Meanwhile, the Complementary Chinese Course for Foreigners Project is a new enterprise in the Chinese language-teaching field, in many ways, an echo to the overseas Confucius Institutes. It is also worth noticing that this programme gives teachers a great opportunity to conduct meaningful research in areas of educational methods and curriculum. Together with participants’ ongoing contributions, the constant guidance from teachers and the support from a variety of organisations, the Complementary Chinese Course for Foreigners Project is bound to play a vital role in the sustained impact of Ningbo’s public service system.

Course for Foreigners Project

40 Ningbo Focus December 2011 www.ningbofocus.com

142
The Dream of Daughters: the Ten Mile Red Dowry

by Guan Erjia and Yu Xuyan

The region of Ningbo, Shaoxing is the birthplace of various kinds of traditional Chinese folk customs. Among them, the Ten Mile Red Dowry has been listed as a national intangible cultural heritage.

Why have the Ten-Mile Red Dowry?

Hoping their daughters would have a happy marriage, the bride's family would by their best to show their prosperity so that the newlywed bride would not get bullied in her new home. Meanwhile, the bride's side would receive the dowry fee from the groom's side and did not want to appear as if they were selling their daughter. Therefore wealthy families would purchase more furniture to marry off a daughter, and to keep up with the Joneses.

The Ten-Mile Red Dowry not only stands for the prosperity of one family, but also for a daughter's dream of her own wedding. The components of the red dowry involve every basic necessity of life as well as new items made by the bride herself.

In addition, the color red is the symbol of life, which also means the extension of life. Red is the lucky color in Chinese wedding customs so the dowry was called the red dowry.

Where to see the Ten-Mile Red Dowry?

The Ten-Mile Red Dowry Museum is located in Ningbo, one hour’s drive from downtown Ningbo. The museum is peaceful and elegant, showcasing the splendid time-honored wedding culture.

If you want to know more about the Ten-Mile Red Dowry, take a trip to Ningbo, or check the website http://www.hbchinese.com/en/201/10000012.html

What is the Ten-Mile Red Dowry?

In ancient times, the wedding day was the show-off day for the bride's family. Led by a lead playing loud music, eight men would carry a red sedan, which was heavily decorated with carvings, gilded patterns, and colored beads hanging from its top. Behind the leading sedan was a long procession of red sedan such as a wedding bed, antlers and various woven boxes, and boxes and rice boxes, all wrapped up in red and green silk. The first sedan arriving at the groom's house in the reception hall, which was decorated in the morning, indicating that there would be no lack of dancing. The complete range of furniture was meant for the whole life of the bride. Sometimes, the procession could stretch for ten kilometers from head to end, hence the name the Ten-Mile Red Dowry.
APPENDIX 4 MATERIALS USED IN FIRST CYCLE

(1) The Concept map created by the students in class
On the Australian and Chinese birthday celebration

Name: __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Presents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to celebrate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe what do you think the Chinese birthday celebration within 3 sentences:
APPENDIX 5 DESIGNED SURVEY FOR STUDENTS

Quiz on the Chinese characters for sports

1. Circle the right character for ball (qiu)?
   A 求 B 球
2. Circle the right character for basketball (lan qiu)?
   A 篮球 B 板球
3. Circle the right character for volleyball (pai qiu)?
   A 足球 B 排球
4. Circle the right character for football (gan lan qiu)?
   A 橄榄球 B 乒乓球
5. Circle the right character for swimming (you yong)?
   A 游泳 B 板球
6. Circle the right character for soccer (zu qiu)?
   A 足球 B 板球
7. Circle the right character for pingpong (pingpang qiu)?
   A 乒乓球 B 橄榄球
8. Circle the right character for tennis (wang qiu)?
   A 足球 B 网球
9. Circle the right character for cricket (ban qiu)?
   A 排球 B 板球
10. Circle the right character for running (pao bu)?
    A 游泳 B 跑步
Now can you give me some feedback on doing the booklet:

1. Do you like it?

   A. Like    B. Dislike

2. Why you like it or dislike it?

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU!
Quiz on Chinese characters for shopping

1. Circle the right character for dollar (kuai)?
   A 毛       B 块

2. Circle the right character for 10 cents (mao)?
   A 毛       B 块

3. Circle the right character for buy (mai)?
   A 买       B 卖

4. Circle the right character for sell (mai)?
   A 卖       B 買

5. Circle the right character for cheap (piao yi)?
   A 便宜     B 贵

6. Circle the right character for expensive (gui)?
   A 便宜     B 贵

7. Circle the right character for thing/item (dong xi)?
   A 东西     B 便宜

Now can you give me some feedback on doing the booklet ➡️
1. Do you like it?

A. Like  B. Dislike

2. Please give a comment on why you like it or dislike it?

THANK YOU!
APPENDIX 6 SURVEY DESIGNED FOR THE TEACHERS

Feedback on the Graffiti-style booklet on Chinese characters

August 14, 2013

During the volunteer teaching time, I designed the graffiti-style booklet, aiming to help the students learn the image of the Chinese characters they are learning.

1. The significance you think does the booklet brings to the students.

2. The significance you think does the booklet brings for the language learning.

3. What is the students’ reaction of the booklet in your observation?

4. General comment on the booklet.

5. Any possible suggestions on the booklet.
APPENDIX 7 TRANSCRIPTS OF INTERVIEWS

(1) Script of in-depth interview with the local language teacher

March 19\textsuperscript{th} morning 11:00-11:40

Interviewer: Erjia Guan

Interviewee: Ms W

G: Thank you for participating in my research. First question I wanna ask is how you think my lessons last term. I took about four lessons, my goal is to teach the students how to deal with the Chinese birthday celebration, like they know what they need to do on a Chinese birthday, the food they are expecting to eat or what present they cannot give to a Chinese person, so what do you think?

W: I like the idea of showing the students a video of what Chinese birthday is about, but I think the students own learning could have been done in a class discussion or a written reflection rather than getting them to make a video or role play. I think that method took too long for a small amount of learning that we are doing, it was not a large, sort of outcome we getting out of it and it took 4 lessons, which is 200 minutes, so it took too long than it required. Because think about the skill and explaining the task, students do have a lot of difficulties in understanding, so I think next time I will suggest to you to get to do a class discussion or a written reflection.

G: Yeah, I think maybe I will more prefer the written reflection. I met a lot of trouble when I was trying to do this role play. At the beginning of my teaching in Australia, I think this is a huge challenge. I think even some experienced teacher doing this; they still have a lot of trouble dealing with the role play.

W: Yes, maybe because you manage a group of students and there is a lot of freedom. Then you have to make sure that your instructional language is extremely clear because we were experimenting, we didn’t necessarily have a clear idea of what instructions to give, so I think that is a problematic, I will do it as a written reflection.

G: The clear instruction is the most valuable thing I learnt from my last research cycle, I was thinking of changing the way that I let them to know what Australian birthday party is like. So, I wanna mention a little about my class in school\textsuperscript{2}. I changed the class into just one lesson, because I do think it takes too long. I walk into the classroom and said today is my birthday and I gave out their tasks in small pieces of paper, telling them to draw pictures about preparation for a birthday. And Ms C told us how to do a concept map.

W: that is very similar to what I was getting out with class discussion, that’s the visual form of discussion.
G: yeah, I thought that is useful in specially getting them to do compare. Because in China, we also mention about food, decoration, how to and the song, so the dimensions are really alike. It takes about 20 minutes or 25 minutes for the students to do that, a bit longer, but it is within my expectation. After that, I let one student to do the camera man and the students just to do the process with me, like sing the song, make wishes, not very creative as the students here, I learnt a lot from their performance, even they read the script, but I think that’s valuable and the students in school2, they do have some creativity but I was thinking whether this is a better way than the role play that I try last time.

W: Can you tell me why? I know why, but can you tell me why? Tell me what it is about teaching methodology, to do more effective teaching.

G: I can control the whole content.

W: it doesn’t about the control of the content, can you give me the terminology for what you are doing to control that, it is called scaffolding. You are scaffolding and supporting students thinking in much more structured way, so you are saying them, right, we got four or five basic areas for birthdays, can you help me think about a dot points, and you are giving them a structure to fill in. They feel safe then, they can think idea easily, but by handing them a task like do a play on birthdays, I found in answer to your last question, I said that it was too broad and one of the problems of culture is in Australia we have multicultural, so maybe there is not only one way to celebrate birthday, and that is a problem within the content of comparison, you can find some kids, say, muslin kids, they have very different way to celebrate a birthday to white Australian kids, so when you are handing the role play with not a lot of structure that means too open. Some students may say: “I don’t do in that way”.

G: I also think about this question and I want make it easier, so I changed a little, I change from the Australian birthday celebration to the local birthday celebration, I think this might be more suitable to use the word ‘local’, because here is Australia, especially in some school, we got students from Asia. They have different customs, and I think I need to change that in the future.

G: so, because my research is to develop the students intercultural competence, I wanna first ask what do you think is intercultural competence for the high school students here.

W: I think intercultural competence is the ability to identify how another culture is different from your own culture, the ability to compare the two cultures with a detail and the ability to change your behaviour according to what is suitable in either cultural content. So as you’ve been successful language teacher teaching intercultural competence, you observe your kids, moving into a different- the target culture and remembering to change their behaviours. If they remember then you know how to
learn the intercultural competence, this is my understanding. Three steps, identify, compare, change behaviour.

G: my understanding is like, they know what exactly the people from the other country will do in some situation.

W: that is identify.

G: and then is how they are going to deal with.

W: that’s the third step, change behaviour, may be part of why your exercise fail down is because your own understanding of intercultural competence was missing a middle part, the comparison, and maybe that is equal to you yourself are still growing. So your are not confident with this yourself. And that hard to teach so think that was part of the problem as well. With birthdays, you were still learning what western birthdays are like and so you couldn’t feel confident to lead the students comparison, is that right?

G: yeah, I got this feeling in the beginning when I start my research, and I think this is.

W: I think, too. You discovered that Chinese birthdays don’t have many clear steps or clear components as a local birthday here. Because even within China, there are many different changes to help people celebrate birthdays. And traditionally, birthday is everybody turn one year old and it’s the new year, so that’s a very very different way of celebrating a birthday. My father in-law and mother in-law, they don’t know how old they are, because they can’t remember their birthday. So , they guess, they said I think I am around 75 years old. But they don’t have or as you ask any kids, even if they are 2 years old, 3 years old in Australia and they can all tell you their birthday and they can all tell you how old they are, very big, like a range of behaviour in China. Some people have very strong idea on how to celebrate a birthday and some people have weak ideas because this is not really part of their world.

G: I was struggling when I was making the video of the Chinese birthday celebration, I watched a lot of videos talking about Chinese birthday but none of them are what I want, what I need.

W: so I think one of the things you’ve learnt through the process is that the teacher needs to have a very strong knowledge of their content before they can teach intercultural competence, effectively. And that is a resource of your research.

G: yep, I will definitely put this part in, because as I am developing the students’ intercultural competence, actually I was learning myself. Because we are in a totally different country now, we learnt a lot.

W: so we were to look at teacher training for Chinese teaching, then what would a overseas Chinese student who is becoming a teacher in Australia, if you were their
university trainer, and you are wanting to develop their intercultural competence, what would you make sure that your students knew, that will you train your Chinese overseas students to do?

G: to focus on specific situation or topic to make sure that they know the Chinese one, know their home culture.

W: just their home culture?

G: about the local culture here.

W: yes. So they must do lot more research on the local culture, one way you can do that is to watch local TV shows and make local friends and really try to work out local culture. What about if you were a teacher trainer in university and you were training non-background speaker, what would you need those teachers to learn?

G: the Chinese one, the Chinese culture, to introducing the Chinese culture.

W: do you think somewhere has a ‘strike’? In teaching intercultural competence in their own country? What would their ‘strike’ be?

G: what is ‘stringke’

W: the advantages.

G: Oh, because you know Australian culture better than us, and you can maybe some points, for us to explain not very attractive or make links to their own culture, maybe you can explain better.

W: more deeply, so in some ways, a non-native speaking teacher have a little bit less work to do, they only have to research one side. And the Chinese overseas students have to research two sides, in some ways. But I would like to remind you that in some ways maybe, Australian background teachers would also need to understand the Australian culture, sometimes, not all the times, there are some things that they are not clear about it as well. So, it’s interesting, you know, when you come to teach intercultural competence, assume that your mother culture is your strength. Sometimes, you actually need to revise your understanding of that. And must be included in teacher training. It must be included. A lot of the time, the teacher training are so focus on language methodology that it doesn’t focus on cultural methodology, do you agree?

G: so, come to the last, it is about the pupil’s rules and disciplines. This is what I found on the internet, this one is with picture and explainations. What I am doing now is I want to teach the culture with the language.

W: this is far too hard for my students.
G: No, I don’t want to teach them how to read this, how to remember, what I doing now is pick up the key knowledge inside the book. Because this is the guideline to teach the children in China, when they do not even know how to say words. Inside this, is a lot of cultural ideas, how to deal with people, how to deal with your brothers, your parents. This is like ‘xun xu jian jin’ from one easy point to a deep one. I want to use the ideas; you know when we want to combine the culture with the language, most the students and teachers in our program will say I teach the 12 zodiac in China and let them know the little story and that is what I was teaching the culture together with the name of the animals.

W: yes, cultural through the languages. What you proposing is more culture by itself, but the difficulty with that is time on task, we simply do not have enough time, and I am afraid I can’t let you teach this in school, it is too much time out of the language class.

G: this is the cycle I design in the beginning of the year; I have to change to suit here. I don’t even have to mention about this school when I was teaching here, what I mention is the knowledge inside. If I catch the chance to teach the students, I want to let them know what I want them to know. I don’t have to worry about this book, this is very good, but even myself, I cannot always remember them all. I can just understand what this is talking about, what is the main idea of this material, that’s what I am learning now.

W: I think there is a lot to talk about in the family member unit, next term, that is relate to the material in this book, but just warn you, it takes them four weeks to learn the family members, it takes them another three to four weeks to learn the question and answer pattern, and that’s just language, and we only have nine weeks next term, which give you one week to do culture if you do it as a separate thing, that is why language teachers teach culture through language. We simply don’t have time. It takes so much effort to teach the language that what we do is we just mention a couple of culture as we going along.

G: yeah, I know the way, I still need to make a lot of changes when I was introducing my research to the others, what I thought in the beginning, I thought whatever research I am doing, I should be able to tell others within three sentences. Whenever I explain the first part the task performance, people will understand, but when I come to tell them that I am going to combine the ideas of this material, teachers and my friends will getting confused and even myself didn’t make it clear to others.

W: I think this book is more like your own background research so that you can develop your own strong knowledge of content in culture. And then, when you are doing teaching intercultural competence, you can teach that with more certainty. Rather than making this a feature of your thesis, my suggestion to you was use it as background material.
G: that is what the fellow students and PHD students suggest me.

W: I think this material is good as a background material, but I will have concern about you use it as a framework.

G: more suitable for the background speakers, you may think this is a better material for a teacher to prepare a lesson to read.

W: Yes, yes, that is what I was talking to you about just before, if you were a teacher trainer, what you will do. So maybe you can say I will suggest to my Chinese overseas students, they should read this book, and they should read this and this and this sections of the book, cause maybe not all the sections are useful, maybe there are some are more useful than others, so you can explain why, I think this is the most important section to have clearly in your mind when you teach non-background speakers. Because you need to explain in the very beginning: the difference between Chinese culture and Australian culture. On that point, maybe don’t try to cover them all, pick out the ones that are the most significant.

W: I think one of the most exciting thing about your research is it holds potential improving teacher training, strength in teacher training. Because most of the time, teacher training focus on language methodology and they assume that you will figure out cultural methodology yourself. Maybe we need to be more structured in teaching of cultural methodology and we need to at least said to training teachers if you are already Chinese background, you need to make sure you have cultural confidence in this, this and this. If you are non-background Chinese teacher, you need to make sure you have cultural confidence in this, this and this in Chinese culture, but also in your own culture. And the last questions, any suggestions, I’ve written down get them to apply culture through language, through excursions, that’s something you have not investigated in your research. And you’ve been in an excursion, and we do comparisons. Maybe you can try to use excursions to develop their intercultural competence, and also write down written reflections. The value of written is that it allows you have more time to process the ideas, and in filming, maybe they don’t think deeply.

May 10th morning 11:50-12:20

Interviewer: Erjia Guan

Interviewee: Ms V

G: so, the interview is mainly about how my research going in my school. So first of all, I want to ask do you still remember the class I did last year? The cultural comparison.
V: yes, I do remember that cultural comparison, the birthday activity that you carried out, the first one, cause you actually did two, the one that we did last term. You got the students to celebrate your birthday by drawing on papers, the gifts, or even a card for you. Yes, what do you need to know about that.

G: do you think it is a good way to let them know how to do a cultural comparison, cause I did the second lesson, I introduced the chinese one and let them fill in a cultural comparison form. To know the Australian first and then know the Chinese one.

V: okay, so, if I was go about the Chinese cultural comparison on the birthday, what I will do is , I will start actually with that video, that you carried out the second lesson, I really like your second lesson on the cultural comparison, something visual for them to do. I think the first time that you want them to do as well the video work for you, which is a bit unfortunate, but having that video, they can really see what it is about. Even it was not a video, a flash show to show things such as the noodles, the red pockets and even the type of food that we eat, like the bound for the oldest, it’s good. And giving out the red pocket. I think the first lesson needed more visual similars on the type of things that a Chinese birthday celebration would have and relating, you did do that, but using a visual similars, you had hand on activity with the paper and they drew out things which is also very good. Cause what you use is their background knowledge, which is very positive, and you ask them to draw things that they might give to people for a birthday, during the Australian birthday, which I found is really useful for them to start off. So, that was quite good, on the birthday comparison and you also did ask them to act out a birthday celebration which was… very difficult to manage, not because your context, your context is very good. So that lesson would work. Basically, with low behaviour issue, it would be better.

G: cause I also try this in another high school. The problem I met is I took too long for them to act out the Australian birthday party. I didn't figure out that the most important thing is to teach the Chinese one, for a long time, I am just struggling with how to let them act out the Australian one, so in that school I took like four lessons to do the cultural comparison. The students really like it, but it takes too long. You know, the students here learning Chinese the time is limited, so I cannot take so long time to do my , like, acting out the Australian one, not the Chinese one, so I was thinking about how to deal with this. And I also did student interview in that school. The students give me suggestions, one suggestion is , I think it is really worth doing, to try that next time, he said lets learn the Chinese one first, when they getting to know the Chinese one, and they also have to do the performance, but its about the Chinese one, to make it easier for them to perform, they can say the words in English, like using Chinese to act out Chinese birthday. So that makes more easier. I think maybe not all the students take part in, just like put them into different groups, and just one or two groups perform in front of the class. Otherwise, it takes too long.
V: absolutely, with the class sizes, sometimes when some groups are acting out, it is quite good to give them an activity to do, or just really try to make sure that they are quite. And also, it is a good idea to start with Chinese one first, but otherwise, you know, you’ve done an excellent job yourself. They got the idea at the end, which is good.

G: yes, my research is basically about develop intercultural competence, what do you think about intercultural competence.

V: well. I think intercultural competence is very important, cause we have a big focus on intercultural language learning in Australia while we focus on, aboviously, learning activity, whereby students all together sense about multiculturism. And one thing that intercultural learning activity is allow them to do is not only give them inside under the language and culture, a different language, but also it allows to relate to their personal, cultural and feel that their personal language and culture is among those as well. It is not us the isolated culture, cause most of our kids, they are minority groups in Australia. I think allow them to know that there are different cultures, let them, give them a sense of, they are not alone, there are other cultures also, aside from the Australian culture and their minority group opens up, their intercultural read of the world.

G: so, I was also trying to use a Chinese traditional teaching material, it’s a book, it is basically like sanzijing (one most popular primer), have you heard about it?

V: oh, yes, like a primer, right?

G: yes, it’s three words and three words with rhythm, easy for Chinese children to remember, even they cannot say any Chinese words, they cannot understand, because inside that is a lot of cultural elements, like the rules in the society and how to communicate with people around, so I was trying to combine the ideas inside the book to teach culture. I think Chinese culture is not the thing I experience, what I say, I wish to find a root for that, so this book is like my base to teach Chinese culture, combine with the language. But the teacher here, thought it is definitely too difficult for the studnets, so I never show this in the class, I was trying to. Also, teachers give suggestions, maybe it is suitable for a training material for teachers.

V: well, I have heard about the sanzijing, it is a very good cultural text, I have to say, because it has been a history in China for so long. But the language is much more difficult than what is prescribed. If you like, you can pick a couple of them and use that for our kids here. But I actually find that going back to your birthday comparison, so you spent two lessons on it by comparising gifts and the food on Australian birthdays. But one thing you can also go back and braden into more and you can do Chinese zodiac, calendar, cause every year, it also relates to their birthday and you can use it as n intercultural activity because you can compare the astrology, calendar, you know, the year of mouse, the year of the tiger, and tell them a bit about
the story on how the animals lined up and then compare it with their astrology signs. But look, this up to you, once again, if you would like to use sanzijing, I will also be in the classroom to support your use on that.

G: well, I am a little afraid. Because the students here are really hard to manage. I am trying, maybe use in a different way, if I only one or two, it doesn't have much meaning.

V: yeah, it is difficult here, and for the lessons here, it is always the last week of the school, or even the last lesson. Definitely, quite difficult, but you are doing an amazing job, Erjia.

G: thank you!

G: so, last questions, what did you do to develop the students’ intercultural competence? Like some activities.

V: okay, what I have done in the past, the intercultural activities. We actually have excursions in the past, when the students are much more manageable. I took the students out to Yumcha, in the previous year when the students are more well behaved. I tried excursion before, we abviously built up, we learn how to ask for food, and we learn how to use chopsticks, and about different kinds of food. I think food is a big part of the Chinese culture. They actually have a taste of dumplings, noodles or fried rice. I also took them out to the darling harbour, Chinese garden, they learn about the elements inside China town and the market city, we went around and we talked about the tigers that were sitting at the gate, we did a survey on that. That was quite interesting cause, also the signs in China town, the have the English and then they also have the Chinese.

G: yes, food has always been a big attraction for the students here.

V: absolutely, and not only food, in the past, I also took them the performance on Taichi. We have some Taichi class, and we learnt about how Taichi improve your health, just like the Australian sporting. We went to St mary senior high, we did the performance with the little children. On that day, we also learn how to do calligraphy, I also got calligraphy sets at the school as well, you can use it if you feel free. Other intercultural activities might include making kites, we have made kites and we have more manageable class, but this year, the class I want to say, very challenging. This is the most challenging class I have had for Chinese. But we have a lot of fun activities in class in the past.

G: I think the students need to find something attractive for the Chinese, otherwise they have no motivations to learn it.

V: absolutely, so this year, I think if they become better, cause they have improved since a couple of the naughty students has been taken out. I can actually feel that this
term the class is better in general, we can select, make a reward for them, a bit about motivation strategy for them, let them know that they are good through a actual amount of lessons, we can take them out to Yumcha excursion or something like that.

(2) Group interview with the students

G: Miss Guan    student 1: A      student 2: E (two boys)

[Show the students the video of last year’s performance]

G: “why is he doing that?”

A: Because the birthday punches, we meant to do it because whenever someone has a birthday, every person has to punch him the exact age, so we made him, he sounds scared so he run through the door.

G: okay, got it. So this is quite different from the Chinese ones. We don’t do the birthday punch, right? Do you enjoy that performance?

A&E: yes!

A: yeah, I just say scene two change to the house, scene three change to the…

G: yeah, but that is also important, you connect each scenes together. So, do you like doing a role play in a language classroom? (yep…) or because this is in English, you are good at it.

A: yeah, if it is in Chinese, it is much harder. E: yes

E: we prefer in English and a Chinese scene, and a English theme in Chinese.

G: you mean in a Chinese situation but in English. (in English so that can be understood) is there understand? And then learn about the conversation. Yes, that’s a good idea! Well, how much you still remember, about the Chinese birthday.

A: I remember my role to say change the scenes.

G: so that is the Australian birthday, and how about the Chinese one?

A: quite a lot. The video.

E: uhhh, I remember bits.

G: so how is that?

E: I think I am in the different group, but I remember roughly what we did.

G: okay, can you tell me how are Chinese people celebrating their birthday?
A: the children got a lot of money. Australian get presents.
E: and they also get clothes, not sure.
G: so, what do they eat for the Chinese birthday?
E: the Chinese food.
G: ok, let’s see what you have written on the comparison form last year, I think you all write something that is typical. A, you wrote about the Chinese cake which looks like a giant peach, it is for the elders.
A: oh, I remember!
G: and for you, E, one year old catch.
A&E: yes, they go for that thing, they have objects, like spoons, what the baby choose is like, sometimes, means what he will do in the future.
G: yes, good, you remember it, is that interesting?
E: It’s quite cultural.
A: Australian let the person choose what he want, and Chinese makes you a present.
G: do you think this kind of, you know, you first do the performance in English, and then I show you how Chinese people do in the same situation, like celebrate the birthday. Do you think this help you to do a cultural comparison?
A&E: yeah, the Australian always let the child choose and the Chinese baby one year old.
G: do you think this help you?
A: yes, if I go to China.
G: so how about there is a Chinese people invite you to his birthday party? You know how to do?
A: yeah, if they are one year old. The elders, the giant peach.
G: if you go to a teenager’s birthday. You cannot give him a giant peach, that’s not good.
A: that’s calling him old.
G: so do you have any suggestions to do the cultural comparison, for example, just on the birthday.
And you prefer if I teach the Chinese way and ask you to perform in English?
A: yeah

E: if we don’t know the Chinese knowledge, then we may say the language and may affend some people. We need to show respect to the elders.

G: and in China, you cannot say a teacher’s full name.

A: cause she is a teacher, a higher position.

G: do you think teacher are higher position?

E: yes. And they got like more experience, and has go through all the training

-11:30

For the two girls:

Student 3: M Student 4: C

G: so, do you like to do such kind of performance in a language classroom?

M&C: yes

G: you mean you like it because it is a performance or you like it because it is in English?

M: it is fun.

G: so what if i ask you to perform in Chinese, to do a role play in Chinese?

M: yeah, it would be a bit harder.

G: it may be not so enjoyable, right?

well, do you think this help you to know the Chinese one, because you perform the Australian birthday party? do you still remember the video? how much do you remember?

C: the grab things.

G: you mean the one year old catch? yes, you love that? that's quite different.

M: and they eat, sort of…

G: the food? Chinese people eat noodles on birthdays, but you eat cakes, right?

do you think you can go to a Chinese birthday celebration? like, they eat noodles, they give out red envelopes

M&C: yes
G: good! do you have any suggestions, we change the form of doing a cultural comparison? Because this is a cultural comparison between China and Australia. Do you have any good ideas? Usually, what did you do? You fill in forms and write feedback. So you prefer the way of performance? Or do you have any questions about the performance? not everyone is contributing?

C: not really. so we just acting out, not sure what we really is doing.

G: so any other ways to show what you do on a birthday celebration in Australia?

have family videos?

C: yeah, take a video of your birthday party or something.

G: you think there will be someone in the classroom that will be willing to do that?

C: i don't know, it depends.

G: where do you usually have birthday?

M: at home.

G: and you also have a party or something.

M: no, cause last year i was in queensland. i have the birthday up there.

G: so you have your birthday celebrated there.

M: yeah, sometimes not at home.

G: that's great. maybe bring family video is one idea that we may try later on.

M: photos.

G: how about, tell you before hand, and ask some of you to do a presentation on your birthday? do you want to do it?

M: it depends on different people.

C: i only have the pictures.

G:yeah, maybe just photos are fine, you remember the video, that's easier for you to understand the Chinese one.

so my interview is mainly about check how you think through the performance last year and how you learn about the cultural comparison, you give me a support.

do you think it takes too long?

M: no, its fun, and you can really work with someone that you may not hang out with.
G: the group work. so i just interview the boy in last period, and they give the idea like we learn the Chinese one first and act the Chinese one in English, that sounds good, right.

C&M: yes. (the girls agreed)

Student interview with student T
2013. 5. 7 period 4 in the morning
T: Taylah  G: Guan

G: so , do you still remember last term’s performance? You are in Ryan’s group, you write the script, right?
T: yeah
G: how is that?
T: That was fun.
G: do you like it?
T: yeah, it was funny

G: you know what I want you to do? Like perform out the Australian birthday first, and I introduce the Chinese one, let you make the comparison, do you prefer this way or you prefer to fill in form to do cultural comparison, don’t know? Like this performance may take longer time in class, so Mrs want always telling me that we run out of time, and last term I also interview two boys, Alex and Elliot, they give me an idea. Because my goal is to introduce the Chinese one to you, so they suggest me that we learn the Chinese one first, then use the English to perform the Chinese one. Like I am more familiar with the Chinese one, so I will give you a more clear framework for the performance, what to perform, so it is like in smaller group, maybe just choose two or three groups to perform.

T: (agree with the sentences above ) yeah, that might be easier.

G: do you have other suggestions? For cultural comparison, as I think you are learning Chinese now, the language, the words the characters, but when you are in year 12, I am not sure how much you will still remember.
T: yep

G: so , what I deem is that some of the cultural parts I introduce to you, you will remember in the future, not the whole life, but,
T: till year 12.

G: yes, till year 12, you go the work ot you go to the uni, you will still remember that, and know the way how to communicate with Chinese. So I wanna know, there is a lot of Chinese people around here, when you see Chinese people on the street, what will you think about?

T: what I think about, I think about they, I don't know how to explain it. They are not different, but we have different life styles, so I look at that, like you look at the way they dress and we dress different, the way they talk we talk different, their language our language.

G: do you want talk to them, or something?

T: I am bit nervous.

G: well, how much do you still remember about the Chinese birthday

T: yeah, a bit.

G: cause I ask you to fill in a form, and comparison form, and I found yours is the best detailed one, so I am really looking forward how much you still remember. You remember the video? The cute boy is catching``and the one year old catch, you cant remember?

T: no,,

G: what do they eat?

T: oh, they eat rice dumplings they eat noodles.

G: yes, for birthday is the noodles. Others, like special birthday?

T: yes

G: which part of the Chinese birthday will attract you most, like the special birthday or the how to celebrate the birthday or the food?

T: uhhhh, probably the food.

G: yes, I found a lot of you are interested in food.

T: yeah, in china they don't eat what we eat, like they eat more noodles than we eat.

G: yep, you drink iced water, or the water directly from the tap, but we don’t.

I think if you wanna learn the Chinese well you need to go to china and live for a while.

T: and you will pick up their language and their life style.
G: yes, as you know you are studying at shopping this term, I will always meet foreigners in china bargain with shopkeepers in Chinese. That is a situation, and if you are in the situation, you can learn it, so that is what I need to put in the performance. You can feel it if you need to use it in the future life, you will remember what is the culture back there. How Chinese people behaving like that.

- Discussion on Chinese loud due to the population.
Do you know any young Chinese people?

T: yeah

G: well, if you really have a penpal in china, do you think it is beneficial?

T: yeah, we will learn a lot from them

- The penpal thing
G: do you have any goal in learning Chinese?

T: yeah

G: you may continue in Chinese?

T: yeah, maybe.
APPENDIX 8 ETHICS APPROVAL

Ms Erjia Guan
63/2 Jones Street
KINGSWOOD NSW 2747

DOC13/79209
SERAP No: 2012255

Dear Ms Guan,

I refer to your application to conduct in NSW government schools (Western Sydney Region) a research project entitled Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian High School students’ intercultural competence through classroom task-performance.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved and that you may now contact the principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation.

Your approval will remain valid until 1 March 2014.

You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to the schools.

I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in NSW government schools:

- School Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time.
- The approval of the Principal for the specific method of gathering data must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school’s convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the research Approvals Officer before publication proceeds.

Yours sincerely,

Kerrie Ikin
School Education Director, The Hills
Western Sydney Region Education Research Manager
26 February 2013

NSW Department of Education & Communities – Western Sydney Region
Nirimba Education Precinct, Building 730, Eastern Road, QUANTUM HILL, NSW 2763 T: 9208 7611 F: 9208 7695
www.det.nsw.edu.au
State Education Research Approval Process (SERAP)

FORM K

Proposed Research Project

When completing this form please refer to the “Guidelines for Approving Applications from External Agencies to Conduct Research in NSW Government Schools”, at https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/research/guidelines.pdf including the appendices on quality research. Responses should provide all of the requested details as concisely as possible. Please note the indicative length for each section. All requested documentation must be pasted into the relevant sections of this document.

SERAP Number: 2012255

Title of Research Project:

Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian high school students’ intercultural competence through classroom task-performance

1. Details of Researcher(s)

1.1. Name of researcher(s)
Erjia Guan

1.2. Name of institution(s)  (if applicable)
University of Western Sydney

1.3. Degree or award that the research relates to  (if applicable)
Master of Education (Hons)
2. Précis of Research

Please provide a summary of your research proposal. (Approximately 200 words)

In the field of language teaching, there are numerous metaphors to illustrate the relationship between culture and language. One metaphor is that communication is like transportation: language is the vehicle and culture is the traffic light. Language makes communication easier and faster; culture regulates, sometimes promotes and sometimes hinders communication. The proposed research aims to develop Australian students’ intercultural competence by the use of a specific performance task in the classroom, in combination with the key precepts of the traditional Chinese primer—*The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines* (弟子规), and within an Action Research methodology. In Chinese classes in two Western Sydney high schools, students will be required to perform a short scene based on a realistic everyday scenario. Thereafter, the teacher-researcher will show them how Chinese people would act in the same situation. This should set the stage for the students, enlightening them and encouraging them to think about cultural knowledge for themselves. The author argues that learning cultural knowledge is about to knowing how to engage with the culture, and the proposed research has been devised to achieve that end. In order to help students to develop a better understanding of why Chinese people would behave in certain ways at home and in the classroom, introducing *The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines* is essential, to explain the cultural roots of Chinese language and culture.

3. Research Design

3.1. Context and background
Describe how this research will build on what is already known, citing related research literature where relevant. (Approximately 400 words)
Language and culture cannot be separated, since they exist within each other. As Jiang (2000) points out: “Language simultaneously reflects culture, and is influenced and shaped by it … language is the mirror of culture, in the sense that people can see a culture through its language (W. Jiang, 2000, p. 328)”. To develop target language-based communicative competence it is necessary for learners to engage in the target language culture; this implies that teachers develop target language communicative competence in learners by integrating language and culture (Alptekin, 2002). Thus, combining language with culture in the language teaching process can offer learners the ability to adapt to the target language culture.

Alptekin (2002) argues that learning a foreign language has become a kind of enculturation, where one can form a new worldview reflecting the target language culture and its speakers. Similarly, Torres (2009) also proposes that, generally, cultural competence or the ability to function in a particular culture, has been regarded as a unique aspect of adaptation.

Liddicoat et al (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, & Kohler, 2003) suggest that “Intercultural language learning involves developing with learners an understanding of their own language(s) and culture(s) in relation to an additional language and culture”. They argue that “learning about one’s own culture is an important part of this process, because we often do not realise that our ‘natural’ ways of behaving are culturally determined”.

Similarly, Stier (2006) illustrates that intercultural competence can be divided into content-competencies and processual competencies. The former means knowing aspects of both the “other” and the “home” culture, including the history, language, world-views, values, ‘do’s and don’ts’. The latter reflects the dynamic character of intercultural competence.

Task-performance is the performance of the complete task (Boyce, 2011). Through students’ in-classroom actions, teachers give out messages to them as to whether they are accepted or not, whether they are competent or not, whether they can accomplish the tasks they are given or not, and whether or not the classroom really “belongs” to them (Shade, et al., 1997). Boyce (2011) argues that a culturally responsive classroom should be student-centred as well as culture-centred. Primers such as The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines (子弟规) are the cultural roots of Chinese learning. Recently, scholars (e.g. Li, 2011) in the field of education have become increasingly interested in this kind of cultural treasure (Xiao, 1990). Regarding its content and format,子弟规 is definitely a precious Chinese cultural heritage. In terms of its content, it teaches children to care about others and be well adapted to society; meanwhile, the cultivation of children’s minds also plays a vital role in life and tells them the right way to follow when studying.
3.2. Research goals

Research goals (or aims) should be clearly stated. (Approximately 100 words)

This research aims to develop high school students’ intercultural competence in the Western Sydney Region by using task-performance in the classroom, combined with the key ideas of 弟子规—The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines, which includes the essence of the Chinese way of daily communication, learning knowledge, moral education and how to deal with people (Xiao, 1990).

3.3. Research question(s)

This should relate to the goals of your research as described above. (Approximately 200 words)

The main research question driving my thesis is:

How can I teach Chinese language and culture to students in NSW high schools by integrating task-performance and the key ideas of 弟子规 to develop their’ intercultural competence?

Contributory questions to the study are:

1. How can the key precepts of 弟子规 be developed as learnable materials for NSW high schools’ students?

2. How can the teacher-researcher use the key precepts of 弟子规 to help students better understand Chinese culture?

3. How does integrating task-performance with cultural comparison between China and Australia in the classroom influence students’ level of comprehension of their home culture?
3.4. Research hypotheses (if applicable)

Your hypotheses should be testable using the methodology and instruments provided below

and able to provide answers to your research questions. (Approximately 100 words)

N/A

3.5. Stakeholder Consultation

Please identify research project stakeholders (students, teachers, educational practitioners and policy makers) and describe any consultation with these groups that has or will occur in the design, conduct and reporting of the results of this project. (Approximately 100 words)

The principal, local language teacher, the students and their parents.
4. Methodology

4.1. Briefly describe the methodology (i.e. the overall strategy) you will use to answer each of your research questions/address your research focus.

(Include a brief justification for the selection of (each of) the methods you propose to use in relation to your research question/focus). (Approximately 200 words)

In action research, the goal of all researchers is to improve students’ learning. This addresses the importance of action research, as well as the reason why I chose to make my study an action research: scholars (e.g. Mertler, 2009) summarise the characteristics of action research as follows:

Action research is persuasive and authoritative, since it is done by teachers for teachers; action research is participative, since educators are integral members—not disinterested outsiders—of the research process (Mertler, 2009, p. 18)

In the research process, interviews are the most common method used for data collection. They are divided into two major types: the unstructured interview, and the structured interview (Kumar). Here in my research, I chose the unstructured interview, meaning more flexible in interview contents, questions and structure.

Teacher journals can provide records of classroom life in which teachers write observations and reflections on their teaching over time; journals offer teachers a way to evaluate and analyse their experience; journals can be regarded as windows on what goes on in the school and on the teaching process through the teacher’s eye (Mills, 2011).

Observation in this research refers to participant observation, especially the teacher-researcher’s and teachers’ observations.

Documents related to a study should be regarded as a means of communication.

In my research, I intend to record the task-performance in my class, for the purpose of cultural comparison. Choosing students to video the performance, use it as a tool to help me writing my self-reflective journal.

4.2. How will you test each of your research hypotheses? (Quantitative methods only)

(Approximately 100 words)
4.3. Description of research instruments (Approximately 200 words)

During my research data collection, I will use the following instruments: interview, self-reflective journal, observations, documents and audio visual data.

*Focus group interview with student-performance group*

In the first term of 2013 I’m going to teach and try out the task-performance in class. For the first circle of data collection, I will choose one group in each of the two high schools to have an interview after their performance and cultural comparison.

*In-depth interview with local language teacher*

In my research process, the local language teachers will act as my guide in teaching language and managing the students. The purpose of interviewing them will be to know the limits of my culture-centred teaching and the way for students to perform in class.

Teacher journals can provide records of classroom life in which teachers write observations and reflections on their teaching over time.

Observation in this research refers to participant observation, especially the teacher-researcher’s and teachers’ observations.

Documents related to a study should be regarded as a means of communication, including the syllabus and the lesson plans.

The teacher-researcher intends to record the task-performance in my class, for the purpose of cultural comparison. Choosing students to video the performance, use it as a tool to help me writing my self-reflective journal.
4.4. How will the research be conducted within schools?

Provide an outline of the research processes for your study as these relate to schools. Describe the protocol you will use to conduct the research. (Approximately 150 words)

In the first step, the local language teacher, the students and parents will be provided with information sheets about the research.

Secondly, the consent forms will be sent to participants and signed by the participants, which will be collected back. Participation is totally voluntary.

Activities for participants are as follows:

For the students, participation means attending the task performance in class, in the end of a teaching cycle, the students will be involved in a focus group interview.

For the local language teachers, participation means observing the teacher-researcher’s class, attending individual interviews to exchange suggestions and idea.

4.5. Timeline for the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Milestones</th>
<th>When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. student interviews completed)</td>
<td>(e.g. second week of March 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students start to know the task performance</td>
<td>First week of term1, 2013, Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local language teacher start to observe class</td>
<td>Second week of term1, 2013, Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish first research cycle, interview the teachers</td>
<td>Fourth week of term1, 2013, Feb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish the second research cycle, students interview completed</td>
<td>The end of term 1, 2013, April</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Third research cycle be done, collecting self-reflective journal   The fourth week of term2, 2013, May

Fourth research cycle finish, students and teachers interview for the second time   The end of term 2,2013, July

Analysis data and combine research data with the documents   Till the end of 2013, term4.

4.6. When will data collection be completed? ___July___ 2013_

4.7. Selection of Research Participants

a) Who will your research participants be? (e.g., students, teachers, parents) (Approximately 100 words)

Group1: 
School students: 30 (age range from 11-14) 
They are students from Year 7 and 8 in high schools. Both schools have Chinese classes for more than one year. The students have at least one Chinese class per week.

Group 2: 
Local language teachers: 2 (age range from 25 to 40) 
One of them is an experienced Chinese teacher in high school, she is really good at dealing with the students during the learning process. The other one is a language teacher who is still a beginner for about 2 years.

Group 3: 
The teacher researcher

b) State, and justify, the total numbers of each type of participant to be involved in each part of the research project. (Approximately 100 words)

Group 1: students-30 of them involved
4.8. Limitations of your research

*Identify and state the limitations of your research. The purpose of this statement is to ensure that you avoid drawing over-generalised or unsubstantiated conclusions from limited data. (Approximately 100 words)*

1. Do not have a class really belong to the teacher-researcher, hard to develop a real rapport between the students and teachers.

4.9. Outline the steps you will take to analyse your data

- your methods for analysing the data should be clearly stated, systematic and appropriate to the nature of the data
- you should indicate how you will minimise the possibility of unacknowledged or unrecognised influences on the findings and discourage the selective interpretation of evidence (intentional or unintentional)
- in the case of quantitative research, please specify how the relationship between variables will be examined and how other influences on variables will be controlled for.
In coding qualitative data, the steps introduced by Kumar (2005) include four phases. Step one is to identify the main themes, going through each descriptive response. Afterwards, one assigns codes to the main theme, using keywords, classifying responses under the main themes when going through the interview transcripts. Next one integrates theme and responses into the text of the report.

In this research, I expect the most valuable data to emerge from the interviews. Therefore, here I take analysis of an interview as an example, showing how I will process the analysis:

- The interview will be recorded by voice recorder and transcribed word for word
- A theme will be identified for the transcript of the interview content.
- Responses will be classified under the main theme when going through the interview transcripts
- The responses will be assessed in relation to the content of my report.
4.7. Outline the steps you will take to ensure confidentiality of information provided and to protect anonymity of participants and schools in relation to:

a) data collection and storage

b) publication/reporting of results.

If applicable, also describe and justify any limitations to confidentiality and anonymity or provide reasons why it will not be offered. (Approximately 100 words)

The collection, use and storage of data about participants will be non-identifiable. Written notes taken by local language teachers will be recorded on the paper. Interviews with teachers and students will be recorded on my laptop. Paper information will be stored in a locked cabinet at Centre for Educational Research, UWS using pseudonym; voice memos will require a password to access. My supervisors and I will have the right to deal with this information in accordance with ethical guidelines. The mandatory period for storage of raw data is 5 years. After that, paper information will be shredded; computer files will be completely deleted.

The results of the research will be submitted for the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Hons) in the form of a thesis. In the dissemination of research results, all the schools and participants will be anonymous. Given the fact that this research is part of an MOU between UWS, the Western Sydney region of the NSWDET and Ningbo Municipal Education Bureau, and that this partnership is well-known, it will be virtually impossible for the school to not be identified as belonging to the Western Sydney region of the NSWDET. However, the school will only be identified as "School" etc. The teachers will only be identified as "teacher" etc. No individual participants will be named.

4.8. How will you communicate your findings?

Outline the steps you will use to disseminate the findings of your research – to participating schools, the Department of Education and Training and the broader education research community.
Firstly, the findings of my research will be submitted as a requirement of the degree of Master of Education (Hons). The broader education research community will be informed about findings through publication of the thesis.

Secondly, an abstract and report of findings will be sent to the Department of Education and Communities as requested.

Thirdly, participating schools will be informed about the findings if they ask the teacher-researcher to do so.
5. Educational benefit

5.1. Benefits of your research project to New South Wales government schools and students.

How does your proposal relate to:

- **Department of Education and Training plans**

- **The National Goals for Schooling**
  The National Goals for Schooling, also known as the ‘Melbourne Declaration’ can be found at: [http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf)

(Approximately 100 words)

This research project responds to the Australian government’s Asia-literacy policy, which aims to promote four key Asian languages including Chinese. However, the intercultural competence has been pointed out in the 2011 NSW Curriculum for languages.

There is a need for a teaching method that focuses on promoting the intercultural competence of the high school students. This research aims to develop high school students’ intercultural competence.

5.2 How your research project will contribute to the field of educational research.

Clearly indicate how the project will contribute to theory and practice in education

(Approximately 100 words).
Contribution in practice: This research will carry out the combination of the cultural structure of China with the intercultural competence model, making it learnable material for NSW high school students and the syllabus.

In term of theory: Offering a newly metaphor concerning about the relationship between language and culture. Bring Chinese theoretical knowledge with teaching practice in Australia.

6. Level of Disruption

Please indicate the types of activities that Departmental staff, students and parents will participate in as part of the research, estimate the amount of time participation might take and indicate the numbers of participants involved. There are separate tables below for a) research participants, b) administrative support and c) overall totals for the project. (Use one line for each activity and add extra rows as needed).
**a) Research participants in each school**

*(Separate by school if different activities occur in each)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity</th>
<th>Participants in each school (number &amp; type)</th>
<th>Amount of time activity will take (e.g. 30 mins)</th>
<th>When activity will take place (e.g. in class time, Term 2 2008)</th>
<th>Classes (number &amp; year levels) (e.g. 5 (yr 3))</th>
<th>Participation strategy (e.g. whole class/ students withdrawn from class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus group interview</td>
<td>30 year 7 students (6 students each time)</td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td>After class (recess or lunch)</td>
<td>2 classes, year 7</td>
<td>Whole class based on voluntary participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observation</td>
<td>2 teachers</td>
<td>50 mins</td>
<td>In class</td>
<td>2 classes, year 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>video</td>
<td>30 year 7 students taking part in the performance</td>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>In class</td>
<td>2 classes, year 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual interview</td>
<td>2 teachers</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>After class, during recess or lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please use the box below to provide any additional information about the administration of your research project relating to a) above (if relevant). (Approximately 100 words)*
b) Administrative and other support expected from each school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative activity or other type of support required (e.g. administer and collect 60 consent forms, distribute 30 survey forms)</th>
<th>Personnel to be involved</th>
<th>Amount of time administrative activity will take</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distribute and collect 30 information sheets and 30 consent forms</td>
<td>2 language teachers</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please use the box below to provide any additional information about the administration of your research project relating to b) above (if relevant). (Approximately 100 words)
c) **Totals for the entire research project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity (e.g. Survey completion, Administering consent forms)</th>
<th>Total Participants (number, type) (e.g. 200 yr 3 students, 5 teachers)</th>
<th>Schools involved (number and type) (e.g. 2 primary, 3 high schools)</th>
<th>Study data collection times (e.g. Phase 1 term 2 2006, Phase 2 term 4 2006)</th>
<th>Total hours (Activity times by numbers involved)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation field notes completion, interviewing teachers, administering consent forms</td>
<td>30 year 7 students, 2 local language teacher, 1 teacher-researcher</td>
<td>2 high schools</td>
<td>Term 1 and term 2. 2013</td>
<td>15 hours approximately</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** (combined activities) 33 2 2 terms 15 hours

*Please use the box below to provide any additional information about the administration of your research project relating to c) above (if relevant). (Approximately 100 words)*

A box for additional information is not provided here.

a) **What processes will you employ to minimise disruption to schools and participants?**
E.g., online survey to be completed by students or teachers outside of school hours. Please note that schools maintain duty of care and supervision of students during the conduct of research and that it is therefore inappropriate for researchers to suggest to school staff that they do not need to be present during the conduct of the research. (Approximately 100 words)

For student participants, completing task performance during lessons; taking part in the focus group interviews after class. Hence, there is no disruption to their normal learning activities.

For local language teacher, the observations and interviews will be conducted under their permission. The teacher-researcher will adjust the interview time and place according to their requirements.
7. Minimisation of Risk or Harm

7.1. List below all activities, equipment, measuring devices, procedures and questions to be used in this research project that are not in everyday use in schools.
(Note: Documentation demonstrating equipment and equipment safety should be included in Attachment E)

Also comment on any potential that the research itself has to impact on privacy, cause emotional distress to participants or to identify issues which carry ‘duty of care’ responsibilities e.g. indications that a child is at risk of harm, involved in criminal activity etc. (Approximately 100 words)

Procedures to be used in this research all belong to normal school activities. The research aims to develop students’ intercultural competence as well as to improve the teacher-researcher’s capabilities as a Chinese language teacher. The research instruments involved in the research all belong to normal school teaching practice and the interaction between teacher and students.

7.2. Describe the procedures that will be put in place to manage any issues arising from items mentioned in 7.1 above and to deal with any outcomes including duty of care responsibilities, should they occur. Where appropriate, include the strategies that will be adopted to ensure that adequate counselling support is available and that participants are aware of the availability of such support. (Approximately 200 words)

N/A

Attachment A
Research Instruments
For the students:

**Interview questions for the focused group interview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Question</th>
<th>Feedback from the students</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What did you like most about the role play?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are birthday celebrations different in Australia and China?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you enjoy doing role plays in the language classroom?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that you could attend a Chinese birthday party and knowing the reason for everything people do there?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you understand <em>the pupil’s rules and disciplines</em> (<em>di zi gui</em> 弟子规) (Chinese book shared with class)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the teachers:

**Interview questions for the in-depth interview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Question</th>
<th>Feedback from the teacher</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you give me some feedback on my class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that the role play can help students gain intercultural competence?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What do you think about the pupil’s rules and disciplines (*di zì guì* 子规) as? (The Chinese book shared with class)

Is it (*di zì guì* 子规) a good resource for teachers to teach Chinese cultural as well as the language?

Any suggestions for me or any questions on my idea

Observation form for the local language teachers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation aspect</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attachment B

Letter to the Principals

The letter to principals seeking permission for their schools’ participation in the research should be concise and clearly worded. It must include information outlining the nature of the research, what is required of school resources, school personnel and participants, the amount of time research activities will require and the timeline for the research. The letter must also inform principals of their right to withdraw from part, or all, of the project at any time.

Dear Principal,

As part of a research project for the degree of Master of Education (Hons), researcher Erjia Guan—a volunteer teacher-researcher—would like to conduct interviews with the language teacher in your school, as well as invite her to observe and evaluate her teaching practice. Students’ task performance will be recorded and reflected in the teacher-researcher’s self-reflective journal, and also the students are invited to take part in a focus group interview.

This research aims to develop high school students’ intercultural competence in the Western Sydney Region by using task performance in the classroom, combined with the key ideas of 《會子規—The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines》, which includes the essence of the Chinese way of daily communication, learning knowledge, moral education and how to deal with people. Should you agree, the researcher will schedule interviews and invite language teacher to undertake teaching observation.

Participation in this research will be totally voluntary. Participants may withdraw from this project at any stage. Should any do so, unprocessed data can also be withdrawn at that stage. If you wish to know more about the research, please contact Erjia Guan by E-mail: ema.kitty@gmail.com.

Thank you in anticipation of your valuable contribution to this research project.

Yours sincerely,

Erjia Guan

Centre for Educational Research, UWS

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The approval number is . If you have any complaints or reservation about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel 02-4736-0062, Fax 02-4736-0013 or E-mail: humanethics@uws.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Attachment C  Information Sheets

Participant Information Sheet (General)

An information sheet, which is tailored in format and language appropriate for the category of participant - adult, child, young adult, should be developed.

Note: If not all of the text in the row is visible please 'click your cursor' anywhere on the page to expand the row. To view guidance on what is required in each section 'hover your cursor' over the bold text. Further instructions are on the last page of this form.

Project Title: Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian high school students' intercultural competence through classroom task-performance

Who is carrying out the study?
The Mandarin teacher Miss ERJIA GUAN is carrying out this study. It will form the basis of the degree of Master of Education (Hons) in the University of Western Sydney. The study is being supervised by Dr. Dacheng ZHAO, Professor Michael Singh and Dr. Jinghe HAN.

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by the Mandarin teacher Miss ERJIA GUAN. It will form the basis of the degree of Master of Education (Hons) in the University of Western Sydney. The study is being supervised by Dr. Dacheng ZHAO and Professor Michael Singh and Dr. Jinghe HAN.

What is the study about?
The proposed research aims to develop Australian students' intercultural competence by the use of a specific performance task in the classroom, in combination with the key precepts of the traditional Chinese primer -- The Learner’s Rules and Disciplines (弟子规(zi de gui)), and within an Action Research methodology.

What does the study involve?
During the course of normal Mandarin lessons, you will be asked to observe the teacher-researcher's teaching practice and student's performance every time a task is arranged, as well as provide written feedback by completing an evaluation form while you are observing. You will be interviewed to give your opinion about teacher-researcher's teaching practice. Interview transcripts and written feedback will be used as data in the study with your permission.

How much time will the study take?
Observation will be conducted on term 2-4 during normal Mandarin lessons. Interviews will be conducted at the end of each term about 30mins.

Will the study benefit me?
The study will directly or indirectly enhance your understanding of Chinese language and culture as well as Chinese people's behavior, and also develop your students' intercultural competence. Offer the opportunity to exchange Chinese teaching ideas with the teacher-researcher.

Will the study involve any discomfort for me?
The study will not cause any discomfort for the teachers. Participation is voluntary. If you decide not to take part in, it will not affect your relationship with the researcher. If you change your mind about
participation after the study started, you can withdraw any time you want. And any information already collected from you will be destroyed.

How is this study being paid for?
The study is voluntary, no payment is involved.

Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?
All aspects of the study, including results, will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. No-one will be able to identify you from the results of the study. Only the researchers and her supervisors have access to the original data provided by you with the ethical permission. Your written feedback will be on paper and interviews will be on audio-tape. Paper information will be stored in files in a locked cabinet for 5 years, after which they will be shredded; computer file containing audio-tape interviews will require a password for access and be stored for 5 years, after which they will be completely deleted. Thesis to be submitted for the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Honours).

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to be involved and - if you do participate - you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator's contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?
When you have read this information, Miss ERJIA GUAN will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact:
Mandarin teacher ERJIA GUAN by calling 0468553503 or via E-mail erjia.kitty@gmail.com
Dr. Dacheng ZHAO by calling 0410630357 or via E-mail by d.zhao@uws.edu.au
Professor Michael Singh by calling 0451065839 or via E-mail by m.j.singh@uws.edu.au
Dr. Jinghe HAN by calling 0422652972 or via E-mail by J.Han@uws.edu.au

What if I have a complaint?
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H9972.

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
Participant Information Sheet (Parent/Caregiver)

An information sheet, which is tailored in format and language appropriate for the category of participant - adult, child, young adult, should be developed.

**Note:** If not all of the text in the row is visible please ‘click your cursor’ anywhere on the page to expand the row. To view guidance on what is required in each section ‘hover your cursor’ over the bold text. Further instructions are on the last page of this form.

**Project Title:** Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian high school students' intercultural competence through classroom task-performance

**Who is carrying out the study?**

The Mandarin teacher Miss ERJIA GUAN is carrying out this study. It will form the basis of the degree of Master of Education (Hons) in the University of Western Sydney. The study is being supervised by Dr. Dacheng ZHAO, Professor Michael Singh and Dr. Jinghe HAN.

Your child is invited to participate in a study conducted by [insert name, position and host School, Centre or Divisional unit] and [if appropriate] will form the basis for the degree of Master of Education (Hons) at the University of Western Sydney under the supervision of Dr. Dacheng ZHAO, Professor Michael Singh and Dr. Jinghe HAN.

**What is the study about?**

The proposed research aims to develop Australian students' intercultural competence by the use of a specific performance task in the classroom, in combination with the key precepts of the traditional Chinese primer -- *The Learner's Rules and Disciplines (知(知)行(行)条(条))*, and within an Action Research methodology.

**What does the study involve?**

During the course of normal Mandarin lessons, your child will be interviewed in the related recess time to give their opinions about teacher-researcher's teaching practice. Interview transcripts and written feedback will be used as data in the study with your permission. Students who are willing to take part in will do a task-performance in class and one of them are acting as a camera man, recording all the performance. All this data will be only used in the teacher-researcher's self-reflective journal.

**How much time will the study take?**

Recordings will be:
Collected on term 2-4 during after-class interviews.

Children not participating in the study will be observing the performance during the time the research is being carried out. And the interview for those students who are willing to take part in the research will be done during recess time.
Will the study benefit me?
The study will directly or indirectly enhance your child's understanding of Chinese language and culture as well as Chinese people's behavior, and also develop their intercultural competence.

Will the study have any discomforts?
The study will not cause any discomfort for the teachers. Participation is voluntary. If you decide not to take part in, it will not affect your relationship with the researcher. If you change your mind about participation after the study started, you can withdraw any time you want. And any information already collected from you will be destroyed.

How is this study being paid for?
The study is voluntary, no payment is involved.

Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?
All aspects of the study, including results, will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

Can I withdraw my child from the study?
Your child's participation in the study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to consent. Your child may withdraw from the study at any time - or you may withdraw your child from the study at which point all written and audio records of your child's participation will be destroyed.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator's contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?
When you have read this information, the teacher-researcher ERJIA GUAN will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Mandarin teacher ERJIA GUAN by calling 0468553503 or via E-mail erjia.kitty@gmail.com
Dr. Dacheng ZHAO by calling 0410630357 or via E-mail by d.zhao@uws.edu.au
Professor Michael Singh by calling 0451068539 or via E-mail by m.j.singh@uws.edu.au
Dr. Jinghe HAN by calling 04226262972 or via E-mail by J.Han@uws.edu.au

What if I have a complaint?
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Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
Participant Consent Form

This is a project specific consent form. It restricts the use of the data collected to the named project by the named investigators.

Note: If not all of the text in the row is visible please 'click your cursor' anywhere on the page to expand the row. To view guidance on what is required in each section 'hover your cursor' over the bold text.

Project Title: Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian high school students’ intercultural competence through classroom task-performance

I, ______________________, consent to participate in the research project titled Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian high school students’ intercultural competence through classroom task-performance.

I acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet [or where appropriate, 'have had read to me'] and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to the classroom observation and individual interview related to the research after class.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

Signed: ______________________

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

Return Address: 1.21-School of Education, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag 1797, Penrith NSW 2751

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.

The Approval number is: H9972
If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Participant Consent Form for Parents/Caregivers

This is a project specific consent form. It restricts the use of the data collected to the named project by the named investigators. Where projects involve young people capable of consenting, a separate consent form should be developed. A parental consent form is still required.

Note: If not all of the text in the row is visible please 'click your cursor' anywhere on the page to expand the row. To view guidance on what is required in each section 'hover your cursor' over the bold text.

Project Title: Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian high school students' intercultural competence through classroom task-performance

I, [print name]........................................, give consent for my child [print name]........................................ to participate in the research project titled Learning Chinese from cultural roots: Developing Australian high school students' intercultural competence through classroom task-performance.

I acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet [or where appropriate, 'have had read to me'] and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my child's involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I have discussed participation in the project with my child and my child agrees to their participation in the project.

I understand that my child's involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about my child will be used in any way that reveals my child's identity.

I understand that my child's participation in this project is voluntary. I can withdraw my child from the study at any time, without affecting their academic standing or relationship with the school and they are free to withdraw their participation at any time.

I consent to my child's participation in the task performance in class and the related group interview around recess time or the tutorial time. Please cross out any activity that you do not wish your child to participate in.

Signed (Parent/caregiver): ____________________________ Signed (child): ____________________________

Name: ____________________________ Name: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Where projects involve young people capable of consenting, a separate consent form should be developed. A parental consent form is still required.

Return Address: 1.21 School of Education, University of Western Sydney, NSW, 2751
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is: H9972

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.