East Asian Canadian Graduated Students, Silent but Engaged: A Dialectical Exploration of Classroom Learner Speech in Competing Educational Models

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

This research is offered to those interested in the phenomenon of the relatively silent Confucian learner and particularly in his transition from his Confucian influenced educational origins to the Freirean-influenced, more learner speech orientated environment of Canadian graduate schools.

Starting with the Analects of Confucius and continuing through the intervening period to present modern research, various possible factors contributing to the Confucian relatively learner-silent model were examined. The research phenomenologically examined the lived experiences of 18 Confucian background graduate students regarding learner speech in Canadian graduate schools. Viewing the participants as situated at the intersection of two different educational models regarding learner speech, the research created ideal types of their earlier Confucian educational model as well as of their Canadian graduate model. Thereafter, their learner speech perceptions were examined using the framework of Hegel’s dialectical pattern.
The research suggests that the responses of the participants indicate movement toward a new, synthesis model in terms of attitudinal movement toward the ideal type of Freirean-influenced, graduate Canadian education regarding (1) increased confidence that the Canadian model can be successfully mastered largely through learner activities that substitute for learner speech, (2) by development of appreciation for independent critical thought, and (3) by preference for the greater equality found in teacher-learner relations of the Canadian model as well as 4) actual participation in the Canadian model learner speech practices.

The research concluded that a synthesis of the Confucian and Canadian educational models may produce future critical thinking, talkative Confucian classrooms led by increasingly friendly, informal teachers but that the focus of its critical thinking and learner speech may be directed more toward the socially harmonious external reference point of the Confucian Dao than toward Freirean focused speaking of individual learner realities as the basis upon which to move toward revolutionary restructuring of social class oppression in favor of greater social justice.
Acknowledgments

Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy (Psalms 126:5).

My educational journey has taken me literally around the world and through two very different educational models. It is a journey that has been sown with many tears and I pray that its completion will enable me to bring the joy of the Lord of all learning to the learners I serve in the future.

I am so grateful that my extended family has been supportive of my educational journey; especially my siblings. You have been taking care of our mom, so that I could finish this journey.

I would like to thank my special supervisor, Dr. Njoki Wane, for supporting, encouraging and mentoring me during the last seven years. During the darkest parts of my journey, you not only led, you pushed. With the imprint of your hands still in my back, I thank you for your strength.

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I would like to extend my special acknowledgement and gratitude to all my OISE professors for the courses I took from them. Because of your learnedness, my thought has been stimulated and challenged.

I thank my 18 research participants from four East Asian cultures from the bottom of my heart. It was because you contributed your very personal perspectives regarding the polar differences in the educational models of the East and West, that I was enabled to finish my journey.

It is with deepest thanks and appreciation to all my dear OISE friends, colleagues, CTL/SJE staff, registrar staff, and members of Dr. Wane’s theses support group that I end my journey. Without your spiritual support, your suggestions, your encouragement and your help I would not have been able to finish.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Freire (2000) drew a clear, bright line when he said:

Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (p. 34).

As I reflected upon Freire’s statement I became convinced that though his words are charmingly convincing, they are not entirely balanced. They identify two educational camps, the first seeks learner conformity and the second offers learner freedom, the first integrates learners into existing logic, the second offers learners the opportunity to critically and creatively and cooperatively transform reality. Stated this way, what learner or teacher would choose the first over the second? Freire’s description suggests that for learners in the first camp education is simply the process of being shaped, molded, and finally, conformed. He might as well also have added, silenced and thereby crushed. In the second camp, he locates a more attractive activity; that of dealing critically, being creative, and discovering and participating with others in a transformation of the world.

As I learned further of Freire, I discovered that the essence and core of his idea of dealing critically, being creative, discovering and participating in transformation of the world consisted and was centered in the act of engaging in learner speech; a learner speech that involved recognition of and speaking out of a learner’s own reality and then joining with others (both teacher and other learners) who are also speaking out their realities in rebuilding and reconstructing a reality that is socially just. Freire did in other places further address the educational model of the first camp but it is always in terms of it being a deadening, conforming, unthinking, and most of
all learner-silent camp where learners become passive receptacles of teachers’ knowledge deposits with the only type of transformation being when they later become even more passive, repetitive, unfeeling and bureaucratic teachers of the next generation of learners. Though one may disagree about whether Freire’s description is balanced or not, he is right in saying that there are two educational camps and he is right that learner speech activities are at the heart of their difference.

Today there are large numbers of Confucian influenced international scholars coming to Canada to participate in an educational environment that has been significantly influenced by Freire and they come after having been first thoroughly socialized in a more silent Confucian educational environment, one that Freire would surely condemn as conformist orientated and one that he would surely condemn as terribly lacking in the critical element of learner speech. These Confucian-influenced learners are sometimes referred to as Chinese learners, sometimes as culturally Chinese learners, and sometimes as Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) learners, with CHC referring to learners from cultures such as China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan according to Watkins and Biggs (2001).

This research focuses phenomenologically upon a sample of these “silent” Chinese learners as they attempt to adapt to their Freirean-influenced Canadian graduate school speech-rich environments. It then uses Hegelian, dialectical terminology to analyze their responses between a “thesis” ideal type of Confucian education against an “anti-thesis” ideal type of Freirean-influenced Canadian education. Located at the interface of two clear examples of the contrasting educational camps described above by Freire, the lived experiences and perceptions of these “silent” Confucian learners may provide insight not only as to their educational past, the quality and techniques of their learning, and how Canadian graduate schools may better appreciate and understand their learning, it may also provide insight as to a future synthesis that may emerge from the collision of these two greatly contrasting and oppositional educational approaches.
To examine these participants’ space at the educational interface of the two educational approaches, the qualitative approach of phenomenology, and more particularly, an approach known as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), was used to explore the personal, lived experiences of the 18 selected Confucian influenced learners regarding their learner speech perceptions as they adapted to their new Canadian graduate school environments. Thereafter, their responses were situated within a theoretical framework of Fredrick Hegel’s ideas of thesis, antithesis and synthesis regarding dialectical change.

A preliminary problem in discussing any aspect of the Confucian educational model or the Chinese learner arises from the fact that there is so little agreement in the research as to what it is and as to the learners it produces. There is research that suggests that the Confucian education model produces learners that are deep and critical thinkers but who have learning characteristics, values, purposes, and practices significantly different from that in Western education (e.g., Li, 2012). However, there is other research and authority that views the Confucian educational model in a negative, binary, deficit fashion as compared to Western education (e.g., Littlewood, 2009; Ninnes, Aitchison, and Kalos, 1999) and that views the Confucian learner as lacking the critical thought characteristics viewed as necessary for deep, effective and meaningful learning from the perspective of Western education.
Table 1
Western versus Confucian Academic Values According to the Literature Review of Ryan (2010, p. 43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western</th>
<th>Confucian</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Deep learners</td>
<td>• Surface or rote learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independent learners</td>
<td>• Dependence on the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Critical thinking</td>
<td>• “Follow the master”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student-centered learning</td>
<td>• Respect for the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adversarial stance</td>
<td>• Harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Argumentative learners</td>
<td>• Passive learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Achievement of the individual</td>
<td>• Achievement of the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Constructing new knowledge</td>
<td>• Respect for historical texts</td>
</tr>
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No meaningful contrasting discussion of Confucian and Canadian educational systems (or any educational systems) may be presented in a typology of thesis and anti-thesis unless the ideal types of the typology can each be defined. This research used the ideal type of a Freirean-influenced Canadian graduate education for the anti-thesis and it approached the problem of the multiplicity of versions of the Confucian educational model by utilizing, for purposes of the typology, the version most distant from that of the Freirean-influenced Canadian model; in other words, the version that best provided contrast with the Freirean-influenced Canadian ideal type. Nevertheless, other versions of the Confucian model were also discussed. Clearly, all research descriptions of all versions of the Confucian learners put them poles apart from the Canadian model but in the spirit of Hegelian oppositional forces, I have used the Confucian model most distant from the Canadian model of education as my thesis in order to allow the greatest contrast between the two educational models being discussed to proceed.

A second problem further challenged this research. It involved the question of how broadly to investigate the literature of learner speech practices of the Confucian model of education. Speech in an educational context (or any context) may be prompted or encouraged (or discouraged) by any number of things. It may arise out of teacher-learner relationships or it may be affected by general concerns for harmony. It may be affected by hierarchical cultural stratification. It may also
be that learners that are motivated by intrinsic concern to learn are more vocal. It may arise out of linguistic considerations buried inside the structure of the language being used. Or it may be that an educational system with different purposes produces different levels of learner speech. Because of the large scope of factors possibly related to learner speech, it was determined that the research would examine the topic of speech from a very broad perspective both in its examination of the research literature as well as within the actual literature of Confucianism. This breadth of approach resulted in a literature review of some length.

It is suggested that though there are no doubt many other varieties of educational models and many other models of learners in the world, the Confucian-influenced learner and the Confucian educational model with its distinctive trait of relative learner silence offered the learner model most oppositional to the Freirean-influenced Canadian graduate school model and it was therefore especially suited to be discussed within the thesis and anti-thesis context of Hegelian language. As later shown in the literature, it is an oppositional model far distant from notions of learner participation on an equal basis with both peers and teacher as vocal co-creators of learning, far distant from a model that views learners as seekers of personal truth through dialectic learner speech exchange, far distant from a learner model where learners separate learning from personal moral development, far distant from a learner model that views teachers as learning facilitators or learner-brothers and partner-learners rather than as role models of what it means to be fully human, and most important for this research, far distant from a learner model that views learner speech as being early, frequent, uninhibited and necessary to the learning process. In all versions of the Confucian-influenced educational model Chinese learners (as well as teachers) would likely find the educational alternatives presented by Paulo Freire in the quote that appears at the beginning of this work more baffling than would learners socialized in the Western/Canadian learning model. As the 18 participants of this research attempt to adapt to their Canadian learning environments
they are being asked to traverse the far distance between these learning poles. This research uses Hegel’s idea of the dialect and creates polar ideal types of education to make a phenomenological analysis of their perceptions and the lived experiences of their journey. Their reports from the space between the interface of these two contrasting educational models may provide insight regarding their past model, their present individual learner needs, as well as how and whether these educational models may intermarry (synthesize) in the future.

1.1 Research Topic/Area

The research topic is the Confucian-influenced learner who is attempting to adapt to the speech-rich environment of Canadian graduate schools. Internationalization of education in Canadian graduate schools is bringing more silent learners of Confucian influenced cultures into Canadian graduate school classrooms having pedagogies that promote learner speech as an important part of the learning process. This research focuses upon the perceptions of these students of their host graduate school environment and its use of learner speech as they attempt to adapt to it and what their perceptions might mean regarding the use of learner speech in future models of education.

1.2 Research Problem

What are the perceptions of Confucian influenced, more silent classroom learners regarding speech related aspects of their Canadian classroom learning experiences and what might these perceptions indicate about a dialectical conflict between the educational models of Freirean-influenced Canadian universities and of their Confucian influenced home cultures regarding the role of learner speech?

1.3 Purpose Statement

The purpose of the research is to examine the perceptions of learners from Confucian influenced cultures in Canadian graduate classrooms regarding speech related aspects of their
learning and to consider what these perceptions may indicate about a dialectical
tension/conflict/change between a Freire influenced Canadian learning model and the Confucian
influenced learning model of the home culture of the participants.

1.4 Research Guiding Questions
The guiding questions of the research are:

1) How do East Asian graduate learners, previously socialized in a Confucian educational
   model to practice relative silence in the classroom, view themselves and the learning
   process in the more learner-talk oriented Freirean Canadian classrooms?

2) What might their perceptions indicate about the dialectical relationship and outcome of
   their Confucian-influenced home educational model and the Canadian educational model?

1.5 Significance and Limitations of the Research
The research is significant for several reasons:

1) First, it appears that no previous research has specifically focused phenomenologically
   upon the perceptions and lived experiences of Confucian scholars regarding their learner
   speech related perceptions in the Canadian graduate classroom.

2) Second, it appears that no previous research has focused upon Confucian learners in
   Canadian graduate classrooms whose previous educational socialization is so thoroughly
   Confucian (from elementary to secondary and to undergraduate college) before attempting
   to adapt to Canadian graduate schools. This long period of previous Confucian educational
   socialization should provide the greatest possible contrast for purposes of examining
   differences and the dialectical interaction between the two educational environments.

3) A third significance of the research is that there is no previous research that has attempted
   to discuss and analyze a Confucian educational model of learner speech and of a Canadian
   educational model of learner speech from a Hegelian dialectical perspective. Doing so may
allow greater understanding of the Confucian learner adaptations taking place at the interface of these two oppositional educational systems and of how this meeting of the two systems may affect the educational models of the future.

4) A final significance of the research relates to the question of the nature of learning (and teaching) in the Confucian influenced silent learner educational model. This educational model and the type of learner it produces remains a mixed question at best and a blurry and unclear one at worst with research being frequently contradictory. Examination of the perceptions regarding learner speech of learners who are at the interface of the two systems may offer clarification of the overall nature of how learning and teaching actually occurs in the Confucian educational model.

The research is also limited in important ways:

A. First, though the research attempts to examine a large portion of Confucian doctrine and literature, it does not suggest that the examination is either a full or expert one. Confucianism is too complex for this claim to be made by me. Instead, the Confucian principles and literature here presented and examined are offered only to give context for understanding the responses of the 18 participants of the research and to create a general picture of some of the embedded Confucian principles that may be related to learner speech in order that the Confucian model of learner classroom speech can be better contrasted with a Freire-influenced Canadian educational speech model.

B. Secondly, since this research is qualitative and phenomenological and focuses on limited numbers of participants, the research does not seek to achieve quantitative, causal, levels of certainty regarding relationships of social variables. Instead, it seeks to use qualitative approaches intended for exploration of the stated research problems for purposes of discovering understanding/insights that may later deserve further
quantitative examination rather than for discovery of correlational or causative relationships that confirm a particular hypothesis.

C. A point about the literature review of the research is also offered as a form of limitation. The extensive review is offered as context rather than to form and support any particular hypothesis regarding learner speech in the Confucian model of education. Though literature reviews are not normally as extensive in qualitative research as in quantitative research because the direction of the research is emergent and not as predictable (Creswell, 2007), the relatively extensive literature review here presented was the result of two considerations. First, the literature arguably relevant to the Chinese learner speech model of today covers over two and a half millennia and includes a central text (the Analects). Just as central aspects of the approach to life of followers of Christianity or Islam of Hinduism require consideration of their central texts, the same is true of Confucian learning. The Analects may be much more, but if it is anything, it is a book of learning. To examine Confucian learning without a serious review of the Analects would be, in my opinion, unthinkable. Secondly, as previously mentioned, because it is conceivable that learner speech may be related to or arise out of or even subtly hide in numerous other learning model characteristics (e.g. teacher/learner relations, hierarchical social relations, linguistic characteristics, concern for social harmony, the purpose of learning, etc.) it was thought that the literature review had to tend toward breadth of examination of educational practices rather than restricting examination to the sole focus of overt learner speech practices.

D. A final qualification or limitation relates to the use of Hegel’s idea of the dialectic. Hegelian analysis can be viewed as a pattern providing insight regarding the future as well as ultimately being an analysis that is more spiritual than scientific. Its principles
are here not intended in the original sense of Hegel’s ideas about spiritual truth but, instead, its pattern and principles are adapted here and used as a linguistic/conceptual framework to examine the reports of the lived experiences of the research participants as well as for an interpretative analysis and discussion of their responses. If the full complicated form of Hegelian thought has been misused, then I take my place (behind others such as Karl Marx) in the long line that must apologize to Mr. Hegel for misuse/misinterpretation of his ideas.

1.6 Organization of the Dissertation

In order to increase the reader’s ability to comfortably track the path I have charted regarding the rather extensive review of literature, the methodology of the research, the use of a modified Hegelian dialectic to situate and analyze the research, and the conclusions/implications drawn from the research, I have organized the research into seven chapters, including the present introductory chapter. Chapter two will constitute a part one, first portion of a literature review focusing primarily upon my personal analysis of portions of the Analects thought to be relevant to learner speech together with a brief summary of historical personalities from the time of the Analects to the present period. Chapter three will constitute a part two, review of the modern research literature built around six identified research landmarks thought to possibly be relevant to learner speech. Chapter four will focus upon discussion of the theoretical framework of Hegel’s dialectic and how it has been modified for purposes of this research. Chapter five discusses the phenomenological methodology of the research and particularly the methodology known as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Chapter six analyzes the data of the participants lived experiences regarding learner speech as revealed in semi-structured interviews within the context of dialectical conflict between Confucian model (thesis) and Canadian model (anti-thesis).
Finally, chapter seven includes reflections, conclusions, a projected future synthesis educational model that may arise from the thesis and anti-thesis models, and suggestions for further research.

1.7 Summary of the Introduction

Canadian graduate school education is rapidly absorbing large numbers of learners from parts of the world having Confucian educational models that bring very different learning traditions, practices and values to the Canadian classroom, especially regarding learner classroom speech practices. This research focuses phenomenologically upon the lived experiences of 18 such learners in order to examine the dialectical encounter of the ideal type of their Confucian influenced original education model with that of an ideal type of the Freirean-influenced educational model they encounter in Canadian graduate schools. The examination may provide insight regarding the direction of educational models of both Canadian and Confucian influenced cultures, clarification as to how Confucian learners learn, as well as suggest a direction of a future syntheses arising out of the Canadian educational experience of these very different learners.
Chapter 2

Part One of the Review of Literature

Confucius’ Words, Interpretations of Them, and Selected Disciples

2.1 Preface

As indicated in the chapter heading, this review of literature regarding numerous aspects of the phenomena of the relatively silent Chinese learner will be divided into two parts, one part being the present chapter consisting of literature that is primarily historical, providing a Confucian historical context for a second part (chapter three) literature research of the modern literature. In the present chapter, the primary focus is upon what is believed to be the writing thought most dependably written by Confucius regarding numerous aspects of teaching/learning possibly relevant to the learning characteristics of present Chinese learners. In the following chapter (chapter three) we examine various research landmarks of the modern research as well as opponents and critics of the characteristics of the Chinese learning model.

2.2 The International Era of Education and the Chinese Learner

There were probably once educational environments where ethnic, racial, language, religious, geographical, whole-bodyness, and class diversity were rare. Their major diversity was in the advanced maturity and experience of the teacher compared to learners. Even in such uniformity there no doubt remained challenges to effective learning. However, just as previous movement from rural to urban increased the challenges of teaching and learning, the present movement toward internationalization of education produces even greater complexity in the challenge of fairly and humanely providing the great diversity of students in the classroom an opportunity to participate in meaningful learning.
The recent rapid internationalization of Western educational institutions of higher learning in countries such as the Canada as well as the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain has brought an increased focus upon international graduate students in general and it has particularly drawn attention to a learner called the Chinese learner, also called the culturally Chinese learner, and the Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) learner; learners coming from such cultures such as China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan (Watkins & Biggs, 2001).

Though the idea of a Chinese learner has been expanded to include learners from additional Chinese heritage cultures, the number of learners actually from China makes up the greatest number of this category and there has been a steady increase in the number of international students coming from Mainland China to study in North America. Of the top 30 countries sending students to study in Canada in 2014, almost 33% came from China, almost 6% came from South Korea, 2% from Japan, and 1% from Taiwan. Collectively, there were 336,497 international students in Canada in 2014, and this was an 83% increase from 2008 and it was also a 10% increase over 2013. These increases brought Canada to the point of being the 7th most popular destination in the world for international students and brought Canada 8 billion dollars from the expenditures of these students. Of all the international students in Canada almost 86 percent were in the three provinces of Ontario (46%), British Columbia (29%), and Quebec (14%) (Canadian Bureau for International Education). Looking specifically at the University of Toronto, Zhou et al. (2005), says “At the University of Toronto, one of the largest universities in Canada, the largest proportion of international students comes from Mainland China, accounting to 18% of all international students from 141 countries/regions in the year 2002-2003 (p. 288).”

As will be seen, examination of the phenomenon of the Chinese learner leads to discussion of the thought and influence of a Chinese teacher and philosopher known as Confucius and additionally, to the extent that his Confucian ideas and thought have migrated and been influential
in neighboring countries/cultures, to this same type of learner in those cultures historically most influenced by China.

2.3 Geographical Sources of the Chinese Learner

The four cultures thought to be the purest examples of Confucian culture are China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan (Yum, 1994). Together these Confucian cultures supplied almost 44% of all students coming to Canadian in 2014 (Canadian Bureau for International Education).

Because Confucian culture has spread beyond the country of modern China many scholars have employed the term Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC) to refer to all learners produced by these cultures. Although the cultures of Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam are sometimes included as CHC cultures, it appears to be the strong consensus and, in fact, Yum (1994) directly asserts, that the cultures most influenced by Confucian thought (and therefore most likely to produce learners with the characteristics of the Chinese learner) are: China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. It is especially in these cultures that the thought of Confucius has been most deeply influential and it is for this reason that learners coming from them to Canadian graduate schools were selected for the present research.

2.4 Classroom Traits of the Chinese Learner and the Chinese Teacher, the meanings of speech and silence, and Other Cultural Considerations Relevant to Learner Classroom Speech

There are many traits of the Chinese model learner that contrast with learner traits expected in Canadian and Western education. Perhaps the most visible is the contrast regarding the issue of learner classroom speech. Though the goal of the present research is to dialectically examine learner classroom speech in contrasting educational models in terms of a possible synthesis model, I will briefly set my goal to the side to discuss the concept of classroom learner non-speech, sometimes described as silence.

Silence, a Result of the Confucian View of Learner Speech
The idea of rare-speaking learners can be expressed as well as interpreted in many ways. Some of the more common expressions attached to these learners are silent, reticent, passive, non-aggressive, shy, quiet, receptive, teacher dependent, rote and listener oriented. Because the most common form of expression for learner non-speech found in the literature by this researcher has been learner silence, it has been used in the title of this research and it has generally been used throughout the research.

The variety of interpretations of the significance and meaning of learner non-speech (silence) are almost as numerous as the expressions used to describe it. It appears to be a concept whose meaning varies with culture. However, it seems that the most basic area of cultural misinterpretation regarding learner silence between Western and Confucian models of education is that learner speech tends to be viewed positively and to be privileged over non-speech in Western models (Delamont, 1983; MacKinnon, 1999) whereas, in China (and cultures affected by China), learner silence (non-speech) is often seen in a positive manner (Yang & Stacy, 2003).

The idea of viewing learner silence positively can be confusing for Western educators. Ollin (2008) suggests that it is normal in the West to erroneously associate silence with an absence of something. Jaworski, (1993), on the other hand, points out that silence can actually be a symbol that signifies important states or relationships. Why the West privileges learner speech over silence no doubt involves numerous factors but Ollin (2008) argues that one possible source of the Western educational model’s tendency to privilege learner speech over silence may arise from popular learning theories in the West such as that of Vygotsky (1962) who argues that social interaction is a critical element in achieving effective cognitive activity and, in the West, social interaction means speaking.

On the other hand, what appears to be a Confucian affection for learner silence may be equally confusing to Western educators. There are, in fact, many examples in Confucian thought
that appear to favor silence over speaking. Confucius himself said: "I wish to say without speaking" (Yi, 1985, p. 133). Nevertheless, it can be argued that at least some Confucian silence is the result not so much dislike of speech or preference for silence as it is to a silence-inducing reverence of speech. According to this view, understanding the Confucian view of silence requires an understanding of the Confucian view of speaking. Chang (1997) explains that the Confucian view of speech is that it is both an indicator of the speaker’s moral development as well as a means of pursuing the speaker’s moral development. He cautions that Confucian speech should match the speaker’s internal moral status and at the same time it must also be uttered relationally so as to be in accord with the traditional politeness standards of li. Li (2012) makes the seriousness of the Confucian view of learner speech even more evident. After describing the strict conditions under which Confucian learner speech is viewed as proper, Li (2012) asserts that Confucian learners are capable of effectively using speech as a tool of learning but that they have been taught to approach speech as a tool that requires cautious and deliberate use. In the Chinese model of Li (2012), learners do not appear to disvalue speech (or to love silence) but rather they value speech too much to use it indiscriminately, especially where social disharmony could result. The result of this elevated view of speech is that they often remain silent. Li argues they have been socialized to see speech as a very special and powerful tool that must be used carefully within the context of humility, sincerity, social awareness, amity, and moral development. It can be no surprise then that learner speech often appears to be a distant second to learner listening as a learning tool in the classroom of the Confucian model. If their reverence for speech is to be interpreted by Western observers as a preference for silence, it should at least be recognized by Western observers that theirs is a silence that arises from their view of speech; one born of reverence for the use of speech as a learning tool and certainly not necessarily one symbolizing disinterest in learning.
Bruneau, (1973) says that there is no such thing as silence according to science and Schwartz (1996) argues that the concept of silence is a slippery one. Scott (1993) makes the point that few concepts are so ambiguous as the concept of silence in communications. Interpretation (and misinterpretations) of silence and its meanings in communication appear to be infinite. Various interpretations no doubt have potential implications regarding both power as well as pedagogy. However, it is not the purpose of the present research to define or fully examine each of these meanings regarding what learner silence (or, for that matter, learner speech) may signify. Though the topic is interesting and relevant and may become a focus of future research, this research seeks to pursue a dialectical exploration of educational models regarding learner speech, not a dialectical relationship of learner speech to learner silence. Therefore, for purposes of this research, a straightforward view of both classroom learner speech as well as classroom learner silence has been adopted, one that views them simply as contrasting learner vocalization approaches, both of which may (but also may not) be a means of effective learning. Ollin (2008) notes Vygotsky’s social learning theory may be the source for the Western “easy speaking” approach to learning. However, Ollin (2008) also says Vygotsky’s theory provided room for a more silent approach to learning, saying “…Vygotsky’s work also referred to a process of maturation in which cognitive development is internalized, marked by a transition from vocalized cognitive processes to ‘silent’ inner speech, where thoughts remain private and vocalization is a matter of personal choice (p. 267).” My view of both speech and silence is therefore consistent with the spirit of Vygotsky’s (1962) observation that learning may be produced either through learner vocalization or through learner silence.

The Confucian Teacher
Just as there are learner traits that contrast with those expected in the Western model of education, there are also a number of traits of the Chinese teacher model that contrast with teacher traits expected in Canadian and Western education. As will be seen, the research often reflects terms such as authoritarian, teacher-directed, and lecture-orientated to characterize the Chinese teacher. It was examination of the question of how teacher characteristics in the Confucian model might produce learner silence that led to an expansion of the scope of my literature review inquiry in this research.

The literature review of this research originally intended to focus narrowly upon the question of Chinese learner speech in the classroom in terms of why these learners seemed to frequently pursue learning with a relatively lower reliance upon classroom speech participation. However, as the research developed it became increasingly clear that isolation of the issue of learner speech was not possible. According to Shim (2008), activities in learning are inseparable from activities in teaching. In the inductive approach that characterizes qualitative research, realizing that a hint to understanding learner speech might lie in the learner relationship with teacher, the focus of the research was broadened to include not just the speaking traits of these students but also their relationships with their teachers. However, this was just the beginning of the broadening process. Further examination and analysis of the issue of Chinese learner speech soon exposed that not only characteristics of teachers might affect characteristics of learner speech. Instead, an army of additional considerations were exposed that could arguably be relevant and important in affecting learner speech. For example, might learner speech be affected by the fact that two educational models had a different purpose (self-perfecting verses understanding)? By the fact that they employed different motivations (different mixes of extrinsic/intrinsic)? By the fact that they utilized different learner strategies (deep versus shallow)? By the fact that one education model was embedded in a culture that emphasized social hierarchy with vertical respect norms and
precise linguistic indicators of social status together with a near reverence for semi-filial teacher/father figures? By the fact that one education model was embedded in a culture highly concerned with social harmony? By the fact that one educational model saw education as being serious and sober and being long and hard and tedious and to be achieved in shovel by shovel manner? By the fact that one educational model grew out of and reflected a social view of society as a collective organism representing a maze of social positions with each person in each position to have protected “face” but each also being constantly held in the social maze through a powerful sense of shame?

As the complexity of the seemingly simple question of learner speech in the Chinese educational model was progressively unpacked, it became increasingly clear that the focus of this research would have to be broadened far beyond any simple direct focus on learner speech-related traits. It was as a part of this much broader focus on learner speech that the Analects of Confucius came to be examined in the hope of using it as a starting point to identify the now much broadened examination of the speech traits of the Chinese learner.

It appeared to be agreed by all that the present Chinese learner model has much of its origin in the ideas of a Chinese figure known as Confucius (551-479 BCE) and his followers. It further seems agreed that his ideas have been a permanent and repeating influence in Chinese culture and education though, to be sure, his influence has been greater at some periods than at others. Cheng (1985) assures us that the ideas of Confucius together with those of his disciple, Mencius, have “dominated the educational life of Chinese, Korean and Japanese peoples in the past thousand years (p. 198)” and that “The respect for him of the Chinese people is shown in his title: Wan-shih Shih-piao (the teacher of all ages) (p. 197). Furthermore, Zhong (2013), in looking specifically at the Chinese culture and its educational values, says:
If one is to characterize in one word the Chinese way of education for the last two millennia, the word would be ‘Confucius’ (about 551BC-479BC). No other individual in Chinese history has so deeply influenced the life and thought of his people, as a teacher, an educationist, a philosopher, a political theorist and creative interpreter of the ancient culture, and as a molder in the Chinese character (p. 2).”

Going further, De Bary et al (1960) asserted that Confucius and his ideas are not only deeply embedded in the Chinese culture but that his ideas have come to be in some fundamental way what it means to be Chinese:

For Confucianism, since the time of its general acceptance, has been more than a creed to be pressed or rejected; it has become an inseparable part of the society and thought of the nation as a whole. It is fundamental to what it means to be a Chinese, as the Confucian classics are not the canon of a particular sect but the literary heritage of a whole people (p. 15).

In cultures so influenced by Confucian thought it would be expected that social institutions of the importance of education would be also powerfully affected and that education and its goals, values, and approaches in Asia would develop significant differences from those of other cultures. Kim (2005) appears to confirm this expectation writing that “Educational systems grow from cultural expectations and ideologies and that Eastern and Western educational systems are as vastly different as the cultures they spring from… (p. 337).”

Differences in educational values and approaches of the Chinese as compared to the West have been noted for many years and they have been suspected to be much more than mere challenges of language. Twenty-five years ago, in considering the learning challenges of Asian students in Western higher education, Radcliffe (1989) noted that Asian students in higher education in the West are “eager to learn, but there seems to be a struggle in their learning that goes beyond mastering the English language.” He further noted that guest instructors and missionaries coming back from Asia frequently spoke of difficulty in teaching and communicating in the Far East, and concluded that “it seems that there is a concern for teaching and learning by Asians with teachers and learners alike. (p. 215).”
Though two and a half millennia have passed since the Analects were written, much of the core of Confucian thought continues to trace to it. Its meaning has been read and studied and debated endlessly by scholars, and this continues even today. Though scholars have speculated regarding the role of Confucius in other Confucian related works, it seems that the only agreed upon literary work that was clearly written by Confucius was the Analects though only portions of it are thought to have certainly come from him. Wei (1947) confidently concluded: “Confucius’ teachings are to be found in the Analects. Outside of this book we are on precarious ground as to authenticity” (p. 46). Therefore, to begin an exploration of the educational environment, both within formal educational institutions as well as in the general culture(s) of the Chinese learner model as it may impact learner speech, it seems appropriate to begin with an examination of the Analects.

2.5 Confucius and the Analects

Tu (1998a) informs us that Confucianism does not start with Confucius. Instead the term Confucianism (Ju-chia in the Chinese) literally means “the family of scholars (p.4),” referring to a scholarly tradition which dated back two thousand years before Confucius when, according to Chinese legend, two Kings, known as Yao and Shun, formed a community based upon their teaching. Tu (1998a) explains that Confucius dreamed of a great harmony that was supposed to exist in the golden age of Yao and Shun but took a more recent figure as his hero known as the Duke of Chou (d. 1004 B.C.) who had enabled the Chou dynasty to enjoy peace and prosperity for more than five centuries. By Confucius’s time the social system had experienced technological events such as iron working, agriculture and coinage and, though they brought about great economic advancement, these advancements also were perceived to have brought a great moral decline. For many centuries Confucius was viewed as only one of the philosophers in this “family of scholars” tradition and it was to take generations before his followers brought his ideas to a
point of dominant intellectual force in China. Tu (1998a) described the Confucian present dominance by saying

Confucianism has sometimes been viewed as a philosophy and sometimes as a religion. As an all-encompassing humanism that neither denies nor slights Heaven, it is not only the faith and creed of the Chinese scholars but a way of life in East Asia; so deeply ingrained in the fabric of society and polity that it is often taken for granted as naturally human. East Asians may profess themselves to be Shintoists, Taoists, Buddhists, Muslims, or Christians, but rarely, if ever, do they cease to be Confucians (p. 5).

2.6 The Life and Thought of Confucius

Tu (1998a) outlines the historical facts regarding the life of Confucius in a straightforward way. He was born in the twenty-second year of the reign of Duke Hsiang of Lu (551 B.C.), in the state of Lu in modern Shantung Providence. His family name was K’ung and his personal name was Ch’iu although he has been called Master K’ung throughout Chinese history. His father died when he was three and his mother was his first instructor. He married at nineteen and had a son at twenty. He excelled in the six arts of ritual, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy and arithmetic, and because he showed unusual skill in poetry and history he was enabled to begin a brilliant teaching career in his 30s.

Slingerland (2013), noting that much of our traditional knowledge regarding Confucius’ life comes from a biography written by Sima Qain, observed of it that much “clearly consists of legend and literary invention” and recommends that “so little can be known for sure that it seems best to stick to whatever facts we might glean from the Analects itself (p. xx).” His “gleaning” of the Analects supplements Tu’s (1998a) description by adding that “Confucius was clearly a native of Lu (18:2), of humble economic background (9:6), and seems to have been a member of the scholar-official (shi) class, the lowest of the lowest of the three classes of public office holders (p.xx).” Though the personal life of Confucius appears to have been largely lost in the mist of history his thought and that of his followers has had a much more verifiable and recorded impact.
Following the advice of Slingerland (2013) to glean the Analects as the means of tracing the principles and thought of Confucius, this research will examine the Analects as the source most likely to have come from him. Thereafter, the historical development of Confucian thought from the time of Confucius to the present will be given a brief examination and finally, contemporary research literature regarding what has come to be known as the “Chinese Learner” will be reviewed regarding those principles that might relate to learner use of speech. Again, to represent that this review covers more than the shallowest layer of Confucian thought would be naive and childish. Instead, this review of literature and history is humbly offered for the purpose of giving background and context for better understanding the past environments that have produced the educational values and attitudes of the 18 East Asian graduate students who were the participants of this research.

2.7 The Analects (His own words)

A smallest scratch of the surface of scholarly analysis of Confucius reveals almost indescribable depth as well as disagreement. Slingerland (2003, p. xiii) writes that the first discussion of the Analects as a text was by Pan Gu (32-92 A.D.) in a work known as History of the Han and that at that time three versions of the Analects were discussed that differed in both the content as well as the number of books from the Analects of today and that none of these versions exist today. Slingerland (2003) bases his translation of the Analects upon what he calls an eclectic version of an earlier disappeared eclectic version that was assembled by He Yan (190-249 A.D.) Though Slingerland (2003) acknowledges that recent scholars such as Brooks and Brooks (1998) see the Analects “as an extremely heterogeneous collection of different (and in many cases competing) viewpoints”, he argues that theirs is a speculative view and states that he prefers the approach offered by D.C. Lau (1979) that recognizes the Analects as a collection of work from different time periods that is somewhat heterogeneous but that “…treats the work as more or less
thematically homogeneous (p. xiv).” This research uses the translation of the Analects of Slingerland as its primary source in examining the Analects.

Starr (2012), as well as Wei (1947), reflect that contemporary scholarship believe that the Analects (Lunyu in Chinese) represent “the single work which is attributed with some confidence to Confucius (p. 9).” He describes the Analects as “a series of aphoristic responses to questions from his disciples (p. 9)” and notes that they, together with the work of Mencius as well as two sections from a writing called the Classic of Rites (known as the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean), were put together by Confucian scholar Zhu Xi (1130-1200 C.E.). During the Song dynasty (1027-221 BCE) these were combined to form what was known as the Four Books and it was these documents that became the main texts of Confucian philosophy that young men were required to memorize and learn to qualify for civil service positions in government during the Ming (1368-1644 C. E.) and Qin (1644-1911 C.E.) dynasties of China.

Fingarette (1972), unlike Starr (2012), gradually came to see the Analects as much more than a set of aphoristic sayings and wrote of Confucius and his Analects the following:

When I began to read Confucius, I found him to be a prosaic and parochial moralizer; his collected sayings, the Analects, seemed to me an archaic irrelevance. Later, and with increasing force, I found him a thinker with profound insight and with an imaginative vision of man equal in grandeur to any I know. Increasingly, I have become convinced that Confucius can be a teacher to us today—a major teacher, not one who merely gives us a slightly exotic perspective on the ideas already current. He tells us things not being currently said elsewhere; things that need to be said (p. vii).

If, as Kim (2005) asserts, educational systems are reflections of underlying social cultural systems, an examination of the Analects suggests a social world view much different from that of the West. My personal examination of the Analects made by identifying selected portions of it thought to be possibly relevant to learner speech (see appendix A) was then organized under general educational themes (see appendix B.) that I encountered in the Analects. This process
yielded the following picture of the educational and social environment seemingly envisioned by Confucius.

2.8 Love of Learning

At the very heart of Confucius’s education is a positive attitude about learning. If students can come to love learning, then student learning motivation becomes intrinsic. If students’ human learning models (teachers) are those that love learning then student love of learning is encouraged and if ever there was a man that loved learning, Confucius loved learning. One of the significant themes that emerges in reading the Analects is that of the superior man’s love of learning. He loves discussing (speech) what he has learned with friends (1:1). His love of learning is so strong that he pursues learning from all sources both superior and inferior (5:15). He measures his standing and worth not by what he knows but by the degree of his love for knowing (5:28). He evaluates his students not by their knowledge or even their performance but by the sole standard of their love for learning (6:3). He seeks learning for his own improvement rather than as a badge of honor to be seen by others (14:25). He cherishes the knowledge his learning has already delivered to him while he simultaneously longs for what it has not yet but will deliver (19:5). Finally, he (Confucius) says that if given additional life he would use it to study (learn) in order to become perfect (7:16).

2.9 Difficulty of Learning

Though learning is loved and though it is described as pleasant in the Analects (1:1), it is not the result of spontaneous child-like or casual, instinctual following of one’s natural curiosity. If such were the case, it would seem natural for learners to speak out without inhibition. However, learning as described in the Analects makes it clear that such was not the case. Instead, learning is seen as a process of slow shovel by shovel building of a mountain that requires choice and determination by the learner (9:18). It is a process that requires seriousness and gravity in implementing it (1:8), and it requires an earnestness that acts as though the learner may not succeed
in learning and, if he does, may lose at any time what he has learned (8:17).

What educational values account for such a love for a process that is described as being so serious and so hard? Many cultures speak of valuing learning but when the learning gets hard or boring or tedious many learners in these cultures fail to persist. Something made the Confucian love of learning mean more than just a shallow cultural affection for or superficial interest in learning or a mere need to orally express a love for learning. That something constituted what might be viewed in the West as a religious-like motivation to work toward a goal, a goal of great importance and value that was central to what it meant to be fully human and one that placed a premium on doing rather than merely saying.

2.10 The Goal of Learning: *Jen* (sometimes translated as *Ren*) and the *Dao*

The almost inhuman level of love for learning encouraged by the Analects appears to be produced by an almost but not quite divine level of love for *jen*, something viewed as benevolence or virtue or righteousness in one’s relations with others as well as love for movement or progression along the path which these qualities were thought to be achieved; a path called the *Dao*.

Yan (2011) suggested that a central question for Confucian ethics and learning is the issue of how we ought to treat others and that the concept of *jen* is the dominant metaphor Confucius used in discussing the issue. Wei (1947) in discussing *jen*, suggested that it be translated as “the virtue of perfect humanity (p. 60).” Yan (2011) says that although Confucius acknowledged a spirit world, the world most real for Confucius was the human world, the world of human relationships. Furthermore, Yan (2011) asserted that the threads of this relational, human social world were reflected in the models of the social positions of king and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother and friend and friend and that it was this social world of relationships that “determines whether one lives a happy and fulfilled life or not (p. 70).” Yan
(2011) asserted that *ren (jen)* referred to a right or good or benevolent or human relationship between two persons that started in the family relationships and then properly radiated out to all social relationships of the whole of society and that “The meaning of life for Confucius, then, lay in the intricate relationships through which one assumes multiple roles in society (p. 70).”

Unlike Jesus, Confucius’ focus was not upon a good afterlife. Instead, for Confucius, the goal was, through learning, to move along the *dao* toward a collective set of good, human social relations (*jen*) covering all social roles and positions in society. By such movement along the *dao*, Yan (2011) says that, “Indeed, one who is capable of doing this well is regarded as ‘having the way’ and being in harmony with the general pattern that guides heaven, earth, and humanity. What seems secular is, in fact, sacred (p. 70).” Wei (1947) explains the point of Confucian thought being oriented to a secular, social world in saying:

> But according to the Confucian conception, the self always has a social significance. Man is, and must be, related to his fellow-men and to society before he can be a man. He is born into a network of social relations. The end of self-cultivation is to get the family regulated, the state well-governed, and to give tranquility and peace to the whole world (p. 76).

Tsai (2001) also called the idea of *jen* the central idea of Confucian ethics explaining that perfecting of self is done only within the context of a variety of others. This pursuit of self-perfection through learning can only take place through relationships with others. Unlike the Confucian notion of development of self that is meaningless without reference to others, Qin (2008) argued that the American, Western notion of self was one that focused more on the individual, saying “It’s clear that the image of the self-reliant and transcendent individual has become much a part of American thought and ideology” (p. 15). On the contrary, Qin (2008) explained the Confucian notion of self as beings that were part of a social matrix or web, saying “Confucius considered individuals to be linked in a web of social relations” (p. 16). According to
Qin (2009) each individual strives toward *ren* but does so through interaction, not isolation, with others. Qin says (2009),

> To involve the other in one’s own self-construction is not only altruistic; it is required for one’s own self-development. Authentic self-growth is not only a broadening process but also a deepening process. As I myself resonate with other selves, the inherent resources within me are multiplied. I acquire an appreciation of myself through genuine communication with others; as I know more of myself, I apprehend more of the other” (p. 17).

Qin (2009) showed the contrast between the Confucian pursuit of learning to achieve a *ren* self, compared to the Western notion of development of an autonomous self by quoting Tu (1985) who said, “Ironically, in the Confucian tradition, the more individualistic and narcissistic one is, the less one is a ‘self’ (cited in Qin, p. 17).” Yan (2011) also illuminated the Confucian goal of learning in saying that “…a careful examination of the text of the Analects reveals that the whole of Confucius’s teaching is orientated toward a higher level of knowledge about virtue and *Dao* (p. 50).”

Though this learning pursuit of virtue (*ren*) and *Dao* might or might not lead to material benefits, the learner was not to be concerned about such benefits (4:9). However, Confucius did believe that this pursuit should bring about a quality of *jue* (awareness) on the part of the learner regarding the multiple positions in society and how the proper role in each of these multiple positions should be performed virtuously with sensitivity as well as with a quality of *zhi* (wisdom or knowledge) that enabled the learner to implement the roles in a manner that was appropriate in the culture.

From the Confucian perspective, the learner’s goal is to become *ren* and thus more benevolent and fully human, but human in an interactive sense. The learner’s movement toward *ren* is a function of movement along the *dao* and, fortunately (for those that aspire to *ren* and humanness), all learners are seen by the Analects as having roughly the same ability to travel the
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dao and to thereby move increasingly toward self-perfection. (7:7) Such movement provided individual learners with the same personal benefits of increasing self-perfection but, as envisioned by Confucius, it was also seen to move mankind collectively toward a secular heaven of social tranquility and peace.

Because learning was believed to lead to both personal self-perfection as well as toward a social, collective benefit of tranquility and peace it was natural that learners developed a strong and durable learning commitment and a love for learning that would withstand great hardship and/or discouragement.

2.11 Ren, Dao, and Tradition (Li)

If learning led to ren or humanness as well as its personal and collective benefits, what then was the nature of the learning that Confucius recommended and what did this learning mean for the idea of learner speech? The answer appears to be that learners were first to learn and then to properly act (as opposed to speak) upon the rules and practices of proper social interaction as handed down in the form of the collective wisdom previously accumulated by the culture. This traditional collective wisdom regarding proper human interaction covered most social interaction and was called li in the Analects. Shun (2002), in discussing li, writes:

Ren仁 (humanness, goodness) and li 禮 (rites) are two concepts central to Confucius’ ethical thinking as reported in the Analects (Lunyu論語). The former refers to the ethical ideal, and the latter to certain traditional norms that govern human conduct... The character ‘li’ originally referred to rites of sacrifice but, even before the time of Confucius, its scope of application had expanded to include other things, such as norms governing polite behavior (p. 53).

Shun (2002) notes that both yi (good form) as well as jing (reverence) are included within the concept of li, and that li particularly applies to conduct between persons in stratified social positions, saying:
Li is related to norms of conduct that govern those in a higher and those in a lower position, to proper ways of governing a state, and to the proper relations between rulers and ministers, fathers and sons, older and younger brothers, husbands and wives, and mothers and daughters-in-law. Proper observance of li is supposed to be the basis for an orderly society...(p. 54).

In the Analects, the ideal of virtue (jen) is frequently described as the goal of learning and movement toward this goal is described as movement along the dao. The purpose of man is to be virtuous and upright (6-19). Confucius wished to be virtuous (7-30). The superior man measured gain not in money but in righteousness (16-10). The scholar is conversant with righteousness (4-16) and he pursues virtue, does not abandon it (4-5) and does not stray from it (6-20). The learning goal is virtue (4-16) and any substantial period of learning has the effect of making one good (8-12). Moreover, by acting upon his knowledge, the learner moves further along a path toward ren. This path or the dao, is described by Yan (2011) as a divine order “that exists behind the disorderly human world (p. 23).”

Although the secular, this-world, collective social heaven of peace and stability envisioned by Confucius might not seem as motivating as the eternal mansions promised by Christianity, Yan (2011) explained that through restraining one’s individual desires and cultivating ren and thereby moving along the path of dao there were great personal benefits to be received in this life, saying:

Confucius believed that people can cultivate themselves to such a degree that they can remain unworried...Because the ren person possesses sensitivity to his or her role in human relationships, such a one can always follow proper ritual behavior and remain calm. Because the ren person is sensitive to forces beyond his control, he or she can accept whatever comes, including illness and death (pp. 77-78).

It seems that ren is concerned mostly with development of an inner humanness and benevolence toward others in society while li is the process of following traditionally prescribed interaction patterns by which in our conduct we can transmit and communicate our ren feelings externally to others. However, no matter how far the individual moves along the path of dao toward
becoming a ren person there is always a bit of the personal ego that can threaten to make human interaction rough and inharmonious. By learning to interact according to the ritual practices, attitudes and manners prescribed by li, mankind can not only avoid the threat to interpersonal harmony, but individuals can also develop personal ren through allowing these interaction practices of li to become part of one’s ever developing self. Yan (2011) expresses the idea most wonderfully:

As long as one retains the self, or ego, in interactions with other people, ren cannot reach its full measure. In other words, the self may cause one’s inherent sensitivity to other people’s feelings to become dulled, adversely affecting that self-centered person as a true being. In order to prevent this from happening, li is introduced, through which a person is able to control himself in every action. At the same time, li is a humanizing instrument, as well. One who participates in li does not feel like an automaton; rather, one feels that one is part of a whole, like a member of an orchestra. Indeed, this music metaphor captures well the essence of Confucius’s teaching. Being a great musician himself, Confucius understood the meaning of living in a harmonious and authentic way (p. 105).

The ren person, through practice of li, becomes a harmonious member of the cultural collective orchestra while yet retaining individual control as he/she moves through the different hierarchical social positions of the collective. Each individual part of the orchestra remains unique, yet it is to blend harmoniously into the heavenly perfection of the whole society. It is a moving vision for those socialized in Confucian principles.

2.12 Vertical Stratification with Horizontal Limitations to be Learned

A jen driven learning system seeking to achieve a secular personal contentment as well as a collective, secular social heaven to be achieved through the proper application of traditional rules of propriety (li) with an attitude of proper interpersonal reverence (yìng) and form (yi) as the learner moves further along the dao toward increasing self-perfection would be viewed as a curious model for education in the West. However, the educational system suggested by Confucian thought becomes even more curious when we consider the social environment within which Confucius sets
this educational model. At the heart of this social environment of the Confucius learner is a hierarchical set of five reciprocal, vertical social positions each of which has horizontal limitations in terms of the loyalty required by an individual in the position.

2.13 Five Cardinal Vertical Social Positions and Their Loyalty Limits

Hwang (1999) argued that Confucians, unlike Christians, did not envision an exterior creator that stood outside of creation and created the universe. Instead, he explained that the Confucian view saw creation as a much more impersonal result of the interaction of conflicting, yet complimentary, forces that took place within the most fundamental force of the universe, the dao. These forces (known as yin and yang) were represented as Heaven and Earth. Using the metaphor of human sexuality and reproduction, the Confucians saw Heaven and Earth as the parents of all creation and envisioned a social system that would include a Way (dao) of Earth that would duplicate the Way (dao) of Heaven. Hwang (1999) explained the Confucian view of creation by saying:

Heaven and Earth exist; all [material] things exist. After all, [material] things existed, there came male and female. From the existence of male and female there came husband and wife. From husband and wife there came father and son. From father and son there came ruler and minister. From ruler and minister there came high and low. When [the distinction of] high and low existed, the arrangements of propriety and righteousness came into existence (I-Ching as cited in Hwang, p. 166).

Hwang (1999) explained that the Confucian notion of creation illustrates how the way of the human social system represented the way of heaven and earth (one of descending verticalness) by saying:

The universe was composed of Heaven and Earth, corresponding to yang and yin. When males and females came into existence creating a social world, their unification gave birth to a second generation, providing grounds for constructing social relationships between father and son, and sovereign and subordinates. Arrangement of social relationships between self and others (the Way of Humanity) corresponds to the Way of Heaven. Only individuals who follow the Way of Humanity are qualified to be persons (p. 166).
The Way (dao) of Earth, as included in the Confucian social system, was not only concerned with the verticalness of social positions in general. Instead, it provided five specific cardinal dyadic vertical relationships around which all human relations were to relate. It also developed suggested proper roles of behavior for each of these social positions based on considerations of ren (benevolence), li (propriety), yi (form or righteousness) and jang (reverence). Hwang (1999), quotes a classical Confucian work to illustrate these five cardinal social positions and their reciprocal social obligations:

What are the things which humans consider righteous (yi)? Kindness on the part of the father, and filial duty on that of the son; gentleness on the part of the elder brother, and obedience on that of the younger; righteousness on the part of the husband, and submission on that of the wife; kindness on the part of the elders, and deference on that of juniors; benevolence on the part of the ruler, and loyalty on that of the minister. These are the ten things which humans consider to be right (Li Chi & Li Yun as cited in Hwang, p. 169).

Having identified the five central vertical related social positions around which the way of humanity was to be constructed as well as their rights and duties of these positions in relation to others, Hwang (1999) describes their vertical significance, saying:

The passage above, which does not include a reference to relationships between friends, promotes the idea that social interaction should follow the principle of respecting the superior. In accordance with the idea of “the ten things of righteousness (yi),” persons who assume the roles of father, elder brother, husband, elders, or ruler should make decisions in line with the principles of kindness, gentleness, righteousness, kindness, and benevolence respectively. And for those who assume the roles of son, younger brother, wife, juniors, or minister, the principles of filial duty, obedience, submission, deference, loyalty and obedience to the instructions of the former group apply (p. 169).

Following his explanation of the vertical nature of relationships in the Confucian Way (dao) of Earth as well as their source, Hwang (1999) then turned to discussion of the limits of obligations within these relationships. He argued that the Confucian view of family is derived from consideration of the human physical body saying it is the source of Confucian ideas of filial piety
and that family members are viewed as being parts of one body making them especially strong and binding:

Each role in the family represents a distinct part of the human body, and together they constitute an inseparable entity. The Confucian configuration of ethical arrangements within a family also corresponds to the body structure. The up-and-down relationship between head and feet refers to the superior and inferior positions of father and son… Children’s bodies originate from their parents’, just as the four limbs stem from the body (p. 170).

Because relationships beyond the family (non-family relations) are seen as less organic (disconnected to the body) in relation to an individual, Hwang (1999) explains that these relations diminish in terms of intensity and loyalty as the distance from family increases, saying “The Confucian ethical system is based not only on the principle of respecting the superior, but also on favoring the intimate (p. 170).” Another way of expressing his idea might be to say that the Confucian ethical system includes a balance between the vertical considerations and filial (family) considerations of an individual’s duties and obligations and this balance sets intimacy in relationship to family members as higher and over and above obligations to strangers.

The implications for learner speech and education in formal educational institutions that function in cultural atmospheres so strongly influenced by ideas of vertical social relations such as the five cardinal relationships of Confucianism and the more intense social environment of filial piety are endless in the ways they may affect the Confucian influenced classroom. With both teachers and students having been socialized in these values, what are the classroom educational characteristics of such a social environment in terms of student speech in the classroom, in terms of encouragement of innovative, creative, independent and forward orientated student thinking, in terms of teaching roles/styles, and in terms of educational pedagogical methods? Hwang (1999) illuminates the role of learners and teachers in this educational system as they pursue learning through self-cultivation and movement along the dao, saying:
Confucians developed a delicate set of methods for self-cultivation. They advocated that everyone from the emperor to ordinary people maintain the five social relationships by the five cardinal rules. Methods of self-cultivation included diligently learning the Way of Humanity, practicing it earnestly, and having a sense of shame when one’s conduct deviated from it…Confucian education consists mainly of instruction on its ethical system. It is based on practical rather than theoretical reason. Unlike theoretical reason, practical reason is aimed at constructing knowledge on the basis of a person’s empirical experience (p. 171).

For both teachers and learners there was an obligation to progress along the path of the dao toward ren but this movement was to recognize the external cultural structure of Confucian principles in society. To illustrate the depth and seriousness of this obligation to learn and move toward ren, Hwang (1999) quotes the powerful urging of Jsun Tze who said:

Sincerely put forth effort, and you will progress. Study until death and do not stop before, for the art of study occupies the whole of one’s life. To arrive at its purpose, you cannot stop for an instant. To do this is to be human; to stop is to be a bird or beast (Hsun Tze as cited in Hwang, p. 171).

2.14 **The Junzi: The Teacher/Conductor in the Opera of Confucian Education**

Yan (2011) explained that when Confucius discussed concepts such as ren, li, yi, etc., he did not do so solely for the sake of their theoretical significance. Instead, his primary goal in encouraging learning was to produce true human representations and examples of them; human models whose lives and conduct represented them. The name for such men who had lived out these principles as examples and models varied but the most common name for those who had learned and, more importantly, displayed these values was junzi. According to Yan (2011), the junzi was not the highest level of human moral development nor the level that had advanced most along the road of the dao. Instead, the highest level of development was the shengren or the sage. However, the shengren level of development was thought to be rarely seen in human history while the junzi was a level which ordinary persons could hope to achieve with much hard work and learning. Noting further that the junzi is a term that is interchangeable with a number of other terms (benevolent man, good man, worthy man, complete man, great man), Yan (2011) said that
“Broadly speaking, *junzi* occupies a central position in the social dimension of Confucius’s thought (p. 107).” In so many respects, it is the *junzi* position that represents both the social goal of ren achievement (learning) as well as the social transmitter of Confucian thought (teacher) and it is in this sense of transmitter that *junzi* represents the Confucian version of the Western concept of teacher.

If we combine Confucius himself (he did not claim to be higher than *junzi*) as well as references to one of the numerous terms for *junzi* (for example, the exemplary man), there is much in the Analects regarding the characteristics, values, and teaching approaches of the *junzi*, all of which, according to Shim (2008), have implications for learning characteristics. He teaches with a seriousness and gravity (2: 20) and a degree of constraint about how far he will pursue learning in the student who fails to learn (7:8) yet he offers instruction to learners of all social classes (15:37) and retains a distance from all students so as to avoid favoritism (16:13), even as he teaches with candor and openness and even intimacy with his students (7-24) whom he teaches out of a sense of love and duty (14:8). He is a knowledgeable person who is tireless in teaching (7:2) who has personally walked far along the *dao* yet his modesty lowers his speech to be sure it does not exceed his conduct (14: 29 and 17: 14). Because he desires his learner’s (student’s) progress he demands strictness (14:8) but he is a person whose gravity can be broken with laughter when appropriate (14:14). He is precise but not rigid (15:36) and he holds a special tenderness in his heart for youthful learners but also expects progress from them (9:22) and is critical of youth who fail to recognize their proper place in society (14:47). He is a careful, orderly, skilled and organized teacher (9:10) whose thinking is open-minded and without preconceptions (9:4), whose humility compels him to be willing to learn from anyone (5:15), whose speech is carefully accurate (13:3), and who represents characteristics of mildness, majesty, and respect before his students. As a teacher, he expects his students to make the choice to accept a point by point challenge and duty
of becoming a true person (9:18), to think (2:25) and to seek unity in knowledge (15:2) rather than just memorizing facts, to constantly have an attitude of questioning (15:15), with even the courage and willingness to respectfully oppose their own teacher when virtue requires it (15:35), to sharpen their learning tools to achieve virtue (15:9), and to listen carefully always observing mannerisms of others with humility (12:20). Finally, the junzi is to have a special ability to judge and advise learners in their learning journey along the dao by virtue of his own experiences as one who has journeyed far along the dao (6:30) himself, and to motivate learners through his own example of learning rather than through threats or punishments (12:19).

2.15 The Junzi Relationship with the Chinese Learner and its Relevance to Student Speech

Li and Du (2013), report that the difficulties of reconstructing the teacher-student relationship in schools in China in the direction of greater student speech participation is a challenging process because it is a relationship dependent upon a dominant view pervading the Chinese culture rather than simply a characteristic of what happens in the formal school educational context. Acknowledging that the traditional teacher-student relationship in China is one of teacher dominance and student obedience, Li and Du (2013) note that

However, the emphasis on the teacher’s directive role in pedagogical practices can also be attributed to China’s special ethical and cultural tradition and...the relationship...is not purely pedagogical, but also involves a series of ethical, emotional, and managerial decisions. From the viewpoint of the students, conforming to the teacher’s direction and guidance is regarded as being of great virtue because it is in accord with the Chinese traditional ethical system which aims to maintain social order and harmony (p. 81).

In other words, the role of the Chinese student is to conform to the Chinese directive teacher and the implication is that significant student speech in the classroom might threaten the traditional Chinese ethical system that aims to preserve classroom peace and social order.

Not only is the position of the junzi highly elevated in Confucian thought but it is a position that fuses in some ways with another highly elevated set of social relations, that of the family. It
is clear that the Confucian tradition regarding filial, family piety has become absorbed in the different but similar relation that Confucian learners are to have with their teachers. The semi-filial nature of the relationship between learners and their teachers in the Chinese educational model is well captured by the following explanation of Li and Du (2013):

The relations between the teacher and the students are embedded in the ethical framework regulated by *li*. In general, the teacher-student relationship should be similar to that between father and son; as a popular Chinese saying states, ‘he who has been your teacher for one day can be regarded as your father for your whole life.’ In this sense the teacher is placed at the same position as the father in the society’s ethical framework, which implies that the students should conform to their teachers’ direction and guidance...when the teacher has instructed a student, the student should take him as his teacher in all educational or non-educational settings throughout his life. Therefore, the dignity of the teacher is quite important for the society (pp. 82-83).

No doubt teachers in the West are today respected somewhat but seldom are they actually expected to have the characteristics and virtue and elevated social position of the superior man or *junzi* described in the Analects. It is possible that religious schools of the West may produce teachers with a desire for *ren* somewhat similar to that expected of the junzi/superior man in the Analects. However, as noted by Yan (2011), unlike Christianity, the Analects do not depend upon a traditionally sacred source of motivation to encourage a love of learning. Instead, the Analects are only “almost” divine in their encouragement toward righteousness. Instead, the Analects practice what is a cautious and a polite secularism where Confucius rarely mentions the other-world and when it is mentioned, he suggests worship in the form of a cautious respect and avoidance of things that are strange and unknowable (2:16), advising that life must be known before seeking to know of death (11:11) and cautioning that if one offends heaven then there is no place for appeal in times of trouble (3:13). Instead of an anthropomorphic God that demands virtue and instead of a direct concern on the part of a learner with an afterlife, virtue in the Analects comes through learning and the motivation behind learning as described in the Analects is that it
leads to a this-life, secular virtue, righteousness, and benevolence that enables one to appropriately love others in each of society’s social positions. Acquiring this virtue of ren or benevolence or humanness and then properly living and applying it is the motivation behind the love of learning we find in Confucianism. Yan (2011) sums this in saying:

A careful examination of the text of the Analects reveals that the whole of Confucius’s teaching is orientated about a higher level of knowledge about virtue and Dao. Though the knowledge of virtue and the Way is metaphysical and elusive, one can approach it through learning (p. 50).

2.16 Summary of the Analects

Confucianism as it emerges from the Analects and as it may form and shape traditional educational thought and learner speech in the four selected Confucian influenced cultures of East Asia included in this research appears to be a system that emphasizes tradition (li) in its orientation, is energized by a love for learning and self-cultivation that is motivated by the pursuit of ren, that is empirical in the sense that it is based upon the learner’s personal life experience as he or she moves along the dao, that views learning as a hard, long and serious process, that is dominated by a vertically stratified, filial influenced, transmitter/teacher-dominant model that includes a student orientation of admiration and respect and that, though inviting and expecting thought and questioning in some circumstances, does not appear to be completely inconsistent with a significant learner silence which possibly could appear and be interpreted to be passivity.

Lee (1996) says that “…close scrutiny of the Analects reveals that the term ‘learning’ pervades the whole literature, thus qualifying it to be called a book of learning (p. 27).” However, from the perspective of Western learning, the Analects has relatively little that directly addresses learner speech as well as relatively little that casts speech as unqualifiedly positive. Instead, in the Analects we encounter speech sentiments of the following nature: Fine words not virtuous (1:3); what good the tongue? (5:5); principled conduct is heard, lecture is not (5:13); hear much, speak
cautiously (2:18); act first and speak through acts (2:13); men of virtue are slow of speech (12:3); speak humbly or you cannot carry out your words (14:21); clever words disrupt virtue (15:26); speak only enough to make a point (15:40); friendship with the glib-tongued is dangerous (16:4); heaven is silent; and the example of Confucius who said he preferred to avoid speech (17:18). Tsai (2016) writes of Chinese learners saying: “They have been socialized to see speech as a very special, powerful tool that must be used carefully within the context of humility, sincerity, social awareness, amity, and always, always as the lesser half of a listening/speaking two-part team (p. 8).”

Finally, it is important to remember that though the educational principles of the Analects were formally taught in the Chinese culture, they were also informally absorbed through general cultural socialization even when individuals were unaware of formal Confucian doctrine. The Confucian secular motivation that produced the degree of respect for learning, for junzi, for hierarchical position, for ren, for li, for filial obligation, for the difficulty and seriousness of the challenge of movement along the dao, and for social harmony was not just the result of formal Confucian education. Instead, it was a cultural ethic that got absorbed into the natural fabric of the Chinese culture. As explained by Yan (2011), learning as envisioned by Confucius was an educational process that arose out of values deeply buried in the culture and required little or no formal reference to Confucius or even to formal education:

In the agricultural society of traditional China most people were farmers, and stayed in a particular area and functioned in a stable social network. When children were born, parents and relatives in the social network treated them as the continuation of the family. The parents (especially the mother) took care of them, satisfied their needs, and bathed them with benevolence. When children reached the age of five or six years old, parents believed children were able to understand social affairs, began to teach them the norm for being a person (righteousness), and required them to be polite to their seniors (propriety). As the children grew older, adults in the family might teach them various aspects of social intelligence (wisdom), especially keeping promises to friends (trustworthiness). Growing up in this type of cultural milieu, an individual’s pattern of social interaction with others in the social network
would likely be congruent with Confucian ethics, even if that person never received any formal education in Confucianism (p. 173).

It seems that the Chinese educational learner model regarding learner speech is as much the product of the culture as of the formal doctrines of the Analects as practiced in formal educational institutions both in China as well as in the other three cultures to which it is thought to have migrated.

### 2.17 Summary of the Period Between the Analects and Present, Modern Research

For the next 25 centuries, Confucianism, its doctrines, and, no doubt, the educational learner model it represents, stretched and contracted. Tu (1998) compacts the influence of some of the major Confucian disciples. He says Mencius’ (371-289 B. C.) idealism and belief in the goodness of man rendered the hierarchical power of rulers more humane. He notes that following Mencius, the cynicism of Hsun Tzu (298-238 B. C.) who believed that man was evil, initiated a counter-movement emphasizing greater control of individuals by the group. Later, Tu (1998) notes that Tung Chung-shu (179-104 B. C.), contributed an organic view of Confucianism which saw man and nature interrelated with the cosmos. After the period of disunity and decline that followed the Han period (206 B.C. to 220 A.D), during the Sui (581-618) and the T’ang (618-907) periods Tu (1998) says the practice of making Confucian study the path to political employment began. Finally, during the period of the Ming dynasty, Tu (1998) notes that it was Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529 A. D.) who advocated a return to emphasizing the moral idealism of Mencius where men self-perfected through mentally willing it, together with an emphasis upon what Tu (1998) calls “uniting thought and action (p. 29).”

Though impacted by 2,500 years of interpretation by his disciples, Confucius ideas of hierarchy, social stability, junzi, moral development and teaching/learning have been delivered to the modern era largely intact. It is equally clear that today they are firmly embedded in the four cultures whose educational models are examined in this research. This Confucian educational
model and the characteristics of the its learner, especially regarding learner classroom speech, has long been a question of uncertainty in the West. As we now turn to the research literature of modern times we discover continued puzzlement and disagreement by Western educationalists regarding the model and its learner, especially regarding the role of learner speech.
Chapter 3

Part Two of the Review of Literature

Modern Research Involving the Chinese Learner and Classroom Speech

3.1 Overview

Having offered a review of the historical literature in Chapter two as context and background, in the present chapter (chapter three) we turn to an examination of modern research literature. An overview of the organization of the review as well as some of the major critics and supporters of the Confucian model of education is offered to make the examination more easily readable.

The literature examination in this chapter is organized around six landmarks of research believed by the writer to be especially important regarding the Confucian learner and the role of learner speech. The first of these landmarks, Watkins and Biggs (1996), marks the beginning of an increasingly favorable view of the Confucian learner that was preceded by an earlier period where the great majority of research regarding the Confucian learner was quite negative. Following Watkins and Biggs (1996), each of the next four selected landmarks reflects an increasingly tolerant if not completely positive position regarding the legitimacy of the Confucian learning model and its production of deep learning. However, the last of the six landmarks, Zhao (2014), represents an abrupt return to the negative view of the Confucian learning model that preceded Watkins and Biggs, one that, except for a few exceptions such as Tu (1979) was almost completely negative.

3.1.1 The Six Landmarks

The first landmark research was Watkins and Biggs (1996) who, in a work entitled *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological, and Contextual Influences*, covered the Confucian learning model from the perspective of the Confucian learner. Five years later Watkins and Biggs
(2001), in a work entitled *Teaching the Chinese learner: Psychological and pedagogical perspective*, covered the Confucian learning model from the perspective of the Confucian teacher.

Thirdly, Chan and Rao (2009), in a work entitled *Revisiting the Chinese learner: Changing contexts, changing education*, provided a re-visitation and updating of the Confucian learning process. A fourth landmark reference point in this review is the work of Li (2009) contained in a chapter contribution she made in the Chan and Rao re-visitation. Her contribution provided not only insight as to how the Chinese learner might be achieving deep learning through a listen-first, speak-last version of the Confucian learning process but also insight about the relationship between the Confucian culture and the socialization that produced the characteristics resulting in the Chinese learner. Two final research landmarks involved research offered here as representing polar opposites regarding the Confucian learning system. One is again the work of Li (2012) presenting a detailed analysis of the Confucian learning process as a genuine alternative to the educational model of the West. The other is the work of Zhao (2014) offering a historically based, highly negative analysis of the development of the Confucian educational model and advising that it be avoided in the West.

In threading passage between these six selected landmark research points we encounter examples of negative opposition and criticism directed toward the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Confucian learning model in research such as Murphy (1987), Pearson and Beasley, (1996), Samuelowicz, (1987), Beeby, (1966), Biggs, (1991), Morris, (1985), Ballard and Clanchy, (1997), and Ginsberg (1992). All of this research preceded a turn in direction marked by Watkins and Biggs (1996) toward a more positive or at least tolerant view of the Confucian learning model. However, in 2014, Zhao represents an abrupt return to the negative view of the Chinese learning model as he tries to convince the West to avoid implementing it.
The proponents and supporters of the Confucian educational model prior to Watkins and Biggs (1996) were few. The primary proponent appears to be Tu (1979), who asserted that Confucian learners/teachers were legitimate learners though learners of an educational model different in purpose and method than the model of the West. Instead of the learner-curiosity and understanding-the-world motivation of the West, Tu argued that for the Confucian learner, learning was a route to a Maslow-like self-cultivation. According to Tu (1979), the aim and purpose of the Confucian learner was to “cultivate oneself as an intelligent, creative, independent, autonomous, and what is more, an authentic being, who is becoming more fully human in the process of learning (cited in Lee, 1996, p. 34).”

3.1.2 Support for the Confucian Learning Model

The period following 1996 has produced numerous researchers who are at least cautiously supportive of the Confucian educational model. Beginning with the Watkins and Biggs edited landmarks (1996 and 2001) and continuing through the work of Chan and Rao (2009) the research is progressively less critical in attitude toward the Confucian learning/teaching process. In Li (2009 and 2012), the research becomes fully supportive though in manner similar to Tu (1979 and elsewhere) where support for the Confucian learning/teaching process is not so much opposition to the Western model of education but instead acknowledgement of the Confucian system as a legitimate alternative and potentially competing model of education.

that appeared to facilitate a willingness to learn in the Confucian learner. They also built upon the observations of Stigler and Stevenson (1991) in order to question stereotypes of the Chinese learner and to re-examine relationships of teachers and learners in collectivist cultures.

Other research that supported the Confucian model included Cortazzi and Jin (2001) who examined the Confucian notion of good teachers both from the perspective of teachers and learners. They further examined (2001) the process of teacher training in the Chinese culture and later in 2006 examined the quality of critical thought achieved by Confucian learners, especially in the context of a type of solitary speech practice typically used by Confucian learners.

Mok, et al. (2001) produced research that began to explain the seemingly paradoxical notions of effective yet authoritarian Confucian teachers while Yum (1988) examined aspects of East Asian languages to illustrate how language may shape the style and content of both Confucian teachers and learners.

Tweed and Lehman (2002) used the approach of an exemplar framework comparison to evaluate the Western, Socratic exemplar of early learner questioning and compared it to the Confucian exemplar of a later learner questioning and considered the implications for learner independence, for learner-directed rather than teacher-directed learning, and for learner speech.

Following the Tweed and Lehman (2002) exemplar analysis, Li (2003) responded to their research by noting that though the Tweed and Lehman exemplar approach was useful, it needed to be corrected in certain ways regarding its presentation of the Confucian learning exemplar. Li’s (2003) corrections consisted first, of an assertion that it had a different purpose; second, that its use of education by learners to secure government positions was not solely a personal economic motivation but rather an effort to use government to achieve collective societal virtues, and third, that Tweed and Lehman (2002) were mistaken in describing Confucian learning as extrinsic for the reason that any perspective of education as an attempt to achieve greater humanity was
inherently intrinsic.

Going beyond her three criticism/corrections of the Tweed and Lehman exemplar, Li (2003) further argued that what appeared to be passive obedience of learners in the Confucian model in relating to teachers was more properly described as a reflection of learner respect for teachers. She argued that this respect arose from learners’ perception that teachers had moved far along the path of the Dao toward a fuller humanity by their actions. The relevance to learner speech of this learner respect, according to Li (2003), was that greater learning was reflected in an active “doing or implementing” rather than through learner “saying” and that since saying implied doing, learner modesty required great caution regarding saying.

The research of Liu (2002) considered the cultural meanings of silence (not saying) as well as three typical learner speech strategies regarding silence used by Confucian learners as they attempted to adapt to Western, learner speech-rich environments. In line with Zhou et al. (2005), Liu (2002) suggested that Confucian learner speech (as opposed to use of learner silence strategies) is situation-specific and modifiable depending upon the specific conditions of the classroom environment.

In 2009, Li produced the first of her two landmarks of supportive research, the first (2009) focusing intensely upon the role of general cultural impacts on Confucian learning/teaching and education and the second (2012) being an even more detailed and complete examination of all aspects of the Confucian learning process that presents it as a legitimate system of education from which Western educationalists might learn. Finally, the positive and supportive research of Li (2009 & 2012) is contrasted to the equally negative evaluation of the Confucian Chinese educational model offered by Zhao (2014) as a polar opposite view of the Confucian learner and learner system, especially regarding learner speech.

It is from the combined examination of ancient literature as contextual background (chapter
two) as well as the contemporary research literature described below in this chapter that a Weberian ideal type of the Confucian educational model has been constructed. This ideal type is then used as a Hegelian thesis and it is opposed against an anti-thesis of the Canadian, Freirean graduate school ideal type.

3.2 Introduction

The rapid internationalization of Western educational institutions of higher learning in countries such as the Canada as well as the United States, Australia, and Great Britain has brought an increased focus upon the Chinese learner. This increased focus has considered whether the Chinese learner phenomena should be approached individually or in terms of generic approaches Clark and Gieve (2006); it has considered the question of how Western educational institutions can best serve the peculiar needs of Chinese learner (Coverdale-Jones & Rastall, 2009). It has further considered changes in Chinese education that affect these learners before they depart their countries of origin to study in Western education as well as changes occurring in these learners by virtue of their experiences in Western education. (Jin & Cortazzi, 2006). It has considered the binary views of the Chinese learner as passive, silent, and submissive compared to the active, inquiring Western learners and has suggested that this dichotomy may be supported by literature analysis but refuted by empirical investigation (Shi, 2006). Finally, it has considered numerous aspects of the apparent paradox of the learning achievement of the Chinese learner when set next to the learning environment from which he comes (Biggs & Watkins, 1996; Watkins & Biggs, 2001). However, as will soon be seen, research regarding the classroom speech characteristics of the Chinese learner appears to have produced little absolute certainty except for the fact of a relative absence of classroom speech by this learner.

The last two decades of the twentieth century saw great economic growth in the cultures represented in this research, first in Japan, Taiwan and South Korea and then, more recently,
followed by similar growth in China. This economic growth saw a parallel growth in the numbers of students from these cultures traveling to Western cultures such as the United States, Canada and Australia to participate in Western tertiary education. During this period, just before the end of the century, numerous researchers reported findings about learners from Confucian heritage cultures (hereafter abbreviated as CHC with CHC learners referred to as either CHC learners, Confucian learners, or as Chinese learners) indicating that these learners tended to be rote-based learners that employed low level learning strategies both in their own cultures (Murphy, 1987) as well as when they studied overseas (Pearson & Beasley 1996; Samuelowicz, 1987). Furthermore, the research reported that these learners were taught and socialized in restricted learning/teaching environments with large classes, teacher-authoritarian, lecture-based approaches, and exam-focused teaching objectives (Beeby, 1966; Biggs, 1991; Morris, 1985) that resulted in the production of passive, uncritical learners (e.g., Ballard & Clanchy, 1997).

3.3 The Chinese Learner: A Paradox

That there has long existed some pattern of learning/teaching principles of Chinese education clustered around the name of Confucius and his disciples as interpreted in the ordinary lives of Asians and described as “vernacular Confucianism” by Chang (Chang, 2000; King, 1992) and as “Chinese heritage culture learners” abbreviated as (CHC) (Biggs, 1996), is beyond question. This historical set of teaching and learning principles became the focus of a flood of discussion and research 20 years ago when Watkins and Biggs (1996) reported an educational paradox. Called the “Paradox of the Chinese learner,” Watkins and Biggs (1996) reported that learners socialized in Confucian heritage cultures and previously believed to be shallow learners with a strong tendency to approach learning by reliance upon rote memorization were, in fact, not only good but even deep and possibly superior learners. Passive, low level strategy learners, who some believed to approach learning with “an extension or transfer of the Confucian ethic of filial piety (Murphy,
1987, p. 87)” and who emerged from teacher centered, authoritarian classrooms lacking in dialogue, had been revealed by the research of Watkins and Biggs (1996) to be effective as well as deep learners and, in fact, apparently superior learners.

The previous view regarding these learners had been that they were deficient learners. Biggs (1996) cited numerous descriptions of CHC learners that described them as shallow or rote learners given to strong reliance upon memorization who typically were passive classroom participants that rarely made comments or asked questions. He additionally cited a number of sources that had previously found these learners to have emerged from classrooms in their home cultures where teachers made all decisions, were viewed as the possessors of knowledge and saw the job of the student to be one of being obediently led to knowledge. Below are examples both of this view of the Confucian teacher and learner (Samuelowiez, 1987):

In my discipline they (Confucian learners) all want to rote learn material rather than think.” “(Asian students) tend to look on lectures as close to gods. Often they are very reluctant to question statements or textbooks.” “…it can be difficult to cope, in small (graduate) classes, with overseas students who are reluctant to discuss, criticize reading and express an opinion.” “In my country, we don’t have much group discussion or tutorials. We are not supposed to make an argument in class (pp. 123, 124-125).

Biggs (1996) further showed that similar learner characteristics were seen to be true of CHC learners when they studied in their original, home cultures. Biggs (1996) quoted Ginsberg (1992, p. 6) to the effect that

In China, knowledge is not open to challenge and extension (by students arguing with their instructors) … The teacher decides which knowledge is to be taught, and the students accept and learn that knowledge. The lecturer is the authority, the repository of knowledge, leading the student forward into this knowledge, a respected elder transmitting to a subordinate junior.

Biggs (1996) additionally quoted Murphy (1987, p. 43), saying

Hong Kong students display almost unquestioning acceptance of the knowledge of the teacher or lecture. This may be explained in terms of an extension or transfer of the Confucian ethic of filial piety. Coupled with this is an emphasis on strictness of
discipline and proper behavior, rather than an expression of opinion, independence, self-mastery, creativity and all-round personal development.

In surprising contrast to the above descriptions, Biggs (1996) argued that empirical evidence in testing results showed CHC learners to in fact be, in most cases, not inferior but superior learners. Utilizing concepts regarding shallow learning verses deep learning first developed by Marton and Säljö (1976), Biggs (1996) asserted that the testing results gave clear evidence that CHC learners were deep learners rather than the shallow learning rote memorizers as had previously been thought, saying

...CHC students in their own countries, obediently receptive to their own fierce and crowded classrooms, have over the years consistently outperformed Westerners.” Furthermore, he concluded that the high levels of learning performance “...could not be achieved through rote learning, and the evidence is indeed that they are not (p. 48).

Arguing that the superior learning performance of CHC learners was due to use of more sophisticated learning strategies than those used by Western students, Biggs (1996) further pointed out that studies of thousands of students on the basis of self-report questionnaires showed CHC students report a stronger preference for high-level, meaning-based, learning strategies, and avoidance of rote learning, than that of Western students both in their own culture (Hong Kong & Singapore; Biggs, 1990; 1991; Watkins, Regmi, and Astilla, 1991), and overseas in Australian institutions (Biggs, 1996, p. 49).

The evidence of superior learning performance when set next to the reputation of CHC learners for passivity and rote memory and the reputation of CHC classrooms for large classes, authoritarian teachers, and strict exam focused lecture teaching methods set up the elements of an educational paradox that Biggs (1996) offered as a “challenge to Western research (p. 49).” A great deal of research from that point to the present has regarded the taking up of this challenge by researchers from both the East and West. The elements of the paradox, called the paradox of the Chinese learner, were presented by Biggs (1996) as follows:
1) CHC classrooms should be conducive to low quality outcomes: rote learning and low achievement:

2) CHC students are perceived as using low-level, rote-based strategies;

3) CHC students have significantly higher levels of achievement than those of Western students; and

4) CHC students report a preference for high-level, meaning-based learning strategies.

In presenting the challenge of his paradox, Biggs (1996) noted that it presented serious difficulties for educators, saying:

…some well supported propositions about the nature of teaching and learning are at risk. And what of the political implications (not to mention the face lost by researchers), if large classes, outdated teaching methods, poor equipment, inadequate public expenditure per student, and relentless low-level examining can produce students who see themselves as engaging in high-level processing, and who outperform Western students in many subject areas? (p. 49).

Though Watkins and Biggs (1996) as well as Biggs (1996) tended to continue to express the traditional criticism of the Confucian classroom model in terms of “large classes/lecture-based” teaching and in terms of “passive/rote” learning students, an implication of their research findings was that learners in learner-silent classrooms learned better than learners in speech rich classrooms and that maybe the expensive small sized classrooms that specialized in promotion of learner speech-rich environments thought in the West to produce higher order, critical thinking were unnecessary and even possibly counter-productive.

Watkins and Biggs (1996) had not only found an educational paradox, they had discovered the possibility of an educational model that challenged the Western learner speech-rich model. It appeared to be an almost a polar opposite educational model, especially regarding the desirability of learner classroom speech. In Hegelian terms, it presented the possibility of an East-West, international educational dialectical tension.
3.3.1 Solutions to the Paradox

It had been proposed that if CHC large student classrooms with low spending per student taught by teacher dominated lecture methods could produce effective and deep learning students, then perhaps Western cultures should adopt such practices. In opposing the suggestion, Biggs (1996) made a number of observations relevant to the paradox.

First, Biggs (1996) disposed of nature/nurture speculations to explain the paradox by acknowledging the possibility that superior genetics of CHC students might explain the paradox. However, he then noted that “It would be foolish to deny the possibility of genetic differences, but it would be poor science to use that argument to preempt further investigation (p. 50).”

Second, to the argument that it might be the poor teaching environment of CHC schools (large classes with lecture orientation and seemingly little encouragement of learner questioning or critical thinking) that ironically somehow caused bright students to devise their own deep-learning, learning strategies, he responded by saying “To pile paradox on paradox, perhaps we are seeing that when schooling is poor, good students are forced to generate their own self-regulated strategies for deep earning precisely in order to survive bad teaching (Biggs, 1996, p. 50).” However, though suggesting a need for more research on the issue, Biggs (1996) concluded that this possible answer to the paradox was weakened by the fact that the research of Stevenson and Stigler (1992) showed all Confucian learners, not just the good students, appeared to benefit from the environment of the so-called “bad” teaching. Since all students came out of the same “poor” learning environment of education it did not appear that the superior learning could be attributed to the creativity of only the good students but that it must have some other source.

Third, Biggs (1996) proposed a theoretical framework within which to examine this puzzling paradox of the Chinese Learner as well as to examine proposals that the West should
adopt the teaching methods of CHCs. It was a framework he had constructed in previous research (Biggs, 1993; Biggs, 1989) called the 3P model, with the three Ps referring to

a) presage (qualities of learners and teaching),

b) process (the approaches to learning of students derived from metacognition), and

c) product (the type of learning that is derived).

His model represented a systems model wherein the three components of the system were considered to be in equilibrium when the three components were in balance. In evaluating the paradox of the Chinese learner within the context of his proposed theoretical framework, Biggs (1996) reported as follows:

In CHC classrooms, however, it appears that presage, process, and product are out of kilter. If poor contexts generate low level processes, then whence the high level outcomes? But if high level processes are in fact generating the high level outcomes, how are those processes generated from the poor contexts? The facts that CHC classrooms produce outcomes that compare as well with or better than those coming from the West, and that they are stable, suggests that a working equilibrium has indeed been struck (p. 53).

In other words, if the large, passive student, teacher directed, rote learning classroom produced low level “process” learning strategies, then where did the academic “product” of deep learning come from? But if high level “processes” of cognition were responsible for producing the academic “product” of deep learners then how could the context of large student, quite classrooms based on what was seen to be teacher directed lecture and rote learning somehow constitute high level learning “processes”? Biggs (1996) then proceeded to offer suggestions as to how a system equilibrium had perhaps been achieved in the Confucian model classrooms that appeared to produce deep and effective learning in the midst of an absence of learner classroom speech.

3.3.2 Rote Learning and its Relation to Learner Speech

Biggs (1998) looked at the component of process regarding student approaches to learning and suggested that though CHC students may have appeared to Western eyes to be approaching
learning through the learning strategy of rote (a low-level learning approach), they might have actually been approaching learning through a different strategy of repetition which Biggs (1998) argued might in some form constitute a deep strategy of learning. Watkins and Biggs (1996) had earlier addressed this issue of apparent rote learning saying, “It is undoubtedly true that students in CHC systems use repetition as part of their learning strategies a good deal more than Westerners do (p. 270).” Nevertheless, having acknowledged that the Chinese learner was memory and repetition prone, Watkins and Biggs (1996) argued that the repetition used was one related to understanding either as a “precondition” to understanding or as a “route to understanding (p. 271)” thus making the Chinese learners’ learning not a surface strategy of learning but instead making it one of an achieving strategy or of a deep learning strategy.

Noting the difference between rote and repetitive learning, Biggs (1996) said that it “…lies in the learner’s ‘intentions’ with respect to meaning” and that “In rote learning meaning has no place in the learner’s intentions, in repetitive learning it has…”, Biggs (1996) continued: “Thus, while Westerners may correctly see Asian students indulging in a high degree of repetitive work, they could be quite incorrect in seeing that activity as ‘rote’ learning and therefore a surface strategy (p. 54).”

In other words, Biggs (1996) argued that rote learning is learning for a purpose or an intent other than better understanding of meaning (maybe to impress or satisfy others) while repetitive learning is a process that appears similar to rote learning but is actually done for the purpose of achieving better understanding of the materials being approached. The difference, as explained by Biggs (1996) was in the intent of the learner. Biggs (1996) suggested that the rote learning practiced by CHC learners was actually done with the intent to achieve better understanding. Therefore, it was properly to be considered repetitive learning, not rote learning, and to be considered a type of deep strategy of learning or a similar strategy that Biggs, in other research,
called an “achieving” approach or strategy (Biggs, 1991, p. 29).

Lee (1996), appears to have reached the same position as Watkins and Biggs (1996) regarding the place of memorizing and repetition for the CHC learner as well as that the CHC learner actually tended to be a deep rather than surface learner, saying: “… memorization is seen as a significant part of learning in the Confucian tradition, but it should by no means be equated with rote learning. Memorization precedes understanding, and is for deeper understanding. It has never been regarded as an end in itself (p. 36).”

Marton, et. al. (1996) provided additional insight regarding the CHC learner’s use of memorization to achieve deep learning strategies by examining in detail the thinking and attitudes of 17 teachers from China regarding the ways in which they learned and the role of memorization in their learning. Their findings indicated that their participants had a tendency to view memorization as having two varieties or two levels. One was the rote memory of mere mechanical repetition that Western education has traditionally viewed as leading only to surface learning. However, the second variety of memorization was described as repetition that contributed to understanding. The second variety of memorization was described by a participant in the research of Marton, et al. (1996) as follows:

**Researcher:** Do you realize that this is mechanical repetition when you repeat again and again?

**Participant:** Mechanical, in fact it is not completely, not exactly. I had no advanced equipments which could help me to remember, or use video-audio, I had to use this method-repeating. During the repetition, I felt I could also understand. Yes, right. Take an article. I wanted to learn it by heart so I repeated again and again, but I often stopped at a certain place. I had to read it more. Maybe I had some problem, maybe there was something wrong with the (structure) of the article, you would feel as if there was a gap between two sentences, If I had this feeling, so did other, or two or three had the same feeling, that showed it was a difficult point. Maybe the topic changed suddenly, or the connection of the sentences. You should pay more attention to the place. I think the best method is repeating. In the process of repetition, it is not a simple repetition. Because each time I repeat, I would have some new idea of understanding, that is to say I can understand better (p. 81).
Another participant described this “memorization for understanding” process by saying: “In the process of repetition, it is not a simple repetition. Because each time I repeat, I would have some new idea of understanding, that is to say I can understand better (Marton, et al., 1996, p. 81.)”

Marton, et al. (1996) concluded that “when a text is memorized, it can be repeated in a way that deepens understanding; different aspects of the text are focused on with each repetition” and that “In the process of repeating and memorizing in this way, the meaning of a text is grasped more fully” and that “it is upon this use of memorization to deepen understanding that the solution of the paradox of the Chinese learner rests (p. 81).”

Though Biggs (1998), Watkins and Biggs (1996), Lee (1996), and Marton, et al. (1996) may have clarified the issue of how seemingly “rote” learners were actually using repetition to learn deeply, the value and place of learner speech in deep learning and the specifics of how CHC learning and that of learning in Western learner rich speech environments might differ in quality and how the two approaches to learning were related remained unclarified. Additional speech related questions remained.

### 3.3.3 Authoritarian Teachers and Learner Speech

The research of Lee (1996) suggested that part of the solution to the paradox of the Chinese learner might justify a revisiting of the concept of the so called authoritarian teacher of CHC classrooms. Explaining that the ideal teacher of Confucian education was one that had the ability to produce “reflective thinking and enquiry in the process of teaching” and one “who guides students but does not pull them along, urges students to go forward and does not suppress them, opens the way for students, but does not take them to the place (p. 36),” Lee (1996) presented a version of an “interactive” (though an “interaction” involving little learner classroom speech) Confucian teacher centered classroom by quoting Lin (1938):
Guiding without pulling makes the process of learning gentle; urging without suppressing makes the process of learning easy; and opening the way without leading the students to the place makes them think for themselves. Now if the process of learning is made gentle and easy and the students are encouraged to think for themselves, we may call the man a good teacher (p. 247).

Pursuing the same point, Biggs (1996) used his 3P theoretical framework to further explore the process component of the environment of learning that existed in CHC cultures by also addressing the issue of the seeming authoritarian context of CHC learning environments and reached conclusions similar to Lee (1996). Biggs (1996) argued that the Western perception of CHC teacher authoritarianism might be a mistaken perception. Noting Gardener (1989) to the effect that the existence of a different epistemology in CHC classrooms had been overlooked by Western observers of Chinese art and music classes, Biggs (1996) argued that Western observers were possibly failing to see beneath the surface of what appeared to merely be very authoritarian, mimetic (imitation orientated) teachers. Using Gardener’s (1989) reasoning regarding previous Western overlooking of actual Chinese epistemology, Biggs (1996) reasoned that because the Chinese believed that there was but one way of thinking about and appreciating beauty, they therefore believed that students must first learn the skills in achieving and approaching beauty before they could then move to becoming creative in exploration of beauty. Unlike the Chinese, Biggs (1996) argued that the approach in the West to teaching art and music was to first encourage student exploration which was thought to thereafter naturally lead to later development of skills. It was this cultural difference in teaching sequence arising from the Chinese epistemological view that there was but one right way to approach goodness and beauty, Biggs (1996) explained, that caused Western researchers to fail to recognize that what looked like mere authoritarian instruction was actually teachers “…holding the hand, not simply to direct, but to create the beautiful (p. 55).”

In other words, Biggs (1996) was suggesting that it was a difference in epistemology regarding how to introduce learners to the “good and the beautiful” that caused Westerns to
mistake Chinese teachers as authoritarian “pushers” rather than “hand-holding guides” who were actually gently leading learners toward the objectives of the beautiful and the good.

Again, though Lee (1996) and Biggs (1996) may have clarified the paradox by showing that what Westerners viewed as authoritarian pushers may have actually been hand-holding guides and although more friendly teachers might obviously impact the likelihood of learner speech the paradox of the Confucian educational model’s achievement of deep learning in the relative absence of learner speech remained unclear and largely intact. Perhaps the learner’s motivation would provide a key to better understanding the approach to learner speech in the Chinese learner model.

3.3.4 Extrinsic/Intrinsic Learner Motivation and Learner Speech

Watkins and Biggs (1996) suggested resolution for another aspect of the “paradox” that involved learner motivation. It had to do with the idea that deep learning was not thought in the West to be produced by extrinsic learner motivation. Instead, deep learning was thought by the West to primarily be the product of learners with intrinsic motivation.

Noting that the West saw learner motivation in terms of ridged categories of intrinsic and extrinsic depending upon the presence or absence of personal feelings that the learner has for the learning object, Watkins and Biggs (1996) argued that “…Western ways of categorizing motivation…do not travel well, at least, not to the Orient (p. 273).” Pointing out that Confucius had said “there are golden houses and beautiful girls in books”, Watkins and Biggs (1996) suggested that the CHCs learner motivations could be jointly intrinsic and extrinsic and that the presence of the extrinsic did not need to in any way reduce the presence of the intrinsic. Furthermore, they argued that a deep motive (one that leads to a deep learning strategy) may consist in “a head of mixed motivational steam: personal ambition, family, face, peer support, material reward, and yes, possibly even interest (p. 273).” Borrowing from research by Hess and Azuma (1991) the proposition that there are deep and personal “internal dispositions (that) create
a sense of diligence and receptiveness (p. 7)” in CHC learners, Watkins and Biggs (1996) argued that these deep and personal dispositions can be a basis for the deep learning strategies that are believed in the West to only be the result of intrinsic motivation and they concluded in the case of the Chinese learner that “In short, the familiar intrinsic/extrinsic polarity collapses (p. 273).”

Writing at the same time, On, (1996) again provided further support for the analysis of Watkins and Biggs (1996) regarding the intrinsic nature of the motivation of the Confucian learner, arguing that it consisted of a deep personal (intrinsic) desire for self-perfection but somehow, at the same time, it included what would normally be seen in the West as extrinsic elements. In describing the motivation of the Confucian learner, Lee (1996) said, “The aspiration for upward social mobility through educational success seems to coexist with the ideal for intrinsic personal growth in the process of education, although they look contradictory to each other (p. 38).”

Again, though Watkins and Biggs (1996) and Lee (1996) clarified the extrinsic/intrinsic motivational differences in CHC learners in relation to Western learners and how each approached deep learning, the paradox of the Confucian educational model’s achievement of deep learning in the absence of learner speech remained unclear. Though they provided insight as to how the Chinese learner’s motivation might appear extrinsic and yet lead to deep learning, they did little to explain learner silence as a means to the end of deep learning or to explain how different learner motivations might produce greater or less learner speech.

### 3.3.5 Learner Achievement Orientation and Learner Speech

Watkins and Biggs (1996) also examined the possibility that the achievement orientation of CHC learners differed from that of learners in the West. For the Chinese learner, they said achievement was not seen so much from an individual competitive perspective as it is from a multiple and holistic perspective. Instead of individual learners competing against other individuals as in the West, Watkins and Biggs (1996) explained that CHC learner achievement
was not an either/or but was a both/and, a combination of the individual and the collective. Watkins and Biggs (1996), interpreting Ho and Chiu (1994), explained that

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\text{... the strict individuality in the West is merged in a superordinating collectivism that derives from Confucian notions of order and stability; in return for obedience and loyalty to the collectivity, principally the family, the individual is given security and face, but when these duties have been fulfilled, the individual is encouraged to pursue his (his is used advisedly) own interests (p. 274).}
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Though it is conceivable that learner speech tendencies might be affected by learner achievement orientations that promote individualism as opposed to collectivism, the connection is unclear and both Watkins and Biggs (1996) and Lee (1996) failed to address such a possible connection. To me it would seem that greater learner speech might be associated with greater individual achievement as compared with collective achievement yet the research did not address such a connection.

3.3.6 Learner Success Attributions and Learner Speech

A final aspect of CHC learners possibly relevant to their use of classroom speech involved the question of learner success attribution and was addressed by Watkins and Biggs (1996). This related to the internal, controllable attributions regarding performance by CHC learners compared to the external, uncontrollable attributions made by learners in the West. According to Watkins and Biggs (1996), the Chinese learner was not a learner likely to attribute his/her performance to uncontrollable factors such as natural, inherited high ability. Unlike Western learners that viewed ability as a major cause of academic success and viewed ability as mostly uncontrollable, CHC learners tended to view ability as something that could be modifiable by hard work and effort and therefore saw academic success as mostly the result of the degree of their own effort. Watkins and Biggs (1996) explained the useful as well as potentially destructive characteristics of attributions in saying:

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\text{...this can have negative as well as positive consequences. While their attributions}
\]
encourage them to work harder and harder thus maximizing their likelihood of academic success, they are likely to feel guilty and to be blamed by their teachers and family if failure results (p. 275).”

Again, differences in success attribution might affect learner speech tendencies but the relationship is not obvious. Conceivably, effort verses inherited, natural ability attribution tendencies might be connected to how learners view the process of learning generally. Effort attribution might produce a longer, harder, more segmented view of the process of education and genetic attribution might produce a more spontaneous, quick, “light-bulb” view of education. If this is true, then earner speech might arguably be found more natural and more frequently in genetic attribution learners than in effort attribution learners. Nevertheless, again, though Watkins and Biggs (1996) explained much about how Chinese learners learn, their image of Chinese learners as learners whose learning toolbox largely lacked learner speech not only left much of the paradox of the Chinese learner intact, it failed to clearly explain their classroom speech tendencies.

3.3.7 Additional Research Possibly Relevant to Learner Classroom Speech

Numerous other authorities writing around the time of publication of The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences contributed insight into the nature of the learning process as it actually occurred in CHC classrooms rather than how it had been earlier perceived by Western observers. The general lesson of Gardner (1989) suggested that the “process” component (see Biggs’ systems theory) of CHC learning was subject to differences in interpretation (and misinterpretation) by cultural outsiders. Biggs (1996) pointed out that Stigler & Stevenson (1991) used the word “constructivist” to describe the most common teaching they observed in Taiwan, Korea, and China. O’Connor (1991) “found the teachers to be uniformly student-centered, frequently engaging all students collectively in problem-solving…and pushing for high cognitive level thought processes (p. 56).” Hess and Azuma (1991) reported a Japanese teacher strategy called “sticky probing” where a single problem was discussed by students under
the direction of the teacher for hours until agreement was reached that was acceptable to both teacher and students. Hess and Azuma (1991) further reported that because Chinese students and teachers often lived on campus, there was a significant teacher-student contact outside the classroom that took place in the form of discussion and study groups. Finally, questioning the perception that CHC teachers must be cold and distant authorities in hierarchical cultures, Biggs (1996) noted that outsiders, in seeing the CHC teacher as authoritarian, might be seeing only part of the picture and that “although teacher-student relations may be strongly hierarchical as compared with these in the West, they are also typically marked by warmth and a sense of responsibility on both sides (p. 56).” Though each of these research efforts contributed to a better understanding of the Chinese learner, in 2001 the paradox of the Chinese learner remained unsolved and intact, especially regarding the role of learner speech.

### 3.4 Teaching the Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives

In 2001 Watkins and Biggs edited another work called: *Teaching the Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives*. In *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences* Watkins and Biggs (1996) had discovered and then examined the paradox of the Chinese learner from the point of view of the learner but in 2001 they moved their focus “… to the teaching culture as it is represented inside the classroom, and even inside the heads of the teachers and students (p. 4).” In their examination of the Chinese teaching culture they offered a number of insights possibly relevant to the use of classroom speech by the Chinese learner, some of them entirely new and some of them resembling insights offered in their earlier work of *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences*.

#### 3.4.1 Learning Cultural Supports and Learner Speech

Watkins and Biggs (2001) described what they called educational supports that they believed existed outside the classroom in the general cultures of CHC that they believed
particularly enhanced the teaching/learning process in CHCs and their students compared to Western classrooms. These general cultural supports for teaching/learning involved the characteristics already discussed (tendency to memorize for understanding, seeing education as a long, hard, and gradual process, an effort attribution of learning success, a mixed intrinsic/extrinsic learner motivation and a social rather than individualist achievement orientation) but Watkins and Biggs (2001) further suggested that there were cultural characteristics in CHCs that socialized children to be particularly learnable in their dispositions, especially as compared to Western cultures. These additional cultural supports involved types of socialization that encouraged children to be respectful to adults, to have patience in approaching tasks, and to be strongly concerned about social norms. Citing Hess and Azuma (1991) that these things make learners more ready to participate in formal learning, Watkins and Biggs (2001) argued that they created a “diligence and receptiveness that is precisely what is required by teachers in schools anywhere (p. 7)” and that it was the relative lack of these things in the West that forced Western schools to rely upon dichotomous concepts such as extrinsic and intrinsic motivation so heavily for the reason that the general culture in the West failed to mold students so as to be naturally predisposed to participate in learning when they entered the classroom.

Watkins and Biggs (2001) further noted something called the dimension of individualist-collectivist cultures that had frequently earlier been used to explain various trans-cultural differences. Giving examples of such research (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Kim et. al., 1994), Watkins and Biggs (2001) said that “The relationships between student and teacher and student and student, seem to take on a somewhat different character in collectivist East Asia (p. 8).” They provided support for this assertion by noting research that had found that Hong Kong university students were more likely to work together outside the classroom than were Western university students (Winter, 1995), that high levels of support and little teasing of weaker students characterized
classrooms in Japan and China (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998), and that Hong Kong students preferred more collaboration in learning environments and saw learning collaboration as more likely to produce deep learning (Chan & Watkins, 1994).

Having summarized these outside the classroom general cultural factors that they thought facilitated teaching and predisposed students toward learning in CHCs, Watkins and Biggs (2001) turned their focus to what was known about current teaching in China.

First, they pointed out that Chinese classrooms were very large and, by Western standards, very underfunded and examination orientated. Secondly, they noted that Chinese students did very well academically in comparison to students of the United States. Finally, Watkins and Biggs (2001) quoted Stigler and Stevenson (1991) to question the validity of the existing negative Western perceptions of the approaches of the Chinese teacher:

A common Western stereotype is that the Asian teacher is an authoritarian purveyor of information, one who expects students to listen and memorize correct answers and procedures rather than to construct knowledge themselves. This does not describe the dozens of elementary school teachers that we have observed (Stigler & Stevenson as cited in Watkins & Biggs, p. 13).

Focusing on the Stigler and Stevenson (1991) finding that Chinese teachers were not similar to their Western stereotype, Watkins and Biggs (2001) posed a question regarding the Chinese teacher: “Here then is some clue as to the paradox of the Chinese teacher. As with the Chinese learner…things are not what they seem from the outside…Given the large classes, and the examinations, how do Chinese teachers get these positive results (p. 13)?”

### 3.4.2 Reexamination of the Supposedly Authoritarian Chinese Teacher and Learner Speech

Ho (2001), in a chapter contribution to *Teaching the Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives*, examined teaching approaches of CHCs and the West by comparing teachers in Hong Kong and in Australia. Ho (2001) found that the Chinese teachers were somewhat
stricter than the Australian teachers, that they viewed themselves as having a greater responsibility to encourage moral self-cultivation of the learner both in and outside of the classroom, that they had a greater tendency to punish violation of norms more as a declaration that a social boundary had been violated than as a means to deter future norm violation by the learner, and that they were more likely to use punishments such as shaming learners before other learners. However, having shown Chinese teachers to be more authoritarian in these respects, Ho (2001) suggested a number of things that put the apparent authoritarianism of these teachers in a different light. According to Ho (1999), the research showed a student-centered dimension in Chinese teachers that had been seldom previously noted. This was exhibited by their finding a surprising amount of teacher consideration of students’ aims and choices and points of view. Ho (1999) argued that the research revealed a significant Chinese teacher empathy with students and a significant willingness to discuss ways students could change and modify their own undesirable behaviors. Furthermore, Ho (2001), in line with the findings of Ho (1999), noted research by O’Conner (1991) that had suggested that although Chinese teachers frequently acted in what appeared authoritarian ways in their daily teaching practices, their perceptions about their own actions included belief that they were humanistic, empathetic, and concerned with helping students maintain face. Ho (2001) suggested that these seeming contradictions might be reconciled as follows:

The way that Chinese teachers reconcile these seemingly opposite approaches to students is to emphasize different roles in different situations. In the Chinese classroom teacher authority characterizes the teacher-student relationship, but after class there are opportunities for establishing a warm and affectionate relationship through informal activities (p. 109).

Ho (2001) concluded by saying that on one hand, Chinese teachers exercised great authority in the classroom to enforce strict norms and felt a strong moral responsibility to guide students along the right life paths. However, these same authoritarian approaches had different effects and were seen differently than they would have been in Western cultures because in the
Confucian context there was also present a strong emphasis upon affective and personal teacher-student relationships that occurred in informal contexts of teacher-student relations.

It seems that Ho (2001) suggested that CHC teachers have different faces (roles) depending on whether they are in or out of the classroom and that in some roles teachers permit significant teacher/student interaction, including learner speech. It is possible that it is in these more informal roles that meaningful learner speech appears as a learner tool.

### 3.4.3 Perceptions of Good Teachers and Teacher Preparation in Relation to Learner Speech

Cortazzi and Jin (2001) also contributed to the book *Teaching the Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives*. Their research focused on the concept or the notion of the good Chinese teacher and also how the good teacher organized learner participation, especially since Chinese classes are very large and yet learner performance is very high. The research took place between 1992 and 1997 and covered grade school up through high school although publication was not until 2001.

First, Cortazzi and Jin (2001) tried to learn how Chinese students defined a good teacher saying they believed that learners’ conception of a good teacher “defines what teachers do and what learners expect them to do (p. 117).” Some of the characteristics found to be included in the Chinese conception of the good teacher were the following:

A good teacher has professional responsibility, a good basis of knowledge, is able to interact with students, solve their problems, is able to explain difficult points to them. A good teacher will treat students as friends. Students will accept a good teacher because the teacher has the ability to help them…Good teachers are dedicated. They work hard, have a good spirit and love their profession. They have professional morality. They are responsible and self-sacrificing. A good teacher is like a burning candle; it gives light through self-sacrifice… (pp. 119-120).

The description of the good teacher of Cortazzi and Jin (2001) did not include learner expectation of teacher creation of space for learner speech discussion. Except for the expectation that the good
teacher be interactive and that he be friendly, all other descriptions appear to represent learners as passive receivers of the teacher’s responsibility, knowledge, ability to solve their problems, help them, explain for them, and be a burning light of self-sacrifice for them.

Having identified aspects of Chinese learners’ perceptions of the good teacher, Cortazzi and Jin (2001) examined the process of teacher development and preparation typically used in China in order to understand the process of how good teachers were produced. They found that the route of achieving teaching success in Chinese education involved surviving numerous teacher/peer observations involving teacher observers coming unannounced to teachers’ classes on a regular basis to evaluate them. These observers/teachers were teachers that had achieved the position of being consider good teachers and had themselves survived many evaluations. When they came to a subject teacher’s classroom to observe, they sat at the back of the subject teacher’s very large class and evaluated the teacher’s performance. The standards used by these observer teachers to evaluate teachers were then adopted by future successful teachers who themselves had passed these evaluations and later became evaluators of other teachers, junior to themselves. This extensive evaluation process resulted in what Cortazzi and Jin (2001) called “a type of cultural epidemiology by observation (p. 121)” that they believed had a great effect upon shaping the nature of Chinese education and therefore, teachers and teaching. Cortazzi and Jin (2001) described the impact of the evaluation processes by saying:

Some teaching methods and approaches can spread rapidly in this way…This would mean that observations would change a teacher’s mental representation of teaching, which affects their classroom behavior; this is observed by others, and the chain continues, consciously or not, until at some stage certain aspects of teaching are held as mental representations or common values by large groups (pp. 121-122).

The end result of the Chinese conception of the good teacher as worked out in the teacher development and preparations program that produced the teachers that survived their peer observed performances was a teacher who had such qualities as knowledge, professional morality,
and establishment of a strong sense of classroom collective support. Good Chinese teachers were also seen as having developed a sense of being performers who had the capacity to skillfully integrate the textbook while modeling learning to learners who were cultivated in an almost friendly way outside the classroom. It is also notable that the good Chinese teacher promoted learner training teaching (types of training that enables learners to more effectively learn) that enabled students to engage in the learning process through surprising amounts of learner participation. Although classrooms of as many as 60 learners using teacher-directed approaches surely varied in their degree of teaching success and obviously these large numbers of student conditions have some restrictive effects, the findings of Cortazzi and Jin (2001) provided some understanding of the degree of stress placed on learner participation, of the significance of “performance of the text” included in the Chinese definition of good teachers, and, finally of the stress placed upon learner-training learning activities intended to better prepare learners to more comfortably and effectively participate in the learning process. Cortazzi and Jin (2001) spoke to each of these areas as follows:

Learner participation:

For the Chinese teacher, then, the challenge is to arouse and maintain learner attention, concentration, listening and interest…and also to enable as many individuals as possible to speak, even if this is brief …A major challenge for the Chinese teacher of large classes is how to organize the participation of learners. This does not necessarily mean just verbal activity…This point was emphasized by a Chinese student at a British university after someone had mentioned that Chinese students were ‘passive’: We are active in our minds. We are thinking all the time. Our minds follow the lecture with questions and challenges. We are just not used to speaking out. But all of us know very well what is going on and we know the answers to the questions those lecturers asked or other students raised (p. 125).

Performance/text incorporation by good teachers (Middle school teacher with class of 53 students):

When I prepare, I see the text in my imagination and I imagine myself performing the text. My teaching is like acting on stage with the text to bring it alive to students. I have this image of performing in my mind. Teaching is a kind of recreating of the text to bring the text alive through performance (Cortazzi and Jin, 2001, p. 125).
Learner-trained learning (Cortazzi and Jin, 2001):

In these large classes...students are quite stringently taught certain learning skills, ways of working or classroom activities...This also seems to be the case with the traditional way of answering questions (students raise a hand, stand, answer, and sit in one brisk flow of movement)...(students are taught to listen to instructions, get into pairs or groups, do the task, and stop on the teacher’s signal—all very promptly)...While to a Western observer this may seem either dutifully disciplined or rather robotic... it helps to get large numbers of students working together efficiently (p. 124).

Though Cortazzi and Jin (2001) were admittedly not focused on tertiary level education, they presented a picture of Chinese teacher-directed classrooms that showed evidence of affective concern in relations with learners, attempts to maximize meaningful participation by learners through teaching of learning methods as well as theater-like lectures and even some attempt to produce critical thought even if it was only an internal critical student evaluation of a teacher theater-like lecture presentation in a very large classroom. One teacher evaluation read as follows:

The teachers are smiling. The children are lively and active. Everyone participates in the class activities... The teachers have professional ability and good feelings for the children. We can see that there are good relations between teachers and children... You have made the classrooms very colorful... You also give them a lot of free play and free outside activities (p. 131).

Cortazzi and Jin (2001) concluded by observing that teacher-student interaction in large Chinese classes had a number of layers. One layer was between teacher and learners, another between learners, another between learners and text, another between teachers in different classrooms in planning and modeling their teaching performance, another between the past cultural/educational traditions and the changing present, and a final layer was between Chinese practices and practices from other places/cultures. They suggested that Chinese teachers attempted to learn from practices in other cultures and they argued that “Those from outside China may also have something to learn from Chinese interaction, whether this takes place in large or small classes (p. 133).” Unfortunately, Cortazzi and Jin (2001) failed to address whether the ideas of good teachers and good teaching approaches are similar in secondary and tertiary levels of Chinese
education compared to that revealed in their examination of primary and middle school teachers. Even more unfortunate, their extensive research revealed little of the importance of independent individual learner speech in the Chinese learner classroom though it did reveal some evidence of a version of teacher staged opportunities for learner speech.

3.4.4 The Paradox of the Chinese Teacher

Mok, et al. (2001), also writing in *Teaching the Chinese Learner: Psychological and Pedagogical Perspectives*, contributed a second paradox regarding the Chinese educational model; that of the Chinese teacher. They began their research by noting that students from CHCs showed academic scores superior to students of the West and then observed: “An interesting question thus arises: how do classrooms which are ostensibly filled with teacher dominated features (and thus not conducive to learning) produce such good learning outcomes? This is what we call the paradox of the Chinese teacher (p. 162).” Having first described the stereotypical authoritarian lecture orientated teacher perceived to dominate the Chinese classroom, Mok, et al. (2001) presented research regarding teaching found in Chinese classrooms and concluded, as noted before, that the stereotype of the Chinese teacher previously described might not be the full picture, saying “So what we have in many cases is highly active and attentive students learning within the framework of lessons carefully orchestrated by the teacher. Such a learning environment may not be that bad at all (p. 163).”

Using an approach called phenomenography, Mok, et al. (2001) examined Chinese teaching from the perspective of the learner. Their research argued that to adequately understand the Chinese classroom it was necessary to examine more than just the form of teaching in the classroom but instead, to also examine how teachers sequence and space and vary the learning process and how this sequencing and spacing was structured by the perception and awareness of learners. Mok, et al. (2001) reported that the Chinese teachers they observed “…successfully
engaged his students actively”, he “… probed into the surface and deep meaning of the text, whilst maintaining a high degree of control” … he “…determined when students should read and enact the passage, and when students should focus on words, sentences, or whole paragraphs of the story,” … and he “… asked questions that were prescribed in the examination paper (p. 176).”

Saying that it was not their purpose to argue for or prefer any particular type of classroom organization, Mok, et al. (2001) noted that what they observed of the Chinese teacher was

“as if he had an invisible script. He choreographed what the students were supposed to perform…The lesson is reminiscent of a dance in which the learners and objects of learning form a melody…It is indeed fascinating to see that such an arrangement is possible and actually exists in a whole-class teaching environment (p. 176).”

According to Mok, et al. (2001), the pattern of variation used by CHC teachers regarding their subject matter was the biggest difference between Chinese and the U.S. math classrooms. They explained this difference in pattern and variation by the following example:

The Chinese and Japanese mathematics classes are, as a rule, organized around one complex problem, or, in other words, ‘the problem of the day.’ The students are trying to find solutions and they find it in different ways. Different methods for solution are subsequently compared and the students’ attention is drawn to different aspects of the problem. In a typical American mathematics class, the teacher frequently introduces a particular method for solving a particular kind of problem and the students have to practice that method on a substantial number of different but similar problems. Chinese and Japanese students learn to do different things (finding different solutions, focusing on different aspects) to the same thing (‘the problem of the day’) while American students learn to do the same thing (applying the same method of solution) to different things (the problems they keep practicing on). There is, of course, a higher degree of complexity, a more advanced mathematical content, in the former case (p. 177).

Mock, et al. (2001) further argued that this timing and spacing (varying) of the teaching of subject content was equally applicable to all disciplinary subjects but their main point was that the degree to which levels of learning could be varied and even superimposed on other levels affected the levels of learning for Chinese learners and that this approach was frequently used by Chinese
teachers. They concluded by saying: “We have tried to make a culturally characteristic and powerful way of teaching visible…The paradox of the Chinese teacher we may not have solved fully. Some, however, would argue that there was no paradox to begin with (p. 177).”

Theatrical, well timed and sequenced, multi-layered, and friendly teacher presentations appear to produce a serious and thoughtful interaction between teachers and learners in the Chinese system of education. However, the question still remains of whether this is sufficient to be viewed as producing and achieving the goal of critical thought so valued in the West or, more particularly, Canadian graduate school, or whether it is merely a dressed up version of the “banking system” of education so often condemned by Freire.

3.5 Linguistic Characteristics and Learner Speech

Yum’s research (1988), represents a different approach to the analysis of learner speech of the Chinese learner compared to what has been presented. Though not directly addressing the paradox of the CHC learner, it was research that produced numerous insights possibly relevant to the use of speech by this learner. Starting with the proposition that communication patterns are the product of the underlying philosophy of a culture, Yum (1988) examined the languages of the cultures most representative of Confucian philosophy. Saying that “the basic assumption of this paper is that communication is a fundamental social process, and that, as such, it is influenced by the philosophical foundations and value systems of the society in which it is found (p. 374),” Yum (1988) limited the focus of her research “to China, Japan and Korea, East Asian countries that have been most influenced by Confucian philosophical principles (p. 375).” Yum then made numerous observations about communication patterns in these East Asian cultures (presumably Taiwan is viewed by her as included in the country of China) that arguably have relevance to the learning process of the CHC learner and his use of classroom speech in learning.

First, Yum (1988) argued that the primary purpose of communication in Confucian
philosophy was to “initiate, develop and maintain social relationships (p. 381)”, and that Confucian cultures placed emphasis on the kinds of communications that would promote these relationships. According to Yum (1988), there are four Confucian-derived communication characteristics in the cultures of East Asia that contrast with those of the West; each of them possibly having implications regarding the degree of learner classroom speech.

### 3.5.1 Process Verses Outcome

Yum (1988) described communication in CHCs as continuing and non-compartmentalized, an idea earlier expressed by Cheng (1987). According to Yum, CHC communications in most areas of interaction in CHCs were seen as on-going and in flux and that they engaged the parties in a constant and continual interpretation of their respective roles and relationships while in Western culture communications tended to be seen as short-term interactions where an exchange of information then resulted in termination of the relationship and the parties then moved to new sets of communication.

### 3.5.2 Language Differentiation

Yum (1988) suggested that the languages of East Asia had extremely complex differentiations that were necessary in CHCs in order to place greater emphasis on the age, social status, intimacy level, gender, and level of formality involved in communications than was found in Western languages where such characteristics were not so emphasized by the cultures. These characteristics were said to be shown by referential terms (such as Professor, Teacher, etc.) but also they were reflected in nouns, pronouns and verbs. According to Yum (1988), “They result from Confucian ethical rules that place the highest value on proper human relationships (i) and on propriety (li) (p. 382).” Yum (1988) said that though all languages included reference to such characteristics, they were much more present in East Asian languages. Yum (1988), drawing upon a concept formulated by Brown and Ford (1964), to the effect that language differentiation
increases according to the importance given to social position distinction required in the culture, then noted that “The importance of social relationships in Confucian societies has promoted the differentiation of linguistic codes to accommodate highly differentiated relationships (p. 383).” To illustrate the degree of language differentiation created to recognize different social relationships of these languages used in CHCs in comparison to English, Yum (1988) gave the follow example:

In English the pronoun ‘you’ is used to refer alike to the old and the young, to the president of the country and to the child next door. In East Asian languages, there are different words for ‘you’ depending on the level of politeness and upon the relationship. There is also the compulsory or preferential use of a term of address instead of the pronoun, as when one says: … ‘Is this Mr. Wang’s book?’ instead of, ‘Is this your book?’ (Chao as cited in Yum, p. 383). Actual role terms such as professor, aunt, student, and so forth, are used in place of the pronoun ‘you’ even in two-person communication, because they clarify and accentuate the relationships between the two communicators better than the simple second-person reference (Yum, pp. 382-383).

3.5.3 Indirect Versus Direct Communication (Considerations of Face)

Most cultures practice communications that are both direct and indirect. Some examples of indirect language are irony, metaphor, and suggestion. Cultures use such indirect communications as ways of being polite. The concept of politeness is derived from cultural ideas of concern for face (Brown and Levinson, 1978). Yum (1988) described the concept of face as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself or herself (p. 383).” Katriel (1986) suggested that indirect speech functioned to protect a listener’s face and that direct speech functioned to protect a speaker’s face. According to Searle (1969) indirect speech is when a speaker communicates more content than is actually expressly spoken by referring to some shared background information that both communicators know by reliance on the hearer’s rationality and ability to make inference. Yum (1988) explained that cultures vary in terms of the use of direct and indirect language but that in East Asian cultures “its use is much more prevalent and accepted as normative (p. 384)” than in the West. To illustrate the level of use of indirect communication in CHC cultures Yum (1988) gave examples from the Japanese:
An American might say, ‘The door is open,’ as an indirect way of asking the hearer to shut the door. In Japan, instead of saying ‘The door is open,’ one often says, ‘It is somewhat cold today.’ This is even more indirect, because no words refer to the door (Okabe as cited in Yum, p. 384). Operating at a still higher level of indirection, one Japanese wife communicated her discord with her mother-in-law to her husband by slight irregularities in her flower arrangements (Lebra as cited in Yum, p. 384).

3.5.4 Receiver Verses Sender-Centeredness (or Listener Verses Speaker Centeredness)

Yum (1988) asserted that communication in the West often focused on the speaker in communications. Therefore, in order to improve communication, the speaker’s contribution must be improved, must be clarified, must be more interest catching and attractive. On the other hand, Yum (1988) said: “… the interest in East Asia has always been on listening and interpretation (p. 384).” Noting that Cheng (1987) found infinite interpretation to be one of the central principle of Chinese communications, Yum (1988) explained “The process of such an infinite interpretation presumes that the emphasis is on the receiver and listening rather than the sender or speech making (pp. 384-385).” Since much CHC communication is indirect communication it requires great skill and sensitivity for listeners to catch the subtle shades of meaning included in speaker’s words. Where the emphasis and training in the West has been on teaching speakers to increase speaking skills, Yum (1988) said that the reverse is true in CHCs where emphasis has been on teaching listeners to increase their ability to interpret what is spoken. Yum (1988) asserted that the ultimate goal of communication in these cultures would be to reach the point where listener’s minds would be so sensitive and empathetic with speakers that spoken messages would become less and less important, if even necessary at all. Yum (1988) expressed this goal saying: “The highest sensitivity is reached when one empties one’s preconceptions and makes one’s mind as clear as a mirror. When such same-heartedness is established, the idea of communicating without using language at all follows (Yuji; Tsujimura as cited in Yum, p. 385).”

Though the CHC ideal goal of full, sensitive, empathetic, listening without preconception,
that achieves learner mind-mirroring of teachers may seem unrealistic, it is also suggested that an ideal goal of expecting Western professors to speak with perfect clarity about complicated intellectual concepts in a manner that attracts and keeps students’ attention over long periods of time and that results in students fully mind-mirroring the concepts may be an equally unrealistic goal. Yum (1998) makes no formal evaluation as to whether the communication encouraged by Asian languages such as Chinese promotes a better or lesser learning process in terms of independent critical learner thought but does effectively raise the question of whether the use of learner speech in education can be expected to be similar in different language environments. The question relates to the following research focusing on learner participation in educational processes and whether the type of mind-mirror classroom participation practiced by the Chinese learner is productive of critical thought.

3.6 Participation and Critical Thought in the Chinese Model: Implications for Learner Speech

Jin and Cortazzi (2006) confirm the descriptions of speech in the CHC learning process given by Yum (1998) and their research gives further light to the relationships of CHC teachers and students as they pursue the mental-mirror thinking expected of CHC students by their teachers. In examining the culture of learning of both pre-university as well as university levels in China, Jin and Cortazzi (2006) focused on the single aspect of classroom participation (including learner speech) and interaction.

Saying that they wanted to remind readers of the diversity of the Chinese culture (There are 55 officially recognized national minorities in China), Jin and Cortazzi (2006) focused on what they called the Chinese ‘cultures of learning (p. 9).’ Their examination revealed the existence of a teacher-centered, teacher/speaker learning process but one that seemingly included some degree of space for learner participation: They noted that
Observers of classes may be struck by the discipline and concentrated attention of students, the high pace and intensity of the teacher-centered interaction. This nevertheless can give learners extended opportunities for one-to-one conservation with the teacher to which the rest of the class listens carefully and may be asked for comments later (Jin & Cortazzi, p. 10).

Jin & Cortazzi (2006) described the position of the teacher in the CHC educational process, saying:

In the central relation between teacher and student, the teacher is often regarded as an authoritative parent to whom respect and obedience are due, but this classic relation of the image of filiality overlooks the reciprocity of caring, concern, and cherishing which also characterizes it in the Chinese tradition (p. 12).

In examining the roles expected of students as well as of teachers in the CHC educational process, Jin and Cortazzi (2006) clarified the almost severe filial like obligations of listening learners towards their speaking teachers in relation to their learner duties as well as expected contributions. They said:

While the common picture is one of heavy memorizing and disciplined reciting of texts in a transmission model of learning, this ignores the strong traditional elements of the student’s own efforts, the need for reflective thinking and independent interpretation, for internalization of understanding, and putting what is learned into practice. It is the combinations of these elements which characterizes student learning in the Confucian heritage… Students are exhorted to make continuous efforts to learn, since diligence ultimately outweighs ability, as seen in popular sayings, ‘If you make enough effort you can grind the iron pillar into a needle’ and ‘thirty percent talent and seventy percent study (p. 12).’

As previously noted, for a long period CHC learners were viewed by Western observers to be not only silent learners but also rote learners that seldom engaged in critical thought. In an observation that has relevance for the place and value of critical thinking in CHC educational values, Jin and Cortazzi, (2006) wrote:

Zhu Xi took up a well-known saying from the Confucian classic of The Mean and elaborated each phrase as the proper sequence of five steps for learning from any worthwhile text: ‘Study it extensively, question its meaning precisely, ponder it with full vigilance, scrutinize its distinctions with clarity of vision, and practice it in all earnestness’ (Plaks as cited in Jin and Cortazzi, p. 13). This Confucian model of study was linked to continuous effort and fostering independence of mind in a willingness to doubt others’ views as well as one’s own preconceived views: ‘In reading don’t force your ideas in the text. You must get rid of your own ideas…’; the student must first of all know how to doubt’ (Gardner as cited in Jin and
Cortazzi, p. 13).

In addition to showing learner qualities of careful listening, reflection, application, diligence, and one-on-one discussion with caring, knowledgeable teachers, Jin and Cortazzi (2006) also described an additional learner practice that was encouraged in the Chinese learner which might be seen as relating to critical thought. It was described as involving speech but it involved student speech of a solitary kind that reflected a disciplined kind of informal self-study grounded in memorization. They noted that:

…self-study can be seen on many university campuses in the early mornings when near a bench, a patch of grass, or a flower bed learners stand upright or sit very straight, alone or spaced about a meter from others similarly engaged, and repeat aloud sentences and texts (in English or in Chinese, often in loud voices) while holding a book straight in front at chest level. Verbally, the students are memorizing through repeated practice, but for many it does not seem to be ‘rote-learning’ but rather, an example of ‘memorizing as a way of understanding’ in which input is internalized and memorized but understanding comes later in reflective practice (p. 11).

This solitary speech not only reflects a kind of internal learning process that arises out of memorization. It also raises an issue as to whether such internal, solitary mental exercises that include learner speech can be productive of critical thought. Gardener (1990) seemed to suggest that development of an independence of mind and a willingness to doubt others can arise through the mostly solitary and independent speech process of study, question, ponder, scrutinize, and practice. On the other hand, Freire (2000) appears to be doubtful that such solitary exercises can produce the independent and critical thought that enables learners to jointly reconstruct a socially fair world with teachers and other learners. His learner speech appears to require a more social and interactive speech; one that is less purely abstract, solitary, and theoretical. He says:

Education as the practice of freedom—as opposed to education as the practice of domination—denies that man is abstract, isolated, dependent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from people. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without people, but people in their relations with the world. In these relations consciousness and world are
simultaneous: consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it (p.81).

3.7 Two Cultural Exemplar Educational Frameworks

Arguing that educational models are only meaningful within the context of their own particular culture, the underlying values of Confucianism were contrasted with those of Western education by Tweed and Lehman (2002). Offering Socrates and Confucius as exemplars to create a framework within which Western and Chinese learners could be discussed, Tweed and Lehman (2002) made numerous arguments, two of which related directly to the question of learner speech in each of the respective exemplars.

3.7.1 Early Versus Postponed Learner Questioning

Culturally Western (Socratic influenced) learners were found by the Tweed and Lehman (2002) exemplar framework to value an early questioning and evaluation of materials presented by instructors. Tweed and Lehman (2002) suggested this reflected the value placed on individualism in the West where questioning the ideas of others is thought to show the positively viewed value of learner independence. They argued that “From this individualistic perspective, the ideal type of thinking is that which doubts and evaluates others’ thinking and generates new ideas (p. 95).” They further pointed out that educational authorities such as Chomsky (1968) had called for learners to question authorities saying it was a major responsibility of intellectuals to, through questioning, expose and reveal lies told by cultural authorities. In fact, Tweed and Lehman (2002) noted that Chomsky (1992) “seemed to imply that students engaged in absorptive learning are not really learning at all (p. 95),” a position largely reflecting Freire’s (2000) caution that true education cannot consist in a pseudo education:

A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice co-intentional education. Teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover
themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement (p. 69).

On the other hand, the Tweed and Lehman (2002) exemplar framework suggested that culturally Chinese learners, in line with the ideas of Hofstede’s (1984) findings, tended to be more accepting of power distance between themselves and instructors and believed that expressions of doubt had the potential to threaten social harmony by disrupting this expected power distance. Asserting that “Students who are sensitized to perceive and accept power distance are more likely to withhold questions that threaten such power distance (Tweed and Lehman, 2002, p. 95),” Tweed and Lehman (2002) pointed out that similar conclusions were reached in research considering Chinese and Australia students reactions to videotaped teacher-student interactions (Gallois, Barker, Jones, & Callan, 1992), in research regarding comparison of tutorial participation difficulties between Chinese and local students in Australia (Mullins, Quintrell, & Hancock, 1995; see also Barker et al., 1991), and in observational research that found Asian Canadian students much less likely to speak out in a number of situations compared to European Canadian students (Duncan & Paulhus, 1999).

Pratt and Wong (1999) were also offered for consideration regarding the questioning traits (or lack of questioning traits) of culturally Chinese learners. They compared Chinese and Western students and instructors and found that Chinese students as well as instructors tended to emphasize the authoritative character of both instructors and text as compared to Western students and instructors. Prat and Wong (1999) suggested that, for culturally Chinese learners, the learning process started with a careful consideration of information from the text as well as from the instructor and only much later in the learning process was questioning by learners expected to occur. They found that for the culturally Chinese learner the typical sequence of learning involved the following four stages: memorizing, understanding, applying, and questioning. Tweed and
Lehman (2002) explained the difference in the sequential role of questioning between culturally Chinese learners and culturally Western learners by saying: “The location of criticism at the end of the learning process contrasts with Western encouragements of learners’ questioning and evaluating throughout the learning process (p. 96).”

Unlike most reported research, the Tweed and Lehman (2002) analysis suggests that learner speech in the Confucian educational model exists but its place in the learning sequence simply occurs much later than in the Canadian and Western educational model. To place it at the beginning of the sequence would be to violate power-distance expectations that the Confucian cultural exemplar has regarding the relationship of teachers and students.

In another finding related to learners’ assertion of independence through using speech to question authority, Tweed and Lehman (2002) reported that their exemplar framework revealed that culturally Western learners were more likely than culturally Chinese learners to assert independence in the cognitive domain by expressing their own personal hypotheses, a theme and practice Tweed and Lehman (2002) said was of increasing importance in Western education (see, e.g., Bruffee, 1993). On the other hand, culturally Chinese learners were said by Tweed and Lehman (2002) to be “… more likely to strive to demonstrate that they have acquired, have been changed by, and can work with essential knowledge (Cai; Pratt & Wong as cited in Tweed & Lehman, p. 96)” rather than attempt to assert their own independent thoughts and hypotheses. Although Tweed and Lehman (2002) acknowledged that their framework found culturally Chinese learners to be more likely to focus upon acquisition of essentials rather than developing of personal hypotheses, they argued that this “Confucian acquisition of essentials should not be confused with passive learning or mere absorption (p. 96).” Instead, they argued that a form of active learning can be found in both the Confucian as well Socratic exemplars, saying:

Both Socratic and Confucian learners, however, can be construed as active. The
Socratic learner must actively work to find knowledge within the self; the Confucian learner must actively work to acquire, understand, and apply essential concepts coming mainly from outside the self. In this sense, Confucian acquisition of essentials occurs not through passive absorption but through constructing within the self the knowledge that the collective considers essential (p. 96).

According to Tweed and Lehman (2002), it seems Western learners are taught to value personal assertion of individually constructed knowledge early in the learning sequence while Chinese learners seek to demonstrate a personal absorption and application of previously teacher constructed knowledge. Clearly, Tweed and Lehman (2002) believed that both learners employed learner speech but they employed them for different purposes and at different times in the learning process. Though both actively participated in the learning process, the Chinese learner’s participation appears to be a delayed one and one that avoids challenging until very secure in having first absorbed teacher offered knowledge.

3.7.2 Teacher Directed Verses Learner Self-Direction

A final product of the Tweed and Lehman (2002) Socratic-Confucian exemplar framework that might have implications for learner speech was the finding that, based on the Socratic principle that knowledge pre-existed in the learner, there was a greater tendency in culturally Western learners to feel a need to pursue learning in a self-directed rather than teacher-directed manner. On the other hand, culturally Chinese learners, based on numerous texts in the Analects that appear to presume the need for competent teachers to provide good learning strategies for learners, felt a greater need for learning activities to be externally teacher guided. The difference seems to be one of: if the learner can choose learning direction, then he also “speaks” for himself, but if others (teachers) chose learning direction, then learner speaking becomes less necessary. It should be here noted that this difference would seem to disqualify the Confucian approach from Freire’s perspective. It would suggest that the Chinese learner’s late developing speech is a fraudulent speech that comes not from himself as a representation of his reality but rather from his teacher.
and the teacher’s representation of reality. For Freire, the oppressed classes were beings for others and the goal of Freirean education was not to use learner speech to integrate the learner into the system but rather to restructure the system so that the learner could become a being for himself. Freire (2000) wrote:

The truth is, however, that the oppressed are not ‘marginals,’ are not people living ‘outside’ society. They have always been ‘inside’—inside the structure which made them ‘beings for others.’ The solution is not to ‘integrate’ them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become ‘beings for themselves’ (p. 74).

Tweed and Lehman (2002) further noted that allowing learners great freedom of choice (self-direction) in the learning process was supposed to correlate with the increased value placed upon intrinsic learning motivation in the West (see, e.g., Dewey, 1916) and that research in the West supported the idea that decreased freedom of learner choice (teacher-direction) in the learning process correlated with decreases in intrinsic learner motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). However, Tweed and Lehman (2002) pointed out that these findings did not appear to be applicable to culturally Chinese learners saying that in Iyengar and Lepper (1999)

it was found that personal choice enhanced motivation for Anglo American children, but for Asian American children, peak motivation was observed not when they freely choose their activities but when their activities were chosen for them by trusted peers or trusted authority figures (p. 96).

3.7.3 Caveats

Tweed and Lehman (2002) expressed serious limits and qualifications regarding their analysis in order to avoid unnecessary controversy with other researchers. Acknowledging that “Any framework, such as our Confucian–Socratic one, that describes cultural differences inevitably must over-simplify in some ways the rich cultural interplay” they offered a number of caveats. Tweed and Lehman (2002) recognized that the two contrasted groups of learners (Chinese and Western) were not in fact homogeneous, they said that they intended no implications or
assumptions about genetic differences in the two groups, and that they intended no evaluation of
the two cultural groups or the academic, learning abilities within each group. Finally, they stated
that they intended no suggestion regarding causation between the two exemplars and student
learning in the East or West and explained their purpose in offering their exemplars, saying: “Using
these ancient exemplars, we construct a framework for organizing previous findings and for
generating hypotheses regarding culturally Chinese and culturally Western learners in the modern
context (p. 89).” Though their efforts to avoid academic controversy were extensive, they were not
effective. Perhaps the most authoritative researcher regarding the Chinese learner, Li (2003), had
noticed their research and she had much to say in response to it.

3.8 Confucian and Western Exemplars: Li Replies to Tweed and Lehman

Even with the extensive caveats of Tweed and Lehman (2002), their propositions
encountered strong protest by Li (2003). These protests served to highlight important contrasts in
the underlying philosophical values of the educational approaches associated with the two
exemplars and also served as indicators of the much more extensive distinctions regarding the
Chinese learner as well as the role of learner speech that would later be offered by Li to distinguish
the two approaches.

Li (2003) responded forcefully to the Socratic-Confucian framework of Tweed and
Lehman (2002). Noting agreement with Tweed and Lehman that learners from both Eastern and
Western educational traditions could benefit from consideration of the others’ traditions, Li (2002)
nevertheless then complained that though their article (Tweed & Lehman, 2002) and its
Socratic/Confucian dichotomy was thoughtful and might prove useful, it was “… a dichotomy that
does not do justice to the Confucian learning model revered by Chinese (p. 147).” Li (2003) then
made a number of charges against the Tweed and Lehman (2002) dichotomy in attempting to show
how it had unfairly treated the Confucian model of education as perceived by Li (2003) to be
practiced in CHCs. In doing so she provided additional insight into the role of speech in the learning of the Chinese learner.

Li’s (2003) first charge was that Tweed and Lehman failed to recognize that the epistemological basis of the two learning models were entirely different, saying that the one was concerned with the discovery of truth, with mind, with articulation and the process of challenging of ideas while the other involved a life-long commitment to personal achievement of ren, a pursuit described by Tu (1979) as a life-long striving for any human being to become the most genuine, sincere, and humane person he or she can become. According to Li (2003), the Socratic educational model involves teachers and learners in the process of truth finding especially in the world of nature whereas the Confucian educational model is about “moral striving” which Li (2003) says “is very different from Western epistemology (p. 147).” Though she does not say it, Li (2003) seemed to imply that learner speech may be more necessary in a Socratic exploration of the natural world than in the Confucian pursuit of moral excellence.

Li (2003) secondly criticized what she perceived as an assertion of Tweed and Lehman (2002) that the purpose of learning in the Confucian model was primarily pragmatic and focused on getting an economic position. According to Li (2003), the Confucian approval of learners’ seeking government jobs in the past was not to be confused with personal pragmatism but was to be properly understood as actually representing the obligation of the Chinese learner to bring ren to government and to thereby individually make words into deeds and to make contribution through application of Confucian values to the social positions of the larger society.

A third criticism of Li (2003) focused on the idea that Confucian learners found the idea of learning for the sake of learning (intrinsic motivation) as a foreign notion and that they were not interested in critical thought or verbal exchange of ideas in achieving learning. In response to this suggestion, Li (2003) pointed out that the core of the Confucian model consisted in the idea that
learners seek to achieve their own personal moral advancement and that learning therefore was an intrinsic goal of personal improvement and not extrinsic at all. Li (2003) further explained that this pursuit of moral improvement caused teachers to be more concerned with what learners did and what they displayed and how they applied ideas, rather than merely being concern with what they said. Li (2003) explained:

Given the moral purpose, Confucius insisted that the standard of self-perfection be what the person does, not what the person says, that is, living the moral principles instead of relying on verbalizing or thinking about these principles (Chang, 1997). Therefore, Chinese culture devalues talking without action. Asian learners are encouraged to observe and to show what they do. However, this emphasis does not mean that Asian learners lack critical thinking skills, are passive or are unwilling to participate. The authors (Tweed & Lehman, 2002) cited Asian students’ tendency not to speak out in class, assuming that speaking is conducive to learning whereas not speaking is lack of engagement. This assumption is challenged by research documenting that seemingly quiet Japanese learners turned out to be just as actively engaged as more verbal learners (Inagaki, Hatano, & Morita, 1998) (cited in Li, p. 147).

Finally, Li (2003) challenged Tweed and Lehman (2002) on her perception of their apparent assumption that respect for teachers caused Confucian learners to be passive and obedient. According to Li (2003), the Confucian model did emphasize the idea of respect and especially respect for teachers but Li (2003) argued that the Confucian view was actually not one of learner obedience that flowed from respect for teachers but rather it was one that believed that learner humility was the best path to learning and this led to great respect for those who contributed to the learning advancement of the learner. Li (2003) explained it as follows:

The assumption was that respect for one’s teachers must cause one to be passive and obedient. Admittedly, respect is an important concept in the Confucian model. However, it does not stem from the notion of obedience but from the concept of humility associated with Confucian ren and junzi (Tu, 1979). The Confucian model regards every person as always in need of improving himself or herself and, ideally, always open and ready to learn from anyone, whether a sage or a person on the street…Belief in humility may lead Asians to be self-effacing a behavioral tendency often taken as a sign of obedience. Asians are respectful not because they are afraid of their teachers or because they have no questions but because they are brought up with the idea that humility ensures better learning. They are taught to listen
attentively and to question only after they have understood others (p. 147).

Although Li (2003) did not appear to challenge the idea of using general, large-scale models/exemplars in order to analyze the contrast between Western and Confucian learners, Li (2003) did make a strong argument that the Confucian exemplar framework offered by Tweed and Lehman (2002) had a number of defects. They included representations of the Chinese learner as purely pragmatic, as obedient to the point of being unthinking, and as largely silent. She argued to amend the exemplar in terms of them being learners with a different purpose, whose humility compelled them to seek knowledge from any source, and as learners who sought not only to absorb but to then apply knowledge. Though she made a strong case for the learning style and listening approach of the quiet Chinese learner she failed to specifically explain the role of learner speech in this research but she was to later make an even stronger and more detailed case explaining the Chinese learner’s approach to speech in her 2012 book entitled Cultural foundations of learning: East and West. Before getting to the arguments regarding the Chinese learner that later developed between Li (2012) and the author of an even more recent book in 2014 by Yao Zhao, the next research looks specifically at various strategies regarding silence used by Chinese learners as they attempt to adapt to the speech rich Western classroom.

3.9 Chinese Learners in Western University Classrooms: Different Sounds of Silence

In 2002, Jun Liu offered the results of interesting research regarding three graduate students from mainland China as part of larger ethnographic research of communication patterns of 20 Asian students studying in Western classrooms. Noting the tendency of culturally Chinese learners to be relatively silent in Western classrooms, Liu (2002) examined the roles that silence plays in communication patterns and especially how misunderstanding can be the result of silence being viewed and treated differently in different cultures. Liu (2002) made the case that silence was not just an absence of speech but that instead what it is, what it means, and how and when it is used
varies culturally. Furthermore, because silence is so subject to interpretation it holds great potential to cause misunderstanding, especially in the context of education when learners participate in the learning environment of another culture. Acknowledging that language skills may be one of the variables that cause students from culturally Chinese societies to be silent in Western classrooms, Liu (2002) nevertheless says, “While this linguistic explanation sounds plausible, it fails to consider the fact that many Chinese students who have lived in the target culture for a while and who have obtained a fairly high level of communicative competence are still quiet in their content classrooms (p. 38).” Liu (2002) argues that beyond the category of linguistic skills there are other factors that explain the silence of learners of culturally Chinese backgrounds. Noting that “Silence shared norms are the filter through which behaviors are measured… (p. 40)”, Liu (2002) said silence may signify either approval or disapproval, a way of communicating indirectly, a marker of power either exercised by the learner or by the instructor, or a way of achieving face-saving for both participants of an interaction while preserving social stability. Having explained the potential of silence to bring about misunderstanding across cultural lines, Liu (2002) then presented an analysis of three graduate students from China who studied in a large, mid-western U. S. university. Each of the students examined by Liu (2002) represented different Chinese learner strategies regarding the use of silence in their Western classrooms. Their strategies were as described below:

A) Yuan represented a strategy of general silence in class interrupted by carefully chosen speaking when he was confident that his questions were not silly and unnecessary and his knowledge of content was very secure. Liu (2002) argued that when his strategy was successful Yuan acquired positive face for himself as well as for other Chinese peers in the class. The challenges for Yuan were in having correct English grammar thought out in advance and in knowing just when it was the right time for him to speak.
Yuan did not see speech as absolutely necessary for learning except when it represented higher insights or levels of thought and he saw silence as a way of showing respect for the teacher. Liu (2002) described Yuan’s strategy by saying: “The key to Yuan’s classroom participation pattern is his sensitivity in when to ask what and how. As seen, Yuan did not perceive oral classroom participation as an absolute necessity unless the questions asked or the issues raised were of a high quality” (p 43).

B) Jian’s silence represented a strategy of concealing his self-perceived language weakness in order to maintain personal face. Only when participation was graded and when he felt very prepared did he speak in his classes. Jian said that he had often written out and practiced asking questions that he had in the class but that the discussion process was too rapid for him to follow so he would wait and ask his questions to other classmates or to the professor after class. Jian justified his failure to speak in class by saying that the Chinese tradition was for students to be passive absorbers of information from an authoritative teacher and that even if students had different opinions than the teacher it was right to keep quiet to avoid any confrontation and, if it were necessary to ask questions, it should be done with the teacher after class. At first Jian was surprised at the number of questions students asked the teacher as well at the teacher being willing to admit that he sometimes did not know the answers to students’ questions. Though he was not at first positive to student speech in class, Jian became become positive to classroom oral discussion because he felt he benefited by listening to the exchanges. Liu (2002) described Jian’s strategy regarding silence by saying: “Jian’s perceptions towards oral classroom participation were overall positive. However, two major factors accounted for his inactive oral classroom participation mode: his lack of confidence in speaking English in class due to his poor speaking abilities, and his
Chinese ideology of a good student being someone who should ‘listen attentively’” (p. 45).

C) Nan represented a silence strategy of never speaking in class. She had very high TOFEL and GRE scores but her English hearing and speaking skills were very limited. When she first started the graduate program she estimated that she understood between 20 and 30 percent of what was said in class. Her strategy to save personal face was to listen very closely in class, to note all questions she had, then to read the text and literature to answer them first, to consult with her Chinese peers in Chinese second, and then, if necessary, to meet privately with the professor. She estimated that she spent three or four times as long in preparing for her classes as her peers. Though she believed that class discussion was useful and she reported that she liked it as a learning approach, her evaluation of herself in the class came solely from her performance on the exams. If she performed well on the exams, then she believed that she had learned well regardless that she did not participate in class discussion. Liu (2002) said of Nan, “Nan valued gains rather than means. She cared about her scores, which is a strong indication of her gaining face in the eyes of others. She firmly believed that a high score was the true reflection of her knowledge and ability… she evaluated the course by what she actually learned regardless of how much she participated in discussion, or how many questions she asked in class” (p. 47).

Liu (2002) argues that all second language students need to learn not only the language of their classrooms but also the ways in which silence constitutes a part of that language in order to avoid important misunderstandings that may affect their success in the classroom, saying: “Thus, acquiring communicative competence in the L2 also means acquiring silence patterns: knowing what to say to whom, when, where, and why, and also what to leave unsaid” (p. 52). For example,
in the case of Chinese learners, their first language silence patterns that represent respect for teachers, sincere concentration and reflection on content, and regard for social stability and concern about wasting others’ time, when unthinkingly imported into their second language classroom environments may be seen as being unprepared, unconcerned, having nothing to add to the analysis, or worse. Liu (2002) describes the potential misunderstanding as follows:

This is a conflict between their L1 cultural norms and the L2 Classroom expectations, which may be doubly difficult to resolve when linguistic resources are limited. Central to this conflict is the cross-cultural misunderstanding. Such cross-cultural misunderstandings occur when Chinese students’ silent behaviour in class as a way to show respect to the teacher or as a concern over wasting other students’ time is thought of as a lack of respect or lack of engagement in the class; when Chinese students’ sense of politeness in class by avoiding expressing conflicting ideas and opinions in order to maintain group cohesion and harmony is interpreted as a lack of independent thinking; when Chinese students’ face-saving strategies in keeping silent to avoid making mistakes in speaking or to be modest are thought of as indications of the lack of communicative competence; and when Chinese students’ willingness to speak up in class is not directly transferred to action because of their anxiety in speaking in a second language in front of L1 speakers (Liu, 2001a, 2001b) (p. 52).

Liu (2002) concluded the article by asking, “What needs to be done when we encounter cross-cultural conflicts in American classrooms (p. 52)?” Earlier in the article Liu (2002) had largely answered this question in arguing that “…Chinese students like Yuan, Jian and Nan might find it more valuable and useful to construct and keep multiple identities in various communities and social settings” (p. 52). This would seem to imply that Liu (2002) placed the burden of adaptation of multiple identities upon the Chinese learners. However, Liu (2002) also raised the question of what efforts Western educators should make to encourage Chinese learners. These two questions would seem to be natural and expected questions to be considered by educators. However, Liu’s (2002) final question seems to imply that the issue is one to be “negotiated.” It is the following: “Last but not least to what extent can people from the target culture communities and students from minority cultures, such as Chinese students, negotiate silence in classrooms to
enhance intercultural communication?” (p. 53). Such language appears to suggest that there is a process of competition (or conflict) that can become one of compromise between two different camps, each with differing approaches to both teaching and learning. If so, what could better describe this process than one that is dialectical? The analysis of the research data suggests that when each camp compromises and recognizes the position of the other that many Chinese learners can and do move toward some version of Western educational values regarding learner speech. Whether their attempts at learner speech satisfy a Freirean criterion is another question.

### 3.10 Learner Speech: Situation and Context Specific and Modifiable by Teachers

An additional example of research that examined the supposed reticence and passiveness of Chinese learners that argued that their speech reticence is dependent upon the learning environment provided to them is Zhou et al. (2005). Having first noted the reported reticence and passiveness of Chinese learners (e.g. Jin & Cortazzi, 1993; Flowerdew & Miller, 1995; Turner & Hiraga, 1996; Liu & Littlewood, 1997 and Liu, 2002), their unwillingness to engage in dialectic and analytic discourse (Turner & Hiraga, 1996), their being less likely to challenge or question their teachers (Bond, 1999, cited in Chan 1999), their use silence in the classroom as a means of insuring class harmony (Ho & Crookall, 1995), their preferred teacher-centered style of teaching and great respect for teachers (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996); their unfamiliarity with learner speaking in their previous education, their preference for less speaking participation and their concern with limiting student speaking in order to avoid showing off (Liu & Littlewood, 1997), Zhou et al. (2005) argued that while cultural difference and language ability were important factors in determining the level of class participation of Chinese learners, that these factors “intersect with a wide range of other elements such as reciprocal cultural familiarity and power differentials between different languages, cultures and knowledge” and that “We argue that the reticence to participate among Chinese students cannot be adequately explained by reducing these experiences
to their ‘cultural difference’ and/or their communication capacity alone (p. 307).” Zhou et al. (2005) suggested that cultural differences and language cannot alone explain the reticence of the Chinese learner because as cultural familiarity and language proficiency increased, reticence remained among many of the Chinese learners. Instead, they argued that more research attention needed to be paid to the environment and processes of the classroom. Along these lines, they pointed out that when Chinese learners perceived receptiveness in the classroom to their knowledge they were more willing to engage in classroom participation. The research summarized their findings in saying that though both cultural differences and language are important, “The classroom processes, in which Chinese students make decisions about knowledge sharing, is context specific or situationally constructed and thus changeable (Zhou et al., 2005, p. 308).”

Both Liu (2002) as well as Zhou et al. (2005) suggest that the classroom speech of the Chinese learner does not have to be non-existent, that there can be negotiated methods of learning involving learner speech if Western teachers are willing, that there are different strategies used by Chinese learners in Western classrooms regarding speech, and that their classroom speech practices are changeable and modifiable depending on the environment and situation of each classroom.

A final example of research that relates to Chinese learner speech in the Western classroom is Li and Jia (2006). Li and Jia (2006) conducted research in the United States as well as in China that challenged earlier research that had found the culturally Chinese learner to be reticent speakers and passive knowledge absorbers in classroom learning (Flowerdew & Miller, 1995; Jin & Cortazzi, 1993; Song, 1995; Turner & Hiraga, 1996). Their research suggested that teacher approaches as well as other factors could influence this supposed trait of the Chinese learner, thus supporting the findings of both Liu (2002) and Zhou et al. (2005).

Focusing mostly on English as Second Language (ESL) classes for undergraduate college
students where three separate classes of students were all Chinese in China and where one class of students in the United States had ten out of thirteen East Asian students with the other three being Turkish, Spanish and Portuguese, Li and Jia (2006) pointed out that there was increasing evidence of passiveness in East Asian students. However, they also argued that there existed various limitations on the earlier research (e.g., excessive focus on teacher expectation of participation and too little focus on peer expectation, use of simple observation or survey format in previous research rather than solicitation of students’ own perceptions of class participation, and focus on behavioral aspects of students’ participation while ignoring non-verbal aspects of students’ participation) that justified further research. Based on their ethnographic research approach, Li and Jia (2006) found that in both their United States and China focus groups East Asian learners tended toward being silent absorbers in their classes but that in the right circumstances they could transform into very active, participatory learners. Furthermore, they found that though their subjects had tendencies toward passive learning, all of the East Asian students in their research reported valuing and liking approaches to learning that included student oral participation in the classroom. Li and Jia (2006) acknowledged that various factors such as linguistic competence, sociocultural factors, pedagogical factors, peer students’ influence, personality, etc. inhibit East Asian students’ oral class participation. However, they argued that with awareness of cultural differences in classroom expectations by both teachers and student, with teacher encouragement, teacher creativeness, teacher awareness of student interests and topic selection, teacher creation of space for participation and opportunities for preparation before performance, and with careful use of eye contact indicating appropriateness of participation, East Asian students had the ability and the interest to become active and effective participants in classroom learning. Li and Jia (2006) said:

So what we found different from other studies is that East Asian students do not hold a ‘negative attitude to participation’ (Flowerdew & Miller as cited in Li & Jia, 2006). Instead, they like it and are able and willing to participate actively. However,
one’s intention to perform a behavior does not guarantee its occurrence because circumstances may intervene between intention and action (Ajzen as cited in Li & Jia, 2006). Therefore, East Asian students’ intention to participate cannot be put into action without a supportive classroom climate and context or space which allows them to actually speak up in class (Liu as cited in Li & Jia, p. 205).

Whatever the original training of the Chinese learner, it appears that this learner can both enjoy and participate in the Western Canadian classroom in some classroom circumstances. The question remains however as to his capacity to engage in meaningful, critical learning in the Western classroom when continuing to rely upon his culturally Chinese, more silent methods of learning and as to how close his speech efforts might come to satisfying a Freirean version of learner speech. The most recent research regarding this question appears to continue to be mixed. Li (2009; 2012) seemingly suggesting yes, and Zhao (2014) confidently asserting no.

3.11 Most Recent Views of the Chinese Learner: The Chinese Learner Revisited

In 2009, the third in a series of books starting with *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological, and Contextual Influences* (Watkins & Biggs, 1996) and followed by *Teaching the Chinese learner: Psychological and pedagogical perspective* (Watkins & Biggs, 2001), was published under the title of *Revisiting the Chinese Learner: Changing Contexts, Changing Education* (Chan & Rao, 2009)”. In the preface, Chan and Rao (2009) explained that much had changed since the publication of *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological, and Contextual Influences*, and the idea that Chinese learners were rote and passive learners had, they said, been debunked. Chan and Rao (2009) pointed out that now many Western educationalists looked to Asian classrooms to discover educational secrets that could possibly be useful in different cultural contexts and that the view of Chinese learners being rote, passive learners had been replaced with “a somewhat glamorized view of Chinese learners as successful and competent learners (p. xvii).” Therefore, they suggested that the usefulness of CHCs adopting Western educational approaches had begun to be questioned and further suggested that there might be merit in CHC approaches.
They argued that their book was necessary because of the rate of change that was taking place in the new information era as well as because of the necessity to move beyond reliance upon the dichotomies used in previous research so as to arrive at a better understanding of the Chinese learner. After reformulating the paradoxes of the Chinese learner and of the Chinese teacher (previously noted), they wrote that the purpose of their book was “To explain the paradoxes and to examine contemporary and future Chinese learners (Chan & Rao, 2009, p. 13).”

3.11.1 The Chinese Learner According to Li (2009)

Surely one of the most powerful voices in revisiting and reformulating the paradoxes of the Chinese learner is Jin Li. Making a chapter contribution in “Revisiting the Chinese Learner: Changing Contexts, Changing Education”, Li (2009) argued that the attitudes of learners toward learning were as important as their learning capacity and that learners’ attitudes toward learning were derived from their culture. Noting the Stevenson and Stigler (1992) announcement of a learning gap between CHC learners and Western learners, Li noted the continuance of the gap and then after reviewing a list of possible explanations for the gap that included longer school periods and more homework (Chen & Stevenson, 1989), more effective pedagogical practices (Hess and Azuma, 1991; Lewis, 1995; Matsushita, 1994; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999); higher parental expectations and involvement (Au & Harackiewicz, 1986; Shon & Ja, 1982; Yao, 1985); a greater student hope of social mobility (Salili, Chiu, & Lai, 2001; Sue & Okazaki, 1990); and greater belief in effort rather than ability (Hau & Salili, 1991; Holloway, 1988; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992), Li (2009) observed that though these findings were valuable, there yet remained four major barriers to understanding the learning attitudes and the achievement of Chinese learners.

3.11.2 Barriers to Understanding Chinese Learners

First, Li (2009) was critical of the “highly general, often dichotomous conceptual frameworks that divide peoples and the world’s cultures based on opposites (p. 39)” such as ability
versus effort, intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation, inquiry based versus rote-learning, and individualist versus collectivistic cultures and selves. Second, Li (2009) criticized the practice of attempting to ignore cultural influences in determining learners’ attitudes toward learning, arguing that learning must be researched by taking its cultural context into account. Third, Li (2009) was critical of what she believed was a Western tendency of viewing Asian education (CHC education) as only a means to social and economic mobility although she did admit that this had led to what she called the necessary evil of the famous Asian examination system. Finally, Li (2009) was critical of the tendency of researchers attempting to use concepts from one culture (the West) and to then blindly attempt to apply them to other cultures (Asian cultures). Of the four barriers to understanding Chinese learner learning attitudes and achievement listed by Li (2009), the one most relevant to the present research is the last one, especially as it relates to student speech as part of learning.

Li (2009) offered the research of Kim (2002) to illustrate how blind application of concepts from one culture to another might act as a barrier to understanding of learning attitudes and achievement. Kim (2002) had investigated the quietness of Asian students and their beliefs about speaking or not speaking in relation to learning in the classroom. Li (2009) observed that it had long been the belief in the West that learner speaking in the classroom correlated with learning (no speaking meant no learning) while the opposite was true of Asian students (Duncan & Paulhus, 1998; Kim & Markus, 2002; Tweed & Lehman, 2002; Winner, 1989). However, Kim (2002) had concluded that European-American students believed that speaking in class did enhance performance but, on the other hand, Asian-American students were much less likely to have this belief. Equally important was Kim’s finding that performance did not decrease with increased speaking in class for European-American students while increased class room speaking did interfere with performance for Asian-American students. Li (2009) used these points to argue that
cultural level beliefs have an impact upon individual learners regardless of other variables and that findings in one culture cannot accurately be automatically transferred to another. Of the research conducted by Kim (2002), Li (2009) said:

This study illustrates how some long-held Western assumptions about processes, efficacy and effectiveness of learning cannot be readily be applied to the study of non-Western cultures… Our understanding will be enriched if we look into learners’ own thoughts, feelings, and behavior as they are developed in their respective cultural contexts (p. 43).

3.11.3 Chinese Cultural Level Learning Beliefs

Following her own advice, Li’s (2009) research focused on the Chinese cultural level attitudes (what I call the big picture) about learning and achievement, their relationship and influence upon individual level beliefs (what I call the small picture), and the learning beliefs that Chinese children have.

In her examination of the cultural level of the Chinese learner (the big picture), Li (2009) focused her examination on the purpose of learning, the model of the Chinese teacher, the learning process used in Chinese education, and the Chinese belief system regarding learning.

3.11.4 The Chinese Purpose of Learning

Li (2009) notes that Lee (1996) gave a historical account of basic Confucian learning values and argued that they continue to affect Chinese learners, saying that the most enduring belief and value was the idea that humans could move toward self-perfection through the process of learning thus making individual self-perfection the primary purpose of learning for Chinese learners. Li (2009) further noted that Cheng (1996) collected data from both rural and urban Chinese that confirmed Lee’s (1996) assertion regarding this purpose of learning for Chinese, saying that “Cheng concluded that Chinese parents, whether well off or poor, send their children to school not to learn literacy or numerical skills but rather to become knowledgeable about the world, able to function well in social situations, and most important of all, morally cultivation (p.
Finally, Li (2009) noted that Ran (2001) also further confirmed that in Chinese education the goal and purpose was one of continuous self-perfection in finding that though British teachers focused on the high achievement of their Chinese students, the Chinese parents of the students focused instead upon their children’s need for harder materials in order that their children would continue to self-improve regardless of their past achievement.

3.11.5 The Model of the Chinese Teacher

Li (2009) also argued that the model of the Chinese teacher is different than the model of the West. Li (2009) pointed out the previously mentioned Jin and Cortazzi (1998) finding that a good teacher in the British system was one who could stimulate student interest, explain concepts clearly, give good instructions, and organize activities well but that the good Chinese teacher was described as one who had deep knowledge, could answer students’ questions, and that was a good moral model for students. This teacher model contrast was further supported regarding teachers of specific disciplines by Gao and Watkins (2001) when they found that, unlike Western science teachers, Chinese science teachers, in addition to academic content, also emphasized moral guidance.

3.11.6 The Chinese View of the Learning Process

Li (2009) said that Marton et al. (1996) found that the rote learning and memorization used by Chinese learners and often criticized by the West as an ineffective and shallow process, was actually believed by Chinese learners to be a process and strategy by which to achieve deeper understanding. Dahlin and Watkins (2000) had also found that British and Chinese students used memorization differently. British students believed the process of understanding to be something that happened suddenly and they used memorization to check and confirm the accuracy of the understanding they believed they had achieved. On the other hand, Chinese students believed that the process of understanding was something that developed over a long period of time only after
much personal effort and they were found to use memorization and repetition as a part of exercising that effort. Li (2009) argued that Chinese learning beliefs included the idea that learning is a long and gradual process that requires much effort and that Chinese learners “commit new material to memory (p. 45)” as the first step in learning, followed by seeking to understand it, followed by trying to apply it, followed by a final stage where they questioned and modified the material. Li (2009), argued that the Chinese learning process does not encourage verbalization in the early stages of the learning process and noted the finding of Kim (2002) that “Asian students not only do not believe that speaking promotes thinking as do Western students, they believe the opposite: speaking interferes with thinking (p. 45).” Li (2009) further pointed out that the findings of Pratt et al. (1999) that Chinese students were often confused when Western teachers seemed to expect them to place classroom verbalization at the very early stages of the learning process seemed to be in line with the findings of Kim (2002).

3.11.7 Culture-Level Learning Beliefs About the Chinese Learning Belief System

Saying that “No systematic investigation of Chinese learning beliefs as an organized system of meanings had been done (Li, 2009, p. 46)”, Li (2009) reported two studies that she had conducted. First, she reported a study in which she had asked college students from both China and the U.S. to free associate in reference to the term learn/learning and then created a concept map that reflected the responses of each of the groups. Second, she reported a study in which she asked students from both of these cultures to describe an ideal learner’s characteristics in their culture. Li’s (2009) learning model that emerged included four dimensions: 1) purpose 2) agency 3) achievement standards, and 4) affect involved in learning that showed how the learning models of China and of the United States were different. Selected highlights of the model that emerged from Li’s (2009) research were as follows:

1) Purpose of Learning
Li’s Chinese learning process model shows that the most important purpose of education for Chinese learners was self-perfection, both morally and socially. Li (2009) attributed this to the Confucian desire to achieve ren, saying:

*Ren* is regarded as the highest purpose of human life. However, a person is not born but rather learns to develop *ren*. Such learning is called ‘great learning,’ as opposed to the narrowly defined ‘skill learning’ (Lee, 1996; Li, 2003a). This great learning is the very model of life envisioned in Confucian thought and is deeply inspiring to Chinese (p. 50).

In addition to achieving ren or movement toward self-perfection as a learning purpose, Li (2009) also discussed additional purposes of the Chinese learner process. The second most important purpose was acquiring cognitively related skills and it was followed by three other socially related purposes: economic position, social status, and making a societal contribution.

Contrary to the Chinese purposes of learning, the primary purpose of learning in the American learning process model centered on “developing the mind and understanding the world (p. 51).” Li (2009) explained that in the American model, unlike the Chinese model, students expressed their concept of knowledge using Socratic related terms: “The mental references of American students included various kind of thinking such as deductive and inductive analysis, inquiry, and scientific discovery, all of which mirrors the goal of Socratic tutoring whereas few Chinese respondents referred to thinking with such elaboration (p. 51).”

2) Agency

Describing the term agency as relating to the things or qualities that relate to the achieving of one’s goals, Li (2009) noted that learners in the Chinese learning process had previously been thought to be “passive, deferent to authority, and lacking initiative, and creativity because they learned for the purpose of pleasing parents and teachers, not for their own growth (p. 51).” Citing Keats (1982), Pratt et al. (1999), Tweed & Lehman (2002) and U. Kim (1999), Li said that these learners had been thought to be “extrinsically, not intrinsically, motivated (p. 51).” However, Li
(2009) said that the open-ended data collected by her research failed to support the view of the Chinese learner being extrinsically motivated. Instead, Li (2009) reported that her data revealed that Chinese learners had a clear sense of effectiveness and purpose regarding their goals of learning. This sense of purpose included a desire to learn the elements what Li called “learning virtues” … “because these virtues emphasize a morally good and desirable dispositional quality that underlies personal agency and action (p. 52).” These learning virtues that made up the strong sense of agency (purpose) of these learners were described as: resolve (fen), diligence (qin), endurance of hardship (keku), perseverance (henqxin), and concentration (zhuaxin). According to Li (2009), “These five learning virtues form a coherent whole in the learning process (p. 53)” and she argued that the implication was that Chinese students did possess agency and a sense of intrinsic motivation although their characterization by researchers in the past had suggested otherwise. On the other hand, unlike the Chinese learners’ concepts regarding agency, Li (2009) noted that her research showed that American learners’ notions of agency were more oriented toward specific tasks (rather than character related traits) saying: “They included active learning activities, specific thinking processes, scientific inquiry into the unknown world, task management and communication (e.g., discussion, debate, self-expression) (p. 53).” She summarized by saying that “The beliefs of the two cultures differed markedly regarding agency and learning virtues (p. 53).”

3) Achievement standards

Li (2009) said that although the long-term purpose and goal of learning for Chinese learners was self-perfection of personal traits through learning, the shorter term goals that Chinese learners aimed at were to achieve “depth and breadth and/or mastery of knowledge (p. 52).” In pursuing these goals, they aimed toward application or use of their knowledge. Li (2009) said that their aim was not just book knowledge, as was the case with American learners, but instead, they aimed to
put their knowledge in use. Finally, Li (2009) said that the Chinese learner sought to achieve a unity and integration or synthesis of knowledge with morality so that the cognitive would be blended with the moral. On the other hand, Li (2009) explained that the achievement standards of the American students centered on development of expertise in their subject matters, doing their best, being creative, and developing personal insights. In comparison to the Chinese learners, Li (2009) said of the American achievement standards: “all of these standards highlighted individual brilliance and achievement (p. 54).”

4) Affect Involved in Learning

There were four positive attitudes that were shown by the research of Li (2009) to be associated by Chinese learners with the term learning and included in their descriptions of ideal learners: commitment, passion or thirst for learning, respect, and humility. There were also three negative attitudes: lack of desire, arrogance, and shame and guilt. Li (2009) asserted that the positive attitude of passion/thirst for learning found in Chinese learners was an outgrowth of parental expectations because the Chinese students understood how much their parents wanted them to become learners.

On the other hand, Li (2009) noted that the American learners reported the positive attitudes of “intrinsic enjoyment, curiosity, and motivation (p. 55).” Each of these attitudes suggest learner independence and Li (2009) suggested that the concepts of free choice and personal independence were not as important for Chinese learners as for American learners, saying: “The former (Chinese learners) enjoy and perform just as well when their learning activities are chosen by their trusted adults (e.g., mothers) and peers (p. 55).”

Li (2009) suggested that the positive attitude of Chinese learners toward the idea of respect may come from the Confucian emphasis upon respect for knowledge and for teachers. She suggested that since the purpose of learning for the Chinese learner is not only knowledge but also
individual self-perfection that it would seem natural to have great respect for teachers because they are thought to have moved far along the Dao (Way) toward self-perfection. Therefore, Li (2009) explained that the respectful attitude of learners toward teachers may be behind the perception in the West that Asian learners represent models of obedience and fail to engage in critical thought (Keats, 1982; Pratt et al., 1999; Tweed & Lehman, 2002). Li (2009) argued this perception was inaccurate saying: “The deference that Asian learners show to teachers does not stem from their fear or blind acceptance of authority but from their deep sense of humility (p. 55).” In another observation bearing on the issue of student speech, central to this research, Li (2009) further added that this sense of humility may influence the likelihood of students immediately responding (or confronting) orally to teachers in class discussions, saying:

The respect and humility of Chinese learners may be very different from the American learners’ challenging attitude, especially in the form of immediate verbal exchanges in the midst of a discussion. Chinese respondents generally made few references to such challenging attitudes towards teachers, although their ideal learners did engage in discussions with their peers. In general, one does not plunge into challenge until one thoroughly understands the issue in question… The reluctance of Chinese learners to challenge their teachers face to face may also come from their sensitivity to the unavoidably painful social consequence: embarrassing teachers (Li, Wang, and Fischer, 2004). However, this does not mean that Chinese learners do not challenge others. In fact, many respondents wrote that challenging old knowledge or advancing new knowledge is an important goal (p. 56).

In discussing the negative learning attitudes revealed in her research, Li (2009) wrote that, unlike American learners, Chinese learners did not indicate a need to display pride when they did well. She suggested that this might be related to their view that the journey toward self-perfection through education is a long term, even lifetime, one so no matter what achievement is attained, there is always much further to go. Li (2009) noted that lack of desire to learn was seen as the most negative of the responses in her research for the Chinese learners, saying this was because it is “the opposite of a heart and mind for wanting to learn (p. 57).” Finally, Li (2009) wrote that the most
negative attitude reported by Chinese learners regarding learning was shame and guilt both for the individual learner as well as for his family and relatives. Li (2009) explained that shame and guilt overlap in Chinese culture and that they are connected to notions of moral failure and cause learners to reexam and reconsider their approaches to learning. On the question of negative attitudes and learning, unlike Chinese learners, Li (2009) said that “The American respondents made fewer references to shame/guilt but more to low self-esteem (p. 57).”

### 3.11.8 Individual-Level Beliefs and Their Relation to the Chinese Culture-Level Model of Learning

After examining broad, culture-level learning, Li (2009) cautioned that her above findings were to be viewed as relevant to only what she called the culture-level model of learning which, she said, was to be distinguished from an individual-level model of learning. Though culture-level models of learning beliefs were recognized by the members of a culture and though individuals were influenced by them, Li (2009) said culture-level models did not determine any specific individual-level beliefs of learning because of variations in variables such as gender, socio-economic status, region, etc.

However, Li (2009) argued it was important that researchers empirically inquire whether individual Chinese learners actually shared the beliefs of the Chinese cultural-level model of learning and she asserted that few researchers had previously directly accessed Chinese learners own individual beliefs. In order to answer whether individual Chinese learners actually shared the beliefs of the (big picture) Chinese cultural-level model, Li (2009) conducted two additional studies.

Using research methods similar to those she previously applied to Chinese culture-level (big picture) models of learning described above where she asked college students to free associate the terms learn/learning and ideal learner, Li (2009) reported that individual Chinese learners’
beliefs were very similar in all respects to the culture-level of the general Chinese learning beliefs she had earlier confirmed. She said

These data suggest that at the individual level, the learning beliefs of Chinese learners reflect those of their culture. It is important to stress again that the breadth and depth of the reflection of the Chinese culture may differ from individual to individual depending on his or her personal characteristics and socialization experiences (p. 59).

Having reported her research results regarding the characteristics of the of Chinese learners at the cultural-level and also having determined that learning beliefs of Chinese learners at the individual-level reflected those of the Chinese cultural-level, Li (2009) then turned to the question of how these learning beliefs develop in the individual.

3.11.9 Individual Learning Beliefs

To learn how learning beliefs, develop, Li (2009) examined pre-school children in China and the United States aged 4 to 6 by giving them the beginnings of stories and then asking them to complete the story. By doing this she sought to discover the children’s perceptions of the purposes of school learning, their perceptions of their achieving peers, and their interpretation of what the learning process involved.

Li’s (2009) research concluded that Chinese children as young as four saw the purposes of education in terms of moral self-improvement, mastery of knowledge, social contributions, social respect and economic position while American children saw the purpose of education in terms of intelligence, literacy, friendship, and playing and fun. In their views of high achieving peers, the Chinese children focused on social respect and ability to help others while the American children focused on mental benefits. The Chinese children had negative emotions regarding their parent’s concerns if they did not achieve well in the school but they admired and respected their peers who did do well although they reported that those children who did do well should have greater humility. On the other hand, the American children were shown to be concerned about negative
social effects for those children that achieved well in the school. Finally, on the question of their interpretation of the education process, Chinese children tended to refer to the learning virtues of diligence, persistence and concentration while the American children tended to refer to mental ability and similar processes as well as to trying hard and use of creative strategies. Maybe one of the most important findings was that Li (2009) reported that the characteristics of both the American and Chinese groups of children in all three categories tended to continue and to become more consistent and intense as the children became older.

Li’s (2009) interpretation of the results of her research was that “These developmental data suggest that the Chinese cultural model of learning is likely to shape Chinese children’s individual beliefs about learning (p. 60).” For purposes of the present research, Li’s (2009) conclusion that individual Chinese learners appear to follow their larger Chinese cultural learning patterns is important. It would seem to justify the position that research on individual CHC learners significantly reflects the general characteristics of learners of the culture although we must remember the qualification of Li that “the breadth and depth of the reflection of the Chinese culture may differ from individual to individual depending on his or her personal characteristics and socialization experiences (p. 59).” Additionally, though there is no specific reason to believe that Li’s (2009) findings regarding CHC learners in China would be different in other CHCs (Taiwan, South Korea, or Japan) it is acknowledged that I failed to find similar research regarding such a connection between individual learners’ learning beliefs and their general cultural levels of learning.

3.11.10 Li’s Conclusion

Li (2009) summarized her research by saying that Chinese learning beliefs centered upon the goals of moral and social perfection, acquiring knowledge and skill, establishing an economic position, achieving social status, and contributing to society. Li (2009) furthermore believed that
five learning virtues (resolve, diligence, endurance of hardship, perseverance and concentration) had become desirable learner traits because they were seen as the means to achieve the five learner goals. Li (2009) argued that these five learning virtues were seen by Chinese learners and teachers as more important than actual learning skills because they believed that mastery of these virtues enabled students to learn any topics on a life-long basis. Li (2009) explained the process by saying that these five virtues and learner goals were what produced the four positive learning attitudes of: 1) commitment toward learning; 2) passion/thirst for learning; 3) a strong respect for knowledge and for teachers (that Li said should not be misunderstood as automatic, unthinking obedience); and 4) humility that came from self-reflection and concern for self-improvement.

Li (2009) concluded her research with four observations. First, she cautioned that dichotomous thinking seldom was appropriate for comparison of Chinese and Western learners. She gave as an example that failure in the Chinese approach to learning was not viewed as the opposite of succeeding (as in Western education) but was instead viewed as simply a part of learning. Second, Li (2009) said that all learners learned within the context of their culture and that “It is therefore imperative that cultural values be considered in any research that examines children’s learning beliefs. (p. 62)” Third, Li (2009) discounted Western views of CHC learners as only being practical and economic orientated, noting that Chinese learners had multiple learning purposes and goals and that economic considerations were just one of them and further, that simply passing examinations was also not an ultimate goal in CHC students’ learning. Finally, Li (2009) addressed the issue of today’s increasing merger (through internationalization of education) of Western and CHC learners by asking:

Does the thinking of Socrates or Rousseau merge readily with the thinking of Confucius or Mencius…what enables the integration of such diverse perspectives? How are parents and educators from different cultures to achieve the goal of such integration? Answers to these and many more questions will undoubtedly shed needed light on the ubiquitous but still largely enigmatic existence of learning
beliefs within and across cultures (p. 63).

Li’s (2009) research puts the relative silence of the Chinese learner in context and shows it to be part of a complex cultural approach to thought and learning in general. Her research makes the Chinese learner’s approach to learning more understandable and maybe more attractive. However, the issue remains about whether it can be productive of critical thought and meaningful learning as defined by the West, especially as viewed by a Freirean model of learning.

3.12 Poles of the Chinese Learner Paradox

The research first stimulated by the finding of a paradox regarding the Chinese learner in Watkins and Biggs (1996) has not yet produced uniform conclusions. Two recent books can serve to represent the extremes in learner speech (as well as learning in general) regarding the model of the Chinese learner. As previously mentioned, one, is by Li (2012) and is entitled Cultural Foundations of Learning: East and West, the other is by Zhao (2014) entitled Who’s afraid of the big bad dragon: Why China has the best (and worst) education system in the world.

In the case of Zhao (2014), he uses a history orientated perspective and writes to warn the West (especially the United States) against adoption of the approaches of the Chinese learner model. In doing so, he suggests that the Chinese model of education is one that is hollow, shallow and even fraudulent. His description of the Chinese educational model is one wherein learner classroom speech is considered as irrelevant to the purpose of education at best and subversive of the Chinese social structure at worst. It is one of an educational model that is not only discouraging to learner speech but also to independent learner creativity. It is one of strict, examination preparation with little emphasis upon any kind of serious, deep learning. It is, he warns, one to be avoided. Tienken (2015), in a very positive review of Zhao’s (2014) book, says that Zhao slays the dragon protecting the myth that China is going to out-educate the US. He peels back the veil that covers a Chinese education system steeped in thousands of years of standardization, conformity, and the killing of creativity.
Zhao’s message is clear: America should not descend into an authoritarian Chinese system of public education if the goal is to foster the creative talents of its youth. (p. 46).

In the case of Li (2012), she writes to explain and defend the legitimacy of the Chinese learner model saying it provides genuine, deep learning opportunities to students, that its practices and values, taken as a whole and viewed within the context of its basic purpose, produces scholarship that is both deep and reflective as well as even critical, and to urge the West to carefully consider its merits as an educational alternative.

Li (2012) describes a Chinese educational model where learner class-room speech, though very different to that in the West, constitutes a serious, thoughtful, and crafted, but second to listening, tool in a learning sequence where learner speech is a last used supplement to careful, intense learner listening as well as an assortment of other Confucian influenced learning practices all of which are embedded within a set of Confucian influenced general cultural attitudes favorable to learning that have been developed over the last 2,500 years.

3.12.1 Learner Speech: The Chinese Educational Model of Zhao

As an American of Chinese descent, Zhao (2014) argues against American adoption of the Chinese educational model, therefore the name of his book is “Who’s afraid of the big bad dragon: Why China has the best (and worst) education system in the world.” In doing so, he offers a picture of a Chinese educational model having some favorable aspects but that is overall very negative. Noting that “I write this book to show how China, a perfect incarnation of authoritarian education, has produced the world’s best test scores at the costs of diverse, creative, and innovative talents” …and that those who admire such an educational model ignore that it “…is incapable of supporting individual strength, cultivating a diversity of talents, and fostering the capacity and confidence to create (p. 9),” Zhao then presents a largely historical analysis. With few direct references to the writing of either Confucius or his disciples, Zhao (2014) describes the Chinese educational model
as being the by-product of two historical developments, both relating to Confucianism.

The first historical development described by Zhao (2014) involved an early Chinese emperor who attempted to create a system for maintaining political power by drawing the culture’s intellectual elite to provide counsel to him while, at the same time, diverting their potential criticism and potential for creating rebellion against him. As described by Zhao (2014), the Emperor Yang Jian (Wen) in the 5th Century,

…needed a way to weaken the heredity powers of certain families and tribes. Thus, he needed to find people who could help govern the country without relying on the existing ruling class. He also needed a way to prevent capable talents from rising against the empire and to reinforce among his subjects the need to obey the rightful rule of the Son of Heaven (2014, p. 38).

To achieve his objectives, Emperor Wen instituted improved imperial exams, called keju, which tested by memorization over the Confucian, status quo oriented, classic writings as a way to select capable talent to serve in the government of the emperor. In what Zhao (2014) describes as “a clever ploy of social control (p. 37)” the exams served to achieve imperial goals for centuries:

For thirteen hundred years, Chinese emperors were delivered a homogeneous and obedient citizenry in three ways. First, through the exams they recruited individuals who demonstrated the greatest commitment to Confucian thinking to help defend the status quo and perpetuate the regime…Second, even those who failed at the exams became defenders and promoters, because often they were hired as teachers to help prepare future generations for the exams. Third, after decades of studying the Confucian texts, even if a man did not become a believer, he would have little time, energy, and resources left to develop the skills, knowledge, and independent ideas needed for a rebellion (p. 40).

According to Zhao (2014), the homogeneous and obedient scholar products of keju had “similar minds, similar thoughts and similar talents. He says they became

…guardians of the existing order, and they helped maintain a unified nation. Their minds were steeped in Confucian philosophy which forbade them to have any unorthodox thoughts. Their lack of knowledge and skills outside the narrowly defined domains of the imperial exam rendered them incapable of putting up a rebellion even if the thought had occurred to them (p. 41).

The second historical development that Zhao (2014) argued greatly affected the present
model of Chinese education involved the process whereby the keju effect of producing a conservative Confucian-orientated, stable, status quo oriented society enabled the Chinese to achieve world cultural dominance, thereby creating an almost reverence in the mind of the Chinese for the keju examinations. According to Zhao, this position of world dominance then had the effect of preventing the chaos of frequent rebellion. This resultant social stability, together with a large Chinese population, provided China with an environment favorable to technical innovation and this continued to re-enforce Chinese world cultural dominance. Zhao (2014) explained:

Rudimentary technological innovations can be made by accident. The probability of such accidents is the same for all societies, and thus the more people in a society, the higher the probability is of accidental inventions...People did however need a relatively stable order to engage in activities that might lead to discovery. They also needed time and certain resources. Keju helped build a unified nation with a large population, so it could have a large pool of accidental discoveries. Keju also provided relative stability and economic prosperity, so people could engage in productive activities pregnant with possibilities of accidental invention (p. 36).”

However, having praised keju in producing Chinese cultural dominance in the distant past, Zhao (2014) damned it as the major cause of China’s inability to compete technologically with Europe’s cultures once they experienced the industrial revolution. Zhao argued that the keju based educational system of the past that had produced social stability and allowed for the accidental innovation that had made China great was, in fact, detrimental to the ability of China to compete in the industrial era for the reason that it restricted social mobility to only one social group and, in doing so, produced a homogenized, backward looking, narrowly skilled, cultural leadership incapable of the type of individual creativity and scientific thought required for success in the newly developing industrial age. Zhao (2014) wrote:

But the industrial revolution changed everything, ushering in a new era in which change became the constant, innovation the norm, and diversity of talents the source of social development. In this new era, keju, which reinforced conservative thinking, and homogeneity, changed from a blessing to a curse (p. 42).

Notwithstanding, the transformation of keju from blessing to curse, notwithstanding that
China numerous times experimented with exterminating the influence of keju, and notwithstanding that the position of Emperor had been replaced first by the Republican government and then by the Communist party, Zhao (2014) argued that keju has survived. Calling it “The witch that cannot be killed (p. 148)”, he argued that the model of Chinese education is today as it always has been saying,

In reality, the essence of Chinese education remains the same as it was ten years ago, twenty years ago, one hundred years, even one thousand years: the system prepares students to pass exams that are believed to lead to a few socially and materially rewarding jobs (p. 159).

Zhao (2014) describes a Chinese education model that even to this day is characterized and dominated by keju. He says that “Chinese schools exist for test prep…” and that “(e)very class, every teacher, every school is about preparing for the exams (p. 132).” His description is of a Chinese educational model that homogenizes rather than diversifies thinking and he says that it is “in essence, a process through which those willing to comply are homogenized, and those unable or unwilling to comply…are eliminated (p. 124).” Zhao (2014) describes a Chinese educational model that is authoritarian and hierarchical, saying “As a historically authoritarian society organized around the Confucian philosophy, China gives a hierarchical order to every facet of life…to other persons, places or things (p. 125).” His description is of a Chinese educational model that emphasizes a narrow band of readily testable skills where the goal of students is not individual meaningful thought but is to select “the correct answer and give the answer in expected ways (p. 133).” He observes that “This finding and answering of predetermined answers is antithetical to creativity, which requires the ability to come up with new solutions and pose questions that have never been asked before (p. 133).” Zhao (2014) describes a Chinese educational model that was originally, and remains today, one of social control where students seek to please at the cost of loss of creativity, saying: “Chinese education is more of a tool for social control than a process of
self-enlightenment... Creative talents are rewarded only when their creativity happens to be desired by the government. (p. 160).”

Zhao (2014) rarely directly addresses student speech in his model of Chinese education but his model descriptors have obvious implications for his view of the role of student speech in the model he describes. The model he represents is a device of social control and students learn not to be individual and creative but to please their superiors as the result of an educational model process where homogenization of thinking rather than diversity is valued and encouraged and voiced difference may be viewed as subversive of both the society as well as the power of their teachers. It is an authoritarian model where student reward lies in giving predetermined answers in the required way to powerful educational superiors regarding a narrow set of skills that are perceived to be readily testable. Nowhere does Zhao (2014) appear to find space in his description of the Chinese educational model for meaningful learner speech or any other potentially system-challenging form of communication. Instead, his is an educational model in which learner speech has little learning utility or relevance and can be dangerous and counterproductive.

3.12.2 Learner Speech: The Chinese Educational Model of Li (2012)

In her book, Cultural Foundations of Learning: East and West, Li (2012), unlike Zhao (2014), relies more upon interpretation of Confucian classics mixed with large amounts of modern, empirical research rather than upon the more purely historical analysis used by Zhao (2014). Additionally, unlike Zhao, whose picture of learner speech arises by implication, Li (2012) speaks very directly to the place of student speech in her Confucian based analysis of a Chinese educational model. Finally, unlike Zhao, who presents a somewhat negative and even cynical description of a Chinese educational model and strongly advises America to avoid its evils, Li (2012) offers a favorable and partisan analysis where she compares Western and Eastern models and suggests to Western educators that the Chinese model is a legitimate approach to learning
though one with different goals, different pedagogy, different teaching methods, different teacher/student relationships, different epistemology and, most of all, different learner speech. Li (2012) argues that the Chinese model of education has much to recommend it and she encourages Western educators to be open to learning from it.

In considering the role of student speech in a Chinese model of education, Li (2012) first explains that Chinese education has a different purpose than that of Western education. Unlike Western education, that Li (2012) says seeks to know “the external world (p. 22)”, Li argues that the goal of a Confucian influenced Chinese model of education is not understanding but rather, self-perfection which she says is to “follow the path of moral self-cultivation (p. 297).”

As an educational model with a different goal, it should not be surprising that the methods of teaching/learning should be different. In fact, according to Li (2012), such is the case, especially regarding student speech. Since the educational goal of moral self-cultivation/perfection is thought to emphasize one’s deeds rather than what one says, then Li (2012) argues one’s speech must be measured against one’s deeds. This perspective, Li (2012) suggests, causes speech to take on a relatively serious and sober character in the educational process because speaking is thought to either represent or even to assert one’s level of moral development in terms of deeds. (A sobering view that even from the Western perspective would be somewhat silencing.) As Li (2012) characterizes the concept, “Therefore, a person’s speaking cannot be divorced from his or her moral character. Speaking is not just one’s cognition and knowledge or any spontaneous, freestanding utterance, but a reflection of one’s moral worth (p. 297).”

In addition to student speech being related to a different educational goal in the Chinese educational model, Li (2012) also explains that educational models of the East are influenced by a general Confucian cultural perspective (big picture) regarding speech that is much different than found in Western cultures. She notes that, unlike the West, East Asian cultures have no tradition
of great leaders that are known for speaking, and explains that this is because the cultural tradition of East Asia “actually devalues-or more appropriately put, distrusts, verbal eloquence as a means to achieve worthy ends (p. 198).” Building further, Li (2012) notes that none of the major religions of East Asia—Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism---emphasize speaking or speech and that even the concept of heaven is represented as being silent in all of these traditions.

Li (2012) identifies three types of negative speech that grow out of Confucian principles, all of which are seen to threaten the learner educational goal of moral self-cultivation as well as three speech virtues that are to be developed in the learner in order to counteract them. The first category of negative speech is a glib tongue which “divorces the mind from the heart”, the second is flattery, which “undermines sincerity”, and the third is boastfulness, which “lacks humility (p. 297).”

The first of the speech virtues (antidotes to negative speech) is the emulation of “tian”, the Confucian notion of Heaven. According to Li (2012), the Confucian notion of heaven “is speechless, but virtuous, to be emulated (p. 299).” Tu (2003) explains that to achieve full human realization, the self-perfection goal of the Chinese learner, humans must measure themselves by the standards of Heaven. However, since heaven does not speak, learners must be constantly seeking it. Tu (2003) says, “To make ourselves deserving partners in Heaven, we must be constantly in touch with that silent illumination that makes the rightness and principle in our heart-minds shine forth brilliantly (p. 172).”

The second speech virtue thought to counter negative speech in the Chinese learner’s learning process involves being sure that one’s deeds exceed one’s speaking. Li (2012) expresses this speech virtue as “…deeds shall exceed words… (p. 297).” The final speech virtue to be cultivated by the learner in order to counter negative speech is adjusting one’s speech to meet social context. Li (2012) expresses it as speech that has “attunement to social context and relationships… (p.
In addition to the three negative speech prohibitions and their corresponding speech antidotal virtues, Li (2012) further describes four additional speech maxims of East Asia that arise out of their general Confucian influenced cultural values: speak little, speak with ambiguity, speak amicably, and speak only after long and serious listening.

Li’s (2012) view of speech in a model of Chinese education reflects powerful speech inhibitions: avoidance of glibness, flattery, and boastfulness, encouragement to seek and aim toward the silence of heaven, a strong concern with shaping one’s speech to recognize the social context of relationships and social properness in the classroom, all done within a moral self-perfecting context that cautions that one’s saying is to assert one’s doing. Beyond these inhibitions, Li (2012) explains, come additional Confucian influenced cultural norms that learners are to make speech brief, vague, socially tuned to the context of social hierarchy, amicable and sensitive to social harmony, and predisposed to privilege and value listening over speaking.

For Li (2012), Confucian influenced learners of East Asia are capable and precise users of speech as a tool of learning but it is a tool that requires careful and cautious use. In the Chinese educational model of Li (2012), learners do not disvalue speech but rather it is as though they value it too much to use it casually, especially where disharmony could result. They appear to have been socialized to see learner speech as a very special and powerful learner tool that must be used carefully within the context of humility, sincerity, social awareness, friendliness, and always, as the lesser half of a listening/speaking two-part learning tool.

3.12.3 The Present Disputed State of the Question of the Chinese Learner and Learner Speech

Though the focus of this research is the dialectical relationship of the Chinese learner model and the learner model of Canada, a similar dialectical process may have been and may be
continuing regarding two competing versions of the Chinese learner speech model itself. One version, represented by authorities such as Zhao (2014), appears to be a very traditional and completely teacher/test dominated, learner-passive/silent model, which may produce a limited scholarship well suited to perform on examinations involving questions with clear, pre-determined answers but unlikely to produce serious critical thought and creativity. The other version, represented by authorities like Li (2012), appears to be a model that includes a largely silent type of learner speech as one of an assortment of learner tools that features thoughtful listening and repetition for understanding first and the use of learner speech later in the earning process. When practiced within the context of a number of out of school general Confucian heritage cultural supports, it is a learner model that appears to produce a scholarship with many of the characteristics and achievement of the learner speech-heavy, critical thought, educational model valued in the West.

The research regarding the Chinese learner, his learning and the role of learner speech in his learning is frustratingly, if not hopelessly, conflicting. The contrast between the educational model offered by Zhao (2014) and of Li (2012) could hardly be greater. How can researchers discuss the nature of the journey of the Chinese learner’s transition to the Canadian graduate model when his educational origins are so muddy, conflicting, and contradictory? The response of this research has been to create an ideal type of a generic version of the Confucian-influenced Chinese educational model and then to place it in contrast to an equally generic ideal type of the Freirean-influenced Canadian educational system and to thereafter use the dialectical process of Hegel as a method of discussing and evaluating the responses of the 18 Confucian trained participants of the research.

Though Hegel’s concept of the dialect never actually included the triadic, three-part pattern of thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis (Mueller, 1958), his analysis of cultural development includes
elements that are not so different from the idea of “paradox” and examination of the Chinese educational model of learner speech is pregnant with the notion of paradox. First is the paradox of how the silent Chinese learner model appears to produce deep level thought, then there is the paradox of how the dominant, authoritarian Chinese teacher of lecture reputation produces thinking and reflective learners, then the paradox of how what appears to be rote memory become a deep learning strategy, then the paradox of how do what appear to be passive, inactive, and quiet learners produce critical thought. Finally, there is the recent, more international paradox of how learners so fully and so thoroughly trained in the silent Chinese learner model environment are able to come in such great numbers for year after year and appear to so successfully adapt to an educational model so different as the Freirean-influenced educational model of Canada.

Ricoeur (1976), in explaining the idea of dialectic said that in order for something to represent the dialectical, a force must have an opposition force but not just any oppositional force. Instead, it must be one that has “…what could be called a productive opposition, if we understand by that an opposition which, in one way or another, permits, encourages, or generates a new thing, in reality or in experience, qualitatively distinct from the opposing terms (p. 173).” The intersection of Canadian and Confucian education is one full of conflict and opposition. It is pregnant with paradox and contradiction and it is where the 18 participants in this research reside. Hopefully, a modified Hegelian eye, phenomenological exploration of their personal, lived experiences will offer clues regarding where they have been and where they may be going regarding learner speech.

3.12.4 A Research Gap and a Theoretical Framework Adequate to Address it

I believe it is clear that the literature regarding the Chinese model of education shows it to be a model that is dynamic, changing and on the move in its relations with Western forms of education. The research questions of this work involve examination of the participants’ reactions to their encounter with the Canadian education model as a means of discovering pointers as to just
where the Chinese model of the future may be going as well as its present characteristics. One of the most insightful analysts of the Chinese educational model over the last five decades is Ruth Hayhoe (2016). In the forward to a very recent book dealing with Chinese educational models in a global age she reflects the amount of change in scholarly interest that has occurred during her long research career, the rich variety of Chinese education models that are now integrating with Western education, as well as a belief that elements of a historically Confucian silent thought process continue to be influential in the production of a more effective future educational model in saying:

When I began my studies of Chinese education in the 1970s, the Cultural Revolution was raging in the mainland, and Taiwan was soon to be identified as one of the four little dragons that followed Japan’s striking successes with education and modernization...At that time there was little serious interest in Chinese education as a model that might have lessons for a wider world. Nor were the transformations to follow China’s opening to modernization, the world, and the future under Deng Xiaoping or the dramatic changes in cross-strait relations between China and Taiwan easily envisaged. It was really only in the 1990s when Samuel Huntington made his dire predictions about a coming clash of civilizations and the United Nations countered this with a call to dialogue among nation that educators in the Western world were able to open up their minds. Only then did it become clear that there might be something to learn in education from Eastern civilizations whose contributions to the European Enlightenment had been crucially important, yet largely forgotten...Now more than 20 years later, this volume bears witness to the rich possibilities of a range of Chinese models of education for stimulating dynamic improvements in teacher formation, pedagogy, curriculum, approaches to learning, and institutional patterns of learning, from childhood up to tertiary education. Nor does it avoid dealing with some of the perceived limitations of the Confucian heritage. Rather, some of the most striking chapters suggest an integration of the strengths of this heritage with valued aspects of progressive Western patterns...Phrases are coined...to elaborate the creative tensions that arise in the process of integrating ideas that appear at first glance to be polar opposites (pp. vii-viii).

The words of Hayhoe (2016) represent familiar ones to those who research the Chinese model of education and its relationship to educational models of the West. The use of words like “progressive,” “stimulating,” “dynamic,” “integration,” “polar opposites,” “rich possibilities,” “dialogue,” “clash,” “transformation,” and “tension” in Hayhoe’s call for an “opening of minds”
highlights a gap in the research literature. The stirring, churning, fluid-like, competitive qualities of the relationship(s) of these two educational models is one of change, contradiction, and conflict pregnant with paradox. Deep learning by extrinsically motivated learners? By silent learners? By large-class, lecture oriented learners? By learners whose hierarchical background formalizes their relations with teachers? The 18 participants of this research are situated at the intersection of these paradoxes, all of which have learner speech relevance. Yet there is no research in the context of Confucian learners encountering the Freirean influenced Canadian environment of graduate schools that uses Hegel’s dialectal approach as a framework to explore this churning educational change and conflict so well described by Hayhoe (2016).

The literature does offer other methodologies and theoretical frameworks by which to approach the question of how the interaction of the Chinese educational models and models of the West may influence development of the Chinese model in the future. For example, Li (2016) in a publication made after the initial draft of this thesis was submitted, uses a historical-cultural approach to create Weber-based ideal types of what are called core concepts to examine change (development) of the Chinese model of education in the Chinese university. Tan and Reyes (2016), in an equally recent publication, also examined change (development) in the Chinese educational model by focusing on how it was becoming a hybrid model of East and West through curriculum reform. They employed a theoretical framework of change drawn from Phillips and Ochs (2004) regarding four specific stages of educational policy borrowing that they believed the Chinese model of education had experienced. A final example from the literature that deals with the process of change and development in the Chinese model is Guo-Brennan (2016) which uses hermeneutic interpretation of conversations with teachers in the Chinese educational model as they attempt to transition from the traditional Chinese Confucian model of education to a more Western-influenced and global model of teaching.
Though each of these as well as other theoretical frameworks have merit, I argue that Hegel’s dialectic has significant advantages: it offers terminology familiar to educationalists of both models, it encourages dialogue yet discourages partisanship, and it is in accord with modern ideas of science and social progression.

As will be seen in Chapter 4, the dialect of Hegel offers a tripartite terminology of thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis that is equally familiar to both Western educationalists influenced by the Marxism of Freire and to East Asian educationalists, many of which most of which are cultures that have been deeply affected directly by Marxism in their past. The dialectal pattern of Hegel is also a theoretical pattern that is easily fitted to the language of dialogue yet it tends to discourage ethnocentric partisanship in that the result of oppositional conflict produces a synthesis that is composed of elements of both its thesis as well as anti-thesis parents. Although thesis does precede anti-thesis in time in the dialectal pattern, there is no ethnocentric winner-concept and defeated-concept involved in the conflict between thesis and anti-thesis because the synthesis that results from their oppositional conflict, though higher in development than both, is made up of both. Just as parents of a child bring together different genetic backgrounds to produce a new, fresh being that is viewed as having higher potential than either parent, there is no reason to view the new product of the child as a defeat of either parent’s genetic contribution. Instead, both parent’s contribution to the new product of the child is advanced in the new form of the child. Finally, Hegel’s dialectic comfortably merges with the scientific and progressive theme of mankind’s continual search for better, more human, and more effective education. His pattern of infinite repetition of the process of oppositional debate, conflict, and contest, that produces a form of higher development that then again repeats and restarts the process of conflict and debate is both progressive in that it places no limits on human potential and scientific, in that it refuses to reach fixed and final conclusions.
Chapter 4

Theoretical Framework

4.1 Part One: Modification of the Hegelian Idea of Dialect

As I have observed graduate students first socialized in Confucian influenced cultures attempting to adapt to the educational environment of Canada I have frequently had the feeling that two levels of activity were happening. First, there was the small and individual level of activity of one student trying to learn to learn in a new learning environment; new materials, new language, new cultural context, new pedagogy and a new epistemology. However, at a broader level, the adaptive struggle of that one student represented something much greater. Contact was being made between two great oppositional educational forces each representing at least a billion people with their sharply contrasting cultural histories. On one side was the force of 2,500 years of Confucian fathered approaches to teaching/learning; on the other side, 2,500 years of Western educational development having many fathers but today deeply resembling those of Socrates, Dewey, and, more recently, especially concerning learner speech, Freire.

Viewing these students’ struggle situated at the interface of these two great motors of education, I wondered about their impressions as they were pulled back and forth between the contrasting educational pedagogies, principles and epistemologies. In some sense, it was the old story of learning to replace the ways of the old and traditional with those of the new and the modern. In another sense, it was the equally old story of learning to replace indigenous ways with the ways of the West. However, this time it seems the story might be played out on a fairer basis. This time the economic hegemony of the West might be less pronounced in determining the outcome of the competition between these two motors of education. True, the relative social power of the West continues to favor the ways of Socrates, Dewey, and Freire but today new economic
realities may dictate that the cultural values of the likes of China, Korea, Japan, and even Taiwan may not be so easily dismissed as they might have been in the past. Now, more than at any time in recent history, the two educational motors stand up to be judged on their merits rather than, as so many times in the past, on other hegemonic resources. An evaluation of two systems of education as radically different as those involved here can never be completely fair or probably even fully completed. The participants in this research may be subtly influenced by the benefits and reputation and prestige of the Western educational approach. They have every reason to convince themselves that the system that gives them their most advanced degree is valid and genuine. On the other hand, they also may have natural allegiances to their cultures of origin. Nevertheless, though the research allows us to see through the eyes of only 18 participants whose cultural preferences have been previously shaped, their choices, conclusions, and evaluations may represent valuable information as to the relative merits of these competing engines of education as we move forward in time as well as modifications or compromises that might improve learning/teaching in each system.

Viewing these participants as microcosmic evaluators in the collision of these macroscopic educational systems required the broadest of theoretical frameworks. One that would provide useful terminology for present competition, dichotomies, conflict, paradoxes, and contested interpretations between educational systems as well as for descriptions of how they may work out their on-going interactions in the future. It is for this reason that the idea of the dialectic has been borrowed, in modified form, from Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. When my father was living, he was a swimmer. When he would take me and my siblings to the pool he would say that we could swim but we should stay in the shallow end. Hegel as a thinker was very deep and, in using his ideas, I will stay in the shallow end.

The notion of the dialectic and how ideas/ideologies/theories/systems change over time is
traceable to the writings of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), an influential German teacher and philosopher of the 18th and early 19th century. Though influential, all writers appear to agree that his ideas were difficult to understand and often invited disagreement. Mueller (1958) wrote that “His greatness is as indisputable as his obscurity” and that “Hegel’s contemporaries were immediately baffled because what was clear to him was not clear to his readers… (p. 411).” Theodor Adorno said that “[i]n the realm of great philosophy Hegel is no doubt the only one with whom at times one literally does not know, and cannot conclusively determine, what is being talked about, and with whom there is no guarantee that such a judgment is even possible (Cited in Cole, 2004, p. 577).” My appeal to Hegel and his idea of the dialect in this research involves mostly a search for satisfactory terminology. I understand that some argue that the dialectic of Hegel was the basis for the more materialistic thinking of Marx and that others argue that the dialect of Hegel was too mystical to be compatible with the more materialistic thought of Marx (Fraser, 1997) but I have no interest in the controversy. It is a much less complicated version of the dialect of Hegel that I attempt to use in the present research; one that offers a terminology and metaphor to capture the notion of the oppositional forces of the two educational systems at the heart of this research as well as to discuss the possible resolution/outcome of their collision.

Rodrigues and Craig (2007) described the basics of Hegelian dialect saying that all change is the result of contradiction and one idea or set of ideas that includes elements of contradiction (a thesis) naturally results in an opposite idea or set of ideas (an anti-thesis) that results in a conflict between the two that produces a completely new idea or newly combined set of ideas (a synthesis). Regarding synthesis, they argued that:

Hegel regards dialectic as embodying the power (or energy or force) of negativity—the opposing of something to its “other”. Thus, dialectic involves the transition of things, and of knowledge, from potentiality or abstraction to actuality and content. A thing is argued to become more fully developed through successive dialectic or self-reconstruction, with its synthesis regarded to be at a higher level of truth than
its preceding thesis and antithesis (p. 741).

In Hegelian terms, the perceptions of the participants of this research may contain the potential of some hint of the outlines of what may result from the conflict of Confucian and Canadian educational systems/principles. Their perceptions may represent the outlines of a higher, progressive truth (synthesis) than either the preceding thesis of Confucian education or the antithesis of Canadian education. In any event, it is a simplified use of Hegelian thought in the manner employed by Sternberg (2001) to examine the dialectical relationship of intelligence and wisdom in producing the synthesis of creativity, by Sternberg (1999) to present a dialectical basis for understanding of the study of cognition, and by Rodrigues and Craig (2007) to examine harmonization of international accounting standards that is employed in the present research.

Popper (1940), considered by many to be one of the greatest philosophers of science in the 20th century, summarizes Hegel’s dialect in a common-sense, understandable, and more detailed manner. Popper (1940) suggests that all human analysis of reality in all areas of thought is actually only a type of trial and error process. Popper (1940) argues that the process of achieving greater human understanding of reality is dotted by all kinds of propositions offered by different analysts at different times and the success of any particular proposition depends upon how well the proposition is borne out both in terms of numbers of its successes and in terms of the breadth of its successes across different categories of human analysis. Popper (1940) notes that in the area of human philosophy and thought propositions that seem to be borne out with regularity then draw supporters that strongly assert and defend them and, at the same time, this naturally produces adversaries and opponents of the position that then attack and criticize the proposition. Applying these ideas to the field of science, Popper says that when theories are offered they then become the subject of critique and testing. Then if they survive this trial and error method of elimination they become accepted as a sort of “survival of the fittest” process product as temporarily the best way
to understand reality until a better way develops.

According to Popper (1940) this trial and error process is what makes up the so-called dialectic, the concept put forth by Hegel. An idea or set of ideas is offered as a thesis and, in Hegelian terms, it is then critiqued through the offering of competing alternative sets of ideas known as anti-thesis. This results in a struggle between the two positions (propositions) that eventually results in a third position called synthesis in Hegelian terms. The explanatory value of the new synthesis position goes beyond either of the preceding two positions by recognizing and combining valuable aspects of the first two. Thereafter, according to Hegel, this three-part process that came to be called the “dialectical triad”, inaccurately attributed to Hegel according to Mueller (1958), may and probably will, be repeated. Popper (1940) makes the point that unlike the trial and error method, the dialectical process is slightly different in that when an idea (thesis) is rejected in trial and error it means that a competitor idea (anti-thesis) simply replaces it. In the dialectical process, however, the thesis idea does not simply disappear, its valuable aspects continue to live on as part of the new synthesis, thereby preserving portions of the thesis as well as the anti-thesis in the new synthesis. This would suggest that neither the learner speech values of Confucian influenced Eastern education nor of Freirean-influenced Western education will completely disappear but that some new and superior learner speech model will be the result of their interaction.

Having described the dialectical triad as it works in the dialectical process of idea development and having argued that it is similar to but not the same as trial and error, Popper (1940) asserted that it often accurately represents how human understanding develops. However, Popper then made a number of qualifications and refinements regarding it.

First, Popper (1940) pointed out that it is not accurate to say that the thesis produces its anti-thesis. Instead, it is actually the existence of a critical attitude that produces the anti-thesis
and if this attitude is missing, Popper says no anti-thesis will be produced. In the present research, this would suggest that both the Confucian thesis as well as the Freirean anti-thesis must be the subject of criticism in order for any synthesis to develop out of their competitive conflict.

Secondly, Popper (1940) points out that the struggle between thesis and anti-thesis does not always produce a synthesis because sometimes the competition between thesis and anti-thesis produces and results in nothing. Furthermore, if the struggle between thesis and anti-thesis does produce a synthesis, Popper emphasizes that it is not completely accurate to say that the new synthesis consists of only parts of both the thesis and anti-thesis because in some cases it will contain entirely new elements that are in neither the thesis nor the anti-thesis. As explained by Popper (1940), “In other words, the synthesis usually will be much more than a construction built merely of materials supplied by thesis and antithesis (p. 406).” According to Popper, this fact is often overlooked by advocates of the dialectical process because of their hope that the dialectical process will help them to predict developments to come.

Finally, Popper (1940) makes the point that although it is often said that synthesis develops from the contradiction between the thesis and anti-thesis, the idea of contradiction is not some mysterious force coming out of the thesis or anti-thesis that moves the process toward synthesis but is instead just the human desire to avoid contradictory ideas. It is this desire to avoid contradictions or inconsistent ideas that accounts for terms like struggle or tension.

In terms of the present research, it is the “paradox” of the Chinese learner’s apparent deep learning without significant classroom speech that is so intolerable as to require tireless research to reconcile. Popper (1940) explains the intolerableness involved in the dialectic by saying:

The only “force” which promotes the dialectic development is, therefore our reluctance to accept, and to put up with, the contradiction between the thesis and the antithesis. It is not a mysterious force inside these two ideas, not a mysterious tension between them which promotes development-it is purely our decision, our resolution, not to agree to contradictions, which induces us to look out for a new
Popper (1940) describes how Hegel’s notion of the dialectic developed out of the conflict between British empiricists and European idealists (rationalists) as part of their struggle to answer the question of how the mind of man can grasp the world. He explains that Hegel sided with the rationalists by arguing that not only was mind in the world but that mind was the world, so that, as Popper describes it “That which is reasonable must be real (p. 413).” Nevertheless, this is where Hegel’s deep water warning begins and, as indicated earlier, this research will be restricted to the shallow end. Instead, the use of Max Weber’s notion of ideal types representing the oppositional idea forces of the two educational models, the idea of conflict and tension between a thesis of the Confucian model and an anti-thesis of the Western, Freirean model, and the idea of a resultant development of a synthesis that grows out of but somehow is greater than merely a combination of thesis and anti-thesis will be sufficient.

4.2 Part Two: Operationalization of Thesis and Anti-thesis

If there is a Hegelian dialectic at play in this research, what do the thesis and anti-thesis represent? From the perspective of the participants, since their first educational socialization was one of Confucian influenced education, the thesis will represent an ideal type of those ideas relevant to learner speech in Confucian influenced cultures already described at some length here and summarized in Figure One below. Also, from the perspective of the participants, since their original educational socialization has been followed by their second educational socialization in Western Canadian education, the anti-thesis will represent an ideal type of the learner speech values of Canadian graduate education. Though numerous important figures have contributed deeply to contemporary Canadian education (names like Dewey, Foucault, Socrates, and others come to mind), when it comes to the specific topic of learner speech values, the name of Paulo Freire immediately jumps forth. Though it would be questionable to say that Canadian graduate
education consists wholly of the ideas and values of Paulo Freire, it would be equally unquestionable that it has been significantly influenced by them. Therefore, for purposes of this research, the learner speech values of a Freire-influenced Canadian educational model become an opposing ideal type and an anti-thesis acting upon and against the earlier ideal type representing the ideal type (thesis) of Confucian learner speech values.

4.2.1 Max Weber’s Concept of the Ideal Type

Eliaeson (2000) explains that in developing the concept of an ideal type, Max Weber was attempting to mediate between two conflicting approaches in the social sciences. One approach involved an empathic understanding of the emotions of subjects and the second was a more objective and positivist approach. According to Eliaeson (2000), Weber’s mediation between the two approaches sided more with the positivist approach. It advocated a rational balance in treating the specific instances of a characteristic verses general concepts by creation of a method that involved what came to be called the ideal type. It is a technique where selected characteristics that typify an aspect of reality is created and used for the purpose of illustrating the relationships between two different concepts even though neither concept may actually exist in reality. Eliaeson (2000) describes the concept by saying:

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism are both ideal types of so called historical individuals. We should note that criticisms of Weber on the grounds that the ideal types he constructed deviate from reality are based on a misunderstanding. Ideal-types are deliberately accentuated (Steigerung). Ideal-types like this are an aid to the interpreter and should help the interpreter to depict reality without reflecting reality directly. The representation of reality given by the ideal-type is disproportionate, and serves to make central features of reality more visible and intelligible (p. 250).

Use of Weber’s concept of ideal types for the present research involves making two ideal-type sets of collections of characteristics in an attempt to depict the reality of two dialectically competing concepts regarding values pertaining to student use of speech in the learning process.
One is that of the Confucian learner and will involve collections of characteristics already described in this research, the other is that of the Freirean-influenced Canadian (Freire, 2000) learner and will represent collections of characteristics derived primarily from the best known work of Freire, “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”. Before offering these two sets of collections of characteristics (ideal types) a number of points should first be made. First, it must be established that Freire (2000) is an important influence in the Canadian graduate school model; second, contradictions that exist in the Confucian learner model are addressed; third, the breadth of the uncertainty as to what may affect learner speech is again acknowledged; fourth, a reminder is given of the narrowness of the present research; and finally, apparent similarities between the thesis of the Confucian model and the anti-thesis of the Freire model are argued to actually be expected in the dialectical oppositional forces.

4.2.2 Significance of the Work of Freire in Canadian Graduate Education

It is fully acknowledged once again that the learner speech values of Freire are not the full equivalent of all Canadian educational values. However, as argued below, to the extent that Freire has greatly influenced Western education, his ideas must be recognized as an important part of Canadian educational values. In fact, McLaren (1999), argues that the work of Freire has received international recognition, and that Paulo Freire is “generally considered the inaugural philosopher of critical pedagogy (p. 49),” that Freire's work has unarguably been the driving force behind North American efforts at developing critical pedagogy, and that

(long before his death on May 2, 1997, Freire had acquired a mythic stature among progressive educators, social workers, and theologians as well as scholars and researchers from numerous disciplinary traditions, for fomenting interest in the ways that education can serve as a vehicle for social and economic transformation (p. 49).

McLaren (1999) acknowledges a number of shortcomings in the work of Freire but in the end gives Freire the greatest praise saying that “as Freire's aforementioned critics also
acknowledge, they (his shortcomings) should not detract from Freire’s central importance as a foundational educational thinker, a philosopher who ranks among the most important educators of this century or any other” and that “…Freire has left stratified deposits of pedagogical insight upon which future developments of progressive education can be built (p. 53).” There is no doubt the Canadian classrooms to which the 18 participants in this research migrated were not pure Freirean but also it seems clear that they encountered his ideas to a large extent, especially his influence regarding the role of learner speech in classroom learning.

4.2.3 Contradiction Buried in the Ideal Type of the Confucian Learner Thesis

Just as any ideal type representing the Freirean learning principles does not fully represent all Canadian educational values, likewise, as indicated previously in this research, there is fracture and uncertainty in any ideal type representing a Confucian set of learning principles regarding the role of learner speech in the learning process. Inside the ideal type of the Confucian learner lie a number of internal contradictions. For example, the motivation of the Confucian learner to achieve deep learning strategies somehow appears to be a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations while the West has always believed that it is intrinsic motivation that yields deep learning. The use of what appears to be shallow learning strategies of memorization that somehow produce deep learning results is another apparent contradiction. Finally, there remains the contradiction of how what appear to be largely silent learners achieve critical thinking. Perhaps the greatest example of internal contradiction regarding the Confucian learner is represented by setting the views of Li (2012) beside those of Zhao (2014) regarding the model of the Confucian learner; one (Li, 2012) a model that includes a largely silent type of learner speech as one of an assortment of learner tools that features thoughtful listening and repetition for understanding and, when practiced within the context of out-of-school Confucian heritage cultural supports, appears to produce a scholarship with many of the characteristics and achievement of the learner speech-heavy educational model
valued in the West; the other (Zhao, 2014) describing a traditional and completely teacher/test
dominated, learner-passive/silent model, which Zhao (2014) argued produced a limited version of
scholarship suited only to perform on examinations involving questions with clear, pre-determined
answers. These apparent internal contradictions can be viewed in the positivist tradition as a
frustrating inability to conclusively identify reality or they can be viewed, within the tradition of
Hegel, as the expected internal agents of dialectical change. In the following ideal types of this
research they will be viewed in the latter way.

4.2.4 Uncertainty About What May Affect Learner Speech Values and Practices and a Reminder

Learner speech practices may be the outgrowth of one or more combinations of the impact
of numerous other educational values/practices. Examples of such values/practices that can
possibly affect the amount and quality of learner speech may be learner motivation (intrinsic or
extrinsic), purpose of learning (understanding or self-cultivation), teacher/learner relations, or
other extra-classroom, cultural values such as hierarchical social relations, language inhibitions,
or emphasis upon social peace and stability rather than confrontation. In this research, though
numerous education related values/practices are examined as possibly related to learner speech,
the purpose of the research is not to examine or completely compare the two conflicting
educational systems. It is, instead to examine the narrower aspect of learner speech within the two
competing systems of thesis and anti-thesis.

4.2.5 Similarities/Differences Between the Thesis and Anti-Thesis

Ricoeur (1976) shows that the dialectic of Hegel did not necessarily anticipate exact
opposites as the instruments of thesis and anti-thesis. Instead, the Hegelian notion of thesis
suggested a special kind of oppositional force between conflicting themes or ideas represented by
a thesis and anti-thesis, one that Ricoeur calls a “productive opposition.” As Ricoeur (1976)
explains:

… a third kind of opposition must be supposed, what could be called a productive opposition, if we understand by that an opposition which, in one way or another, permits, encourages, or generates a new thing, in reality or in experience, qualitatively distinct from the opposing terms (p. 173).

In a number of ways, the educational model of Confucius (thesis) and of Freire (Antithesis) are not completely different. Instead, they are both different and similar at the same time. For example, both are accurately described as secular oriented belief systems, yet each has its own unique trace of the sacred or spiritual. Confucius seldom spoke of spirits or the other-world and focused most of his attention on the secular, social world, yet, according to Tu (1985), he advised a due respect for spirits and made the goal of his ideas one of an almost human heaven of peace, respect and duty so much that Confucianism is properly to be viewed as a religion. At the same time, Freire’s primary goal was secular revolution on behalf of deprived, dehumanized groups yet he filled the spaces of his approach to social justice with Christian-like notions of love. McLaren (1999) says: “What sets Freire apart from most other leftist educators in this era of cynical reason is his unashamed stress on the importance and power of love (p. 53).” In some odd, unexpected ways, Freire sounds almost like Saint Paul in his insistence that love comes first. At the center of his approach to teaching is the idea of dialogue and yet even dialogue is nothing without love. He says: “Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people. The naming of the world, which is an act of creation and re-creation, is not possible if it is not infused with love McLaren (1999, P. 53).” The point of noting these similarities/differences is to argue that though both the Confucian and Freirean models are correctly described as secular and both are correctly described as having elements of the religious (sacred), they yet come together in a dialectical, contradictory way so as to present the “productive opposition” called for by Ricoeur (1973, p. 173).
4.3 Thesis: The Confucian Model and Learner Speech

Without retracing previous chapters of this research, the offered elements revolving learner speech in the Confucian model ideal type are: (1) Peace, (2) Piety, (3) Passive Pondering, (4) Position, (5) Purposeful Self-Cultivation and (6) Past. In addition to the elements of the model there is also a (7) teacher who occupies a position of parent in relation to the learner and a learner attitude of (8) persistence.

Educational models are produced by the cultural models of which they are a part and were my understanding of Confucian culture more complete, I would have attempted to prioritize the precise position of each of the elements of the Confucian ideal type from first to last in terms of their relative importance. Such a prioritization would have indicated the degree of hierarchy, order, symmetry, and structure that is reflected in the general Confucian cultural view. As will be recalled, it was Heaven and Earth that produced Man, men and women who produced children, and therefore, in filial duty, to the Heaven and Earth, mankind is obligated to attempt to reproduce the Way (Dao) of Heaven. Everything in Confucianism seems to be ordered and structured. Since it was beyond my ability to do a prioritization, I have used terms that begin with the same letter as a poor substitute to indicate an emphasis upon order and structure in the general Confucian culture and more specifically in a Confucian ideal type educational model. If there is learner speech in the Confucian model it would be expected that it must be exercised in thoughtful, careful, and appropriate ways that fit the position oriented order, structure, and symmetry of the following:

(1) Peace

In the Confucian model ideal type, peace and harmony is the Way (Dao) of the Heavens and the Way of Earth seeks to recreate the Way of the Heavens. Silence is the Way of the Heaven. Listening can be a tool of learning and it is a much safer social tool of interacting than is speaking.
Earnest listening represents respect and deference but speaking risks being interpreted as challenge, as opposition, as pride, as rebellion and worse yet it can show how little one knows or understands. The Confucian model is one that appears to provide fewer spaces in the classroom for safe and protected learner speech than the Western, Canadian model. If it does provide significant spaces for learner speech it appears that they are teacher (junzi) orchestrated and programmed speech space, one that teaches learners to participate in learning as prescribed and one that is ordered and therefore safe for teachers and learners but one that at the same time may hold some potential for the kind of oppositional or challenging learner speech demanded by Freire in the Canadian educational model. Because speech holds such potential threat to peace and social harmony, it appears that listening is the preferred tool of learning when possible in the Confucian model.

(2) Piety

The sense in which the word piety is here used taken from Ho (1994). According to Ho, filial piety is a central principle for Chinese social relations. It is a principle that relates to children’s obligations to parents but it also is extended to relate to all social positions involving rank as well as age. Ho (1994) writes that

Filial piety prescribes how children should behave toward their parents, living or dead, as well as toward their ancestors. It justifies absolute parental authority over children and, by extension, the authority of those senior in generational rank over those junior in rank…Among the social obligations of the individual, those pertaining to filial piety are of overriding importance…The attributes of intergenerational relationships governed by filial piety are structural, enduring, and invariant across situations within Chinese culture. They generalize to authority relationships beyond the family and are thus potent determinants of not only intergenerational but also superior-subordinate interactions (p. 350).

If ever an educational model could be described as emphasizing convention (li), propriety, and social power, it must be one that makes learning and dutifully applying the collected societal rituals (li) in the matrix of social positions its goal as the learner moves along the Dao (Way)
toward the position of *junzi* (or further) in a teacher/student relationship that has much of the appearance of a filial relationship. Again, there may be space for learner speech in such a model (Li (2012) argues there is) but it may only be the speech of reverence and duty and properness (convention) and powerlessness, and therefore, much below the Freirean demanded speech level of curiosity, challenge, critical analysis, and revolutionary dialogue.

(3) Passive Pondering

Li (2012) argues that learner silence can be a route to learning when it involves intense listening, intentional memorization aimed at understanding, and under the influence and leadership of teachers that appear authoritarian but that, in fact, employ hand-holding, sticky probe, communications. As indicated by Li (2014), such an environment may produce relatively deep and serious thought. However, the likelihood of critical thought on a regular and large scale by learners in such circumstances seems possible but also questionable. It seems even more questionable that it will produce the critical, naming of one’s world demanded by Freire.

(4) Position

According to Ho (1995), the notion of self in Confucian thought differs from that of the West and it seems that this difference might have educational implications regarding the role of learner speech. Unlike the self of Western cultures that develops on the basis of wants, choices or needs, Ho explains that the Confucian self is one that develops in relationship or perceived relationships with others. Ho (1995) explains it as a process where the role occupied by a person overrides his own personality in determining his role behavior. Referring to the process as “relational identity,” Ho (1995) says “The significance of relationships entails the very definition of identity (p. 116).” Tu (1998b) expresses a similar notion regarding the role of relationships and social positions in determining the Confucian sense of self. For him the Confucian self appears to be one whose identity is reflected from the center of a maze of social relationships starting with
the family and extending outward all of which contribute to a sense of multiple selves. To the extent that the self is individualistic based on individual choice as in the West, then learner speech is a pretty direct matter of giving voice to a perspective that happens to be that of the learner. However, to the extent that the self becomes that of Ho’s (1995) “relational identity” speech in the Confucian tradition becomes a much more complex representation of a multiplicity of interests and perspectives. Tu (1998b) suggests that the Confucian quest for learning involves a transformation of the individual human. It is a process of moving from the individual through the family, through the community, through the nation, through the species of humanity and even through the integration of Heaven and Earth. Tu (1998b) using portions of Huston Smith’s *The World’s Religions* describes the process as follows:

In shifting the center of one’s empathic concern from oneself to one's family one transcends selfishness. The move from family to community transcends nepotism. The move from community to nation transcends parochialism and the move to all humanity counters chauvinistic nationalism. We can even add: the move towards the unity of Heaven and humanity (tianrenheyi) transcends secular humanism, a blatant form of anthropocentrism characteristic of the Enlightenment mentality. Indeed, it is in the anthropocosmic spirit that we find communication between self and community, harmony between human species and nature, and mutuality between humanity and Heaven. This integrated comprehensive vision of learning to be human may very well serve as a point of departure for a new discourse on the global ethic. (pp. 294-295).

The learning process Tu (1998b) described is one of self-transformation through learning that results in higher and higher levels of empathy. It seems that as learner speech becomes more and more fractured and representative of multiple perspectives, and thus, a more and more serious and deliberative act, that it might increasingly lead toward the silence (serious listening) that Confucius suggested reigned in Heaven. Tu (1998b) concludes by recommending that: “This integrated comprehensive vision of learning to be human may very well serve as a point of departure for a new discourse on the global ethic. (p. 295).” I suspect that Tu envisions a learner speech that is much more ear-based and deliberate and controlled than the speech we will below
find preferred by Freire.

(5) **Purposeful Self-Cultivation**

Especially emphasized by Tu (1985) and by Li (2012), the learner speech of the Confucian education model is one centered upon individual, moral self-improvement. It is not the learner speech of curiosity satisfaction nor the speech of understanding and controlling nature nor the speech of political liberation that we find in Freire. Instead, it is the learner speech of one who has committed to move along the *Dao* (Way) and, as such, it is as much or more about doing as about saying, asking, or telling. It is a speech that focuses upon those further than themselves along the *Dao* (*junzi*) and therefore involves more listening and watching and respecting of more advanced role models in terms of their speech and their actions. Finally, because it involves the core Confucian goal of becoming increasingly human within the context of increasing numbers of social relationships, it is likely a sober and thoughtful and serious and empathetic speech rather than the liberatory speech of Freire.

(6) **The Past**

As indicated in a previous chapter, the Analects of Confucius sought to call a present generation in chaos to return to a previous, more ordered and just society. As also indicated previously, the rituals prescribed by *li*, believed to be the proper and human conduct for each of the various relational social positions in society, were in fact representations of the collected cultural wisdom of the past. Therefore, the application of the *li* prescribed conduct was by nature conservative and backward looking. For Freire (2000), it is the present individual’s experiences in speaking out and naming his own personal reality that is important but if ever there was any culture that emphasized Isaac Newton’s notion that cultures stand on the shoulders of their predecessors (Scotchmer, 1991) it must be the Confucian culture. Though each individual Confucian learner seeks to become more fully human the prescriptions for achievement of humanness tend to be
offered from the past. Like all backward-looking cultures, not only does Confucian culture appear conservative, it also has been accused of being a protector of status quo power relationships. There have been periods when it was common for the Chinese to openly recognize the conservative and status quo orientation of Confucian thought. Ho (1995) suggests this element when he points out that self-cultivation frequently means that the lower social positions must subordinate themselves and that the upper positions are then, though not originally intended, left with almost unlimited power. Ho (1995) notes that “… in sociological terms, li serves to maintain status hierarchies (p. 118)” and Ho (1995) gives examples of historical periods when the cardinal social positions were recognized as creating prisons for those in the lower social positions as opposed to achieving the peace and social harmony that Confucianism claimed to seek. This aspect of Confucianism as a backward looking, status quo protecting system that subdues individuality rather than providing self-actualization is reflected in Ho’s (1995) following observations:

The self in Confucianism is a subdued self. It is conditioned to respond to perceptions, not of its own needs and aspirations, but of social requirements…Confucianism has been accused… of paternalism, conservatism, even oppressiveness. The great emphasis on propriety leaves little room for the unbridled expression of emotions and feelings. The extreme rigidity of prescriptions for proper conduct tolerates no deviation from the norm and thus inhibits the development of individuality. Confucianism tends to produce people who view behavior in terms of whether it meets or fails to meet some external moral or social criteria and not in terms of individual needs, sentiments, or volition (p. 118).

If Ho (1995) is right, then a heavy burden always weighs over the speech of the self-cultivating Confucian learner. Much of self-cultivation involves learning the proper human reactions from within each of the many social positions (starting with the positions of the family) and speech from within each of these positions must fit the accumulated li prescriptions of the past. Speech is possible but if Ho (1995) is correct it is likely to be a self-subdued speech, not the active and individually powerful speech anticipated by Freire.
(7) The Confucian Teacher

The Confucian teacher has many admirable qualities. Most of all his or her learnedness has allowed for and promoted great movement along the Dao leading to a type of self-actualization in the matrix of Confucian social positions according to the role prescriptions provided by li. He or she presents a model of learning for the learner but it is one of a father-teacher; one who is willing and even eager to learn with and from the learner-child, but one that, in theory, always makes the guiding voice of the learning the voice of li, the collected wisdom of the culture from the past, not the voice of the learner or even the voice of the teacher. It is a voice not based upon the individual realities and lived experiences of the learner but of a larger collection of voices mostly from the past that address how to become more human within the social positions of the larger culture.

(8) Persistence

If the preceding concepts can be said to constitute the central elements of an ideal type Confucian learning model, there is an additional concept that might be described as an attitude. If the preceding elements can be said to be the motor of the Confucian learning model, the lubricant might be described as learner persistence. The basic idea is the attitude that all normal learners can achieve significant learning progress if they work hard and long enough. Associated with this attitude about learner success is the belief that if learners fail to learn it is a reflection of learner laziness/motivation. According to this attitude failure to learn means learner laziness as well as family (and even teacher) failure to properly guide the learner. When applied on a culture wide basis, it is an attitude that can be a wonderful incentive to learners to work and families (as well as teachers) to train but it can also place horrible pressure upon learners and families and make learning a fearful and terrifying experience where learners act (and speak) very cautiously because every strategy must become one that enables the learner to demonstrate learning. One such strategy is a cautious learner silence where learners focus only upon tests to demonstrate their learning.
Another may be to only speak after first developing great certainty of the correctness of their speech. Both practices might avoid the risks of allowing learner speech to reveal areas of learner ignorance. In such an environment learner speech is likely to become rare and is unlikely to produce the level of revolution and opposition required in the Freirean learner speech model.

4.4 The Anti-Thesis: The Freirean Model and Learner Speech

The offered elements revolving learner speech in the model of Freire (2000) are: (1) Perception of oppression, (2) Articulation of an alternative reality, (3) Confrontation of oppression by naming the world, and (4) Participation in actively recreating the world through problem solving. The Freirean (5) teacher is less a teacher father as is found in the Confucian model but more of a teacher brother who has symbolically given up the social power of a dominator and joined the learner as a brother in reading the world in relation to their own voice as well as the voice of the learner. Finally, there is also an attitude. It is the attitude of (6) hope and love; a hope that points to a better future and a love that is inclusive of those in the classes that have been othered.

(1) Perception of Oppression

The purpose of the teacher and of teaching for Freire is to make learners aware of the existence of oppressive cultural systems that create seeming realities of oppression that steal the voice and therefore the humanity of the oppressed. It is a pedagogy where the teacher seeks to reveal the conflict between the cultural reality of oppressors and of oppressed peoples, to encourage the oppressed to rediscover their voice and dignity, and then to join with learners in recreating the world so as to make it inclusive of the voices of all people, not just the privileged. Freire’s (2000) idea of education is based on a belief that education must be committed to a value viewpoint. He believed that traditional education has betrayed the interest and the values of the oppressed classes by pretending to be valueless, neutral, and objective. Shaull (2000), argues that
such a position is actually a default position for teaching the values and perspectives of the
dominant local class, saying that one cannot teach the conflicts (or anything else, for that matter)
by assuming this neutral view as though “it fell from the sky (p. 24),” for it is no view at all. In
other words, the assumption of a supposedly neutral class view is actually a perspective of the
projection of local values as neutrally universal ones and it results in an educational system that
has the effect of keeping the dispossessed classes silent, inactive, and ignorant of their creative
ontological vocation (as he calls it) is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and
in so doing moves toward ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and
collectively (p. 32).” Shaull (2000) says that

Rather than being encouraged and equipped to know and respond to the concrete
realities of their world, they were kept ‘submerged’ in a situation in which such
critical awareness and response were practically impossible. And it became clear
to him that the whole educational system was one of the major instruments for the
maintenance of this culture of silence (p. 30).

Unlike Freire, for Confucius, there is no notice given to the idea that what appears to be
objective social reality may in fact be a tool of an oppressor class working against the interest and
values of dispossessed peoples. Confucius invited all to begin the process of expansion of the self
by learning the *li* prescriptions that apply to the social positions of society and to apply these
prescriptions with sensitivity and empathy but there is little recognition of the idea that some may
have lost their voice and therefore their dignity and humanity under the position orientated matrix
described in Confucianism.

(2) Articulation of an Alternative Reality

Freire (2000) starts from the position that it is the natural state of all men that their lives
should consist of speaking their reality and in doing so offer it as a perspective for construction of
the world. His education seeks to encourage and aid people who have been prevented from doing
this to come to see that “The pedagogy of the oppressed is an instrument for their critical discovery that both they and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanization” and that this dehumanization “…is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed (p. 48).” Freire (2000) goes further to explain that correction of the dehumanization of both the oppressor and the oppressed must come from the socially weaker oppressed class, saying: “This, then, is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well (p. 48). To begin this task, the oppressed must speak and through speaking begin the process of naming their own world and through speaking and naming and offering their truths to participate in creating and re-creating the world.

(3) Confrontation of Oppressors in Naming the World

Freire (2000) is clear that the oppressor class will not give up their power to define the reality of marginalized classes voluntarily. According to Freire, though it is dehumanizing, the unjust system is one that causes the oppressor class to see it as fixed and just. He says “For the rightist sectarian, ‘today,’ linked to the past, is something given and immutable… (p. 38)” and:

The oppressors do not perceive their monopoly on having more as a privilege which dehumanizes others and themselves. They cannot see that, in the egoistic pursuit of having as a possessing class, they suffocate in their own possessions and no longer are; they merely have. For them, having more is an inalienable right, a right they acquired through their own "effort," with their "courage to take risks." If others do not have more, it is because they are incompetent and lazy, and worst of all is their unjustifiable ingratitude towards the “generous gestures” of the dominant class (p. 59).

The false consciousness of the oppressor class prevents it from voluntarily joining the dispossessed in recreating the world in a more just way and the oppressed classes do the oppressors a favor in opposing them for otherwise the oppressors too continue to be dehumanized because their oppressor “…consciousness tends to transform everything surrounding it into an object of its
domination. The earth, property, production, the creations of people, people themselves, time—everything is reduced to the status of objects at its disposal (p. 58).” Furthermore, because of the dehumanization of the oppressor class, Freire (2000) offers little hope of it providing role models (junzi in the Confucian tradition) for guiding of the dispossessed. In fact, Freire warns against such a hope for salvation of the dispossessed insisting that the naming of the world of the dispossessed must come from their experiences, not those of the oppressor class. Freire (2000) explains that humanization does not come from the superior man: “…the oppressor, who is himself dehumanized because he dehumanizes others, is unable to lead this struggle (p. 47).” He additionally notes that it would be a contradiction to expect the oppressor to liberate the oppressed, saying: “…the pedagogy of the oppressed cannot be developed or practiced by the oppressors. It would be a contradiction in terms if the oppressors not only defended but actually implemented a liberating education (p. 55).” Freire says that “No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption (p. 54)” and that “The oppressed, who have been shaped by the death-affirming climate of oppression, must find through their struggle the way to life-affirming humanization (p. 58).” Instead, Freire argues that the dispossessed class can lead themselves without a paternal teacher coming from the oppressor classes saying:

Provided with the proper tools for such encounter, the individual can gradually perceive personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, become conscious of his or her own perception of that reality, and deal critically with it. In this process, the old, paternalistic teacher-student relationship is overcome. A peasant can facilitate this process for a neighbor more effectively than a ‘teacher’ brought in from outside (p. 32).

Finally, Freire (2000) argues that there are actually only two choices when it comes to education, one that teaches learner conformity to a system that favors the powerful and therefore
leads the disposed to become persons for the other or one that teaches freedom and liberation to name your own world in a creative and critical way. He offered the choice as follows:

There is no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes “the practice of freedom,” the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (p. 34).

As a teacher and as a learner Freire recommends and urges the latter form of education.

(4) Participation in Actively Recreating the World Through Problem Solving

Praxis overshadows speech for Confucius. For Freire speech is very necessary but also so is praxis. Education where the leaders only lecture becomes a dead education. Freire argues that without both student inquiry and praxis, humanity will be absent or undeveloped. Freire (2000) explains that mere teacher lecture, “whether values or empirical dimensions of reality, tend in the process of being narrated to become lifeless and petrified” and that the result is that “Words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated, and alienating verbosity (p. 69).” Instead, Freire (2000) calls for a true learner praxis that involves humans engaging in dialogue in order to solve the problems that exist in their lived experiences, saying:

They must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world. ‘Problem-posing’ education, responding to the essence of consciousness—intentionality—rejects communiques and embodies communication (p. 76).

In his problem-posing process Freire (2000) envisions a new teacher/student partnership, saying:

A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice co-intentional education. Teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement (p. 69).

In order to have the teacher/student relationship and co-praxis envisioned by Freire (2000)
he says that the traditional poles between teacher and student have to be reconciled. He says that “Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students (p. 69.)”

Though Freire (2000) did not specifically mention Confucius, it is as though he could have been addressing him and the notion of learners attempting to adapt to *li* as he condemned the educational system of the oppressor class by saying:

> The educated individual is the adapted person, because she or he is better ‘fit’ for the world. Translated into practice, this concept is well suited to the purposes of the oppressors, whose tranquility rests on how well people fit the world the oppressors have created, and how little they question it (p. 76).

In contrast to producing the learner as adapted person, Freire (2000) sought what he believed was a more authentic education, one that encouraged movement toward a humanization that went beyond mere adaption to the existing social system. He described it as follows:

> Authentic liberation—the process of humanization—is not another deposit to be made in men. Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it. Those truly committed to the cause of liberation can accept neither the mechanistic concept of consciousness as an empty vessel to be filled, nor the use of banking methods of domination (propaganda, slogans—deposits) in the name of liberation (p. 76).

(5) The Freirean Teacher

Confucius offered education where superior men having achieved self-cultivation would teach learners to achieve their own self-cultivation by learning to occupy all social positions with grace and empathy as prescribed by *li*. In doing so Confucius sought a world of stability, dignity and respect and promised harmony on Earth reflective of that found in the Heavens. Freire offered education where teachers would encourage learners to recognize social injustice based on class oppression and then join teachers on a co-equal basis to collect the voices of all class perspectives and then through revolutionary dialogic communication to achieve greater humanity through becoming beings for themselves instead of beings who belonged to others. These new beings for
themselves would then participate in a new creation and re-creation of their world, one that included voices from all of perspectives, not only of the oppressor class but one that focused on solving problems in the lived experiences of all people. The Freirean teacher was a teacher-brother who was willing to give up power over learners in order to empower learners. This coming down of the teacher in order that the learner could be a co-partner in a fresh new learning experience was not quite the same thing as the Confucian teacher being willing to learn from those far behind him in their journey along the Dao. It was not quite the same as the learned junzi being willing to help and to listen and even to learn with the learner. Instead, it was a radical surrendering and setting aside of the teacher status in order to give the learner’s speaking of his or her reality a type of equality with the voice of the teacher. Even though Freire acknowledged that learners need the superior experience and knowledge of the teacher, the coming down of the teacher involved a moment of true sharing of power and authority with the learner. Freire (2000) described this coming down of the teacher in rank and joining the learner in the process of naming their world as a type of necessary sacrificial religious-like act on the part of the teacher without which learning would not only be a hollow and empty memorizing process but would actually be participation in an act of domination and oppression for both the learner and teacher. Freire (2000) said:

Once teachers see the contradiction between their words and their actions, they have two choices. They can become shrewdly clear and aware of their need to be reactionary, or they can accept a critical position to engage in action to transform reality. I call it ‘making Easter’ every day, to die as the dominator and be born again as the dominated, fighting to overcome oppression (p. 18).

(6) The Attitude of Freire’s Approach

Unlike the attitude of learner hard work and persistence which fueled the motor of the Confucian engine of education, the attitude that fuels the motor of Freirean education is one of love and hope. The persistence of the Confucian learner is no doubt partly related to an inherent love of learning in the learner but it is also clearly partly related to a sense of obligation and piety,
especially, parental piety. Contrary to the persistence of the Confucian learner, another attitude underlies the Freirean system. It is an attitude that recognizes the hardship of the dispossessed class but brings an almost religious-like love to the process of showing them the means whereby to recover their lost voice and, with it, their humanity. Not only is there love, there is a faith in the process that brings hope to its achievement. According to McLaren (1999), the drive behind dialogue is love for the learner and without love there can be no true dialogue. Furthermore, love requires that dialogue be liberating for the learner. McLaren (1999) quotes Freire’s (2000) statements that: “If I do not love the world—if I do not love life—if I do not love people—I cannot enter into dialogue” and “A love that does not liberate feeds off its object like worms on a corpse” (p. 53). McLaren (1999) asserts that this is a love that sustains hope and avoids despair. Even as injustice and suffering of the dispossessed continues, it is a love that produces hope by remembering and honoring the suffering of the past as inspiration to go forward in the future. McLaren (1999) explains:

This commitment is sustained by preventing nihilism and despair from imposing their own life-denying inevitability in times of social strife and cultural turmoil. Anchored in narratives of transgression and dissent, love becomes the foundation of hope... Love, in this Freirean sense, becomes the oxygen of revolution, nourishing the blood of historical memory (p. 54).

Giroux (1985) speaks of the spiritual aspect of Freire’s pedagogy in a similar way, suggesting that it comes from Freire’s experience with South American liberation theology. Regarding Freire, he writes:

…the prophetic vision central to his politics are heavily indebted to the spirit and ideological dynamics that have both informed and characterized the theologies of liberation that have emerged primarily from Latin America since the early 1970s. In truly dialectical fashion, Freire has criticized and rescued the radical underside of revolutionary Christianity... It is prophetic in that it views the kingdom of God as something to be created on earth but only through faith in other human beings and the necessity of permanent struggle. (p. xvii).
Again, like Confucian thought, Freirean thought is secular in its terminology but, also like Confucian thought, it also includes a distinct trace of the sacred.

4.5 Similarities of the Confucian and Freirean Education Models

Zhao (2013) argues that Confucius was actually an early version of a critical educator who was in many ways similar to Freire. According to Zhao (2013), their similarities were as follows: (1) Both advocated teachers being both teachers and learners in that Confucius was willing to learn from any source and in that Freire emphasized the notion of teacher-learners and learner-teachers; (2) Both Confucius and Freire emphasized an integration of learning theory and learning practice and application; (3) Both Confucius and Freire advocate deep learner reflection that was expected to become active in application and to be pursued with an attitude of humility and love, and (4) Both Confucius and Freire advocate types of transformation. For Confucius, there was a type of moral individual transformation that was sought that if done by enough people would then transform society toward a harmonious and peaceful society. For Freire, a type of individual transformation was sought that eventually affects the whole society and moves the society away from class oppression and toward greater social justice.

I accept these arguments of Zhao (2013) except on one issue. The ideal types used in this research reflect the arguments of Zhao (2013) regarding the similarities of Confucius and Freire in the bottom box of Table 2. However, I reject Zhao’s (2013) argument that both Confucius and Freire advocated collapsing the learner and teacher positions. I see nothing in the Analects of Confucius arguing for abolishing the distinction of the junzi (teacher) position and that of the learner position so as to make them equal. Confucius’ willingness to learn from anybody is not comparable to Freire’s (2000) insistence that the reality of the oppressed must be spoken by the oppressed class and the dominant class (here teachers) must not attempt to speak for the oppressed.
(here students). It is not at all comparable to Freire’s insistence that teachers become true co-
learners with their students.

For Confucius to have advocated the Freirean equality between teachers and learners that
Zhao (2013) suggests would violate the spirit of his view and vision of a social matrix of
superior/inferior social positions filled by learners who have absorbed and achieved the ways of li
in order to create a social world of harmony. It would threaten the notion of hierarchy in a social
system that revolves upon the notion of hierarchy and, without hierarch, the system would hardly
be Confucian.

This however, is not to say that the hierarch built into his social matrix of superior and
inferior positions must be inflexible, cold, distant, and wholly without oral discussion. After all,
Confucius suggests that even junzi can be in error and should be willing to learn from others.
Confucius and his system requires hierarchy but much in the Analects suggests that it can consist
of a social difference that, though it is vertical, can also be warm, supportive, and approachable.
The Confucian position of junzi cannot be reduced to one of equality with the learner position as
in the Easter experience called for by Freire. However, the Confucian model does provide space
for the junzi to be not only a serious and earnest taskmaster-advocate of further progress along the
dao by students, but also a warm, approachable and even humorous and kindly learning-uncle who
lovingly looks back from advanced learned positions far along the Dao and waves to invite students
to move further. This distinction between the seemingly absolute equality of teacher-learner
positions called for by Freire and the verticality of social positions required by Confucian thought
becomes important later in this research in interpreting the participants’ preference for greater
warmth, approachableness, and learner speech in teacher-learner relations as a blending (synthesis)
of the two approaches rather than as a full repudiation of the Confucian model of their home
cultures. Instead of fully adopting the relationship of equality implied by the approach of Freire,
the participants’ preference for the teacher-learner relationship experienced in Canadian graduate schools may be something else. It may reflect a desire for a more “fuzzy” verticality in the teacher-learner relationship; one that includes warmth and approachability and greater oral openness, yet not one that, as suggested by Freire, practically abolishes distinctions in the two positions.

Table 2: Dialectic of Confucian Thesis, Freirean Anti-thesis with Commonalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confucian Ideal Type</th>
<th>Freirian Ideal Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Peace (harmony, respect &amp; speech)</td>
<td>* Awareness of oppression by learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Piety (filial duty &amp; speech)</td>
<td>* Giving voice to learner’s world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Position (multiple positions of self &amp; speech)</td>
<td>* Confronting oppression of oppressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Purposeful self-cultivation (morality and speech)</td>
<td>* Action toward new social fairness (praxis) through problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Past (tradition and speech)</td>
<td>* Motived by attitude of hope and love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Persistence (pressure and speech)</td>
<td>* Teacher: Brother-partner problem solver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Teacher: Father-teacher shows the way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shared Characteristics

* Both are secular but with elements of the spiritual
* Both are egalitarian (all can self-cultivate and all can speak their reality)
* Both seek a greater humanity (one by adapting individuals to societal positions and one by recreating societal prescriptions to achieve social justice)
Chapter 5

Methodology

5.1 Research Methods

As I have observed learners from East Asian cultures in the classrooms of Canada and in the United States I have often wondered what is wrong or different with us when it comes to joining into the classroom discussions which are so often a big part of the Western classroom learning experiences. In considering this research, I have decided that the best way to get an academic answer to my curiosity was to go to the source of the phenomenon, the learners themselves, and to probe their thinking regarding the phenomenon of their relative silence in the classroom. Of course, coming from an East Asian culture myself, I had my own preconceptions as to what their responses would be yet I realized that my own personal thinking might not represent their lived experiences or that if it did it might only represent a small part of the bigger picture regarding their silence in the classroom. In deciding how to investigate their lived experiences the qualitative approach of phenomenology immediately sprang to my mind. I was focusing upon naturalistic human perceptions so my methods needed to be qualitative. It was their impression of the phenomena of their own learning experience as well as that of their Confucian influenced peers about which I sought information.

In making the case for the use of qualitative research in research involving education, Hurst (1987) said that because human behavior was primarily determined by culture, there was little chance of understanding educational processes through aping the physical sciences and their quantitative constructs. Instead, as opposed to quantitative research, Hurst (1987) argued that education, being the very processes by which culture was transmitted, was particularly well suited as an object for the application of qualitative, phenomenological research. Hurst (1987) said:
Education, being the process by which codes of meaning are transmitted from one generation to another, is spectacularly suited for phenomenological interpretation, which makes it more superficially curious that educational research has been so much in thrall to statistical analysis of one sort or another (p. 69).

Because this research sought to explore the specific phenomena of learner-speech perceptions of specific students in the particular situation of learners and graduate students in Canadian university classrooms, the research follows the recommendation of Hurst (1987) and uses the qualitative approach of phenomenology. Though the research goes to some length to set the approach of Confucian learners to learner speech in the historical context of Confucian educational thought, the goal of the research was not to explain the participants’ use of speech as learners but rather to probe and explore their perceptions regarding it and to then analyze their perceptions within the context of a dialectical relationship between Confucian and Western Canadian educational models. Creswell (2007) noted that, “Research problems best studied using the quantitative approach are those in which the issue needs to be explained; problems best addressed by the qualitative approach are those that need to be explored (p. 76).”

Starks & Trinidad (2007), further supplied justification for a phenomenological approach in this research. According to them, the truth of the subjective realities experienced by participants is only knowable through an “embodied” examination of their experiences and “In phenomenology reality is comprehended through embodied experience. Through close examination of individual experiences, phenomenological analysts seek to capture the meaning and common features, or essences, of an experience or event (p. 1374).”

Creswell (2007) used metaphor to explain the nature of qualitative research by comparing it to a fabric saying general perspectives and world views are like the loom frameworks that hold a varied fabric together. In describing these frameworks, he noted that researchers use terms such as constructivist, feminist, interpretist, naturalistic, and post-modern and that “(w)ithin these
worldviews and through these lens are approaches … such as narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case studies (p. 35).” In speaking of the field of qualitative research, Creswell (2007) said that “the field has many different individuals with different perspectives who are on their own looms creating the fabric of qualitative research.” This research represents the efforts of one of those many different individuals. It brings the perspective (loom) of Hegelian dialectic to an analysis of Confucian education learner-speech perceptions in relation to an opposing strand of Canadian graduate school education, that of Freirean learner speech. It is a qualitative loom that is unreported in previous research.

Regardless of the diversity of perspectives described by Creswell (2007), he listed the following characteristics that were common to all qualitative research:

1) The setting is natural rather than in a lab with researchers having face-to-face interaction;
2) There is a theoretical lens and the study may be organized around identifying the social, historical, or political context of the problem under study;
3) There is a form of interpretative inquiry where researchers make an interpretation of their data;
4) Researchers try to develop a complex picture of the problem under study looking for complex interactions of factors rather than tight, cause and effect relationships;
5) It is the researchers that actually collect the data;
6) Researchers use multiple sources of data and then try to make sense of it and organize it into themes and categories;
7) Researchers use an inductive approach of building their data into categories or themes from the bottom up; and
8) Researchers allow the data to emerge and are willing to modify research approaches based on where the data leads.
It is the goal of this research to follow Creswell’s (2007) general qualitative research prescriptions: The research setting involves the naturalistic experiences/perceptions of Confucian socialized learners as explored by the researcher through phenomenological methods as the participants attempt to adapt to a much different Canadian model of graduate education. The world view is naturalistic as the participants’ experiences/perceptions are explored, understood and then organized and interpreted around and through a theoretical lens of a version of Hegel’s model of the dialectic (explained in Chapter 4). The research seeks to develop a complex picture of the problem being studied and searches broadly for complex interactions of factors that might be involved in learner speech approaches (e.g., concerns of collectivism, social harmony, hierarchical social structure, language/communicational forms of respect, teacher/learner relations, pedagogical approaches, etc.) of the Chinese learner as opposed to using large number samples containing selected variables and looking for tightly connected, cause and effect, probability based relationships of variables and factors. The research data was personally collected by me. Finally, by allowing the data reports of learner perceptions (participants) to build and develop from the ground up in an inductive way and by then allowing emergent categories or themes that represented the flow of the data to develop rather than representing constructs previously created/envisioned by myself, the research reflects all of the characteristics described by Creswell (2007).

In addition to these general characteristics of phenomenological qualitative research, this research also attempts to follow the principles of a particular approach, first developed in the area of health psychology but now rapidly spreading to other areas, regarding phenomenological research know as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

5.2 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

The present research will not contribute to the quantitative, statistical curiosity of research in education so forcefully condemned earlier by Hurst (1987). It is not statistical at all. In fact, it
is what researchers refer to as idiographic, a form of research that focuses on the particular or the individual as one single, unique source of perceptions about a phenomenon. Though, as qualititative research, this type of research involves a ground up or inductive analysis where it seeks to discover themes through an interpretative combining of a number of individual perceptions, it is research that initially attempts to discover insight regarding the single, unique learner speech perceptions of one former Confucian trained scholar participant regarding their encounter with Canadian graduate school classrooms. Only thereafter does the research seek to discover commonalities that the members of this small group of participants might have.

As I considered the challenge of understanding the perceptions of a relatively small number of research participants regarding this phenomenon, it brought to my mind my undergraduate experience in Psychology. This then eventually drew me to an approach known as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). It is an approach that has found increasing use in the field of Psychology. Reid et al. (2005) says:

Understanding experience is the very bread and butter of psychology, and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA: Smith, 1996) offers psychologists the opportunity to learn from the insights of the experts –research participants themselves (p. 20).

Chapman and Smith (2002) explain that

The aim of IPA is to explore how participants make sense of their experiences; IPA engages with the meaning that experiences, events and actions hold for participants. At the same time, IPA recognizes that the researcher’s own conceptions are required in order to make sense of the personal world being studied through a process of interpretative activity (p. 126).

Chapman and Smith (2002) further note that IPA as a method of research has its roots in phenomenology and symbolic interactionism and that, as an approach, it offers “a theoretical underpinning, a set of methodological procedures and a corpus of studies p. 126).” Smith (2004) offers a simplified outline the central features of IPA saying: “I would suggest that the
characteristic features of IPA can be captured in an alliterative three-part list: idiographic, inductive, and interrogative (p. 41).” Smith (2004) also suggests that it is best done with limited numbers of participants, saying: “It is only possible to do the detailed, nuanced analysis associated with IPA on a small sample (p. 42).” Smith (2004) notes the researcher flexibility necessary in IPA as well as the absence of predetermined researcher hypotheses in IPA, saying: “IPA researchers employ techniques which are flexible enough to allow unanticipated topics or themes to emerge during analysis. Thus, IPA researchers do not attempt to verify or negate specific hypotheses established on the basis of the extant literature; rather they construct broader research questions which lead to the collection of expansive data (p. 43).”

Reid et al. (2005) offered a succinct but more detailed description of the basic elements of the IPA approach as follows:

1. It is an inductive approach that uses a bottom up approach rather than a top down approach that does not seek to test hypotheses but rather aims at participants’ perceptions and an exploration of their possible meanings.

2. Participants are viewed as the best experts on their own perceptions and participants are chosen as having particular expertise on the phenomenon being explored.

3. The complexity of the experiential data secured from the participants is reduced by rigorous analysis as the analyst tries to make sense of it for the participants and from the perspective of the analyst and the research.

4. The analysis places some emphasis upon what is distinct or personal or ideographic but at the same time balances this with what is found to be shared or common across the group of participants.

5. The sufficiency standard of the analysis is: a) the interpretation is subjective and is not offered as fact, b) it is grounded in the data so as to be transparent, and c) it must be
believable or plausible from the perspective of the observer or reader.

6. The researcher should reflect upon his role in the research as interpreter of the data, collaborator with the participants in the interviews, and in data analysis and publication of the research (p.20).

Both Reid et al (2005) as well as Smith (2004) report that IPA is becoming an increasingly popular methodology and that its focus has spread beyond the area of health psychology. Smith (2004) writes:

Thus, if a researcher is interested in exploring participants’ personal and lived experiences, in looking at how they make sense and meaning from those experiences, and in pursuing a detailed idiographic case study examination, then IPA is a likely candidate for consideration as a research approach/whether the topic is described, within the conventional parlance, as cognitive, social, developmental, or whatever (p. 48).

It is argued that the complex questions of learners’ perceptions and lived experiences as they attempt to transition between radically different learning systems is exactly the type of inquiry for which IPA was intended. In implementing the above process of IPA this research spoke to each of the above described elements as follows:

5.2.1 Inductive

First the research was conducted from the individual perspective of single participants. No hypothesis was offered. Instead, the research consisted of inductive data gathering followed by exploration of the meaning of the data. No one participant attempted to speak for the perceptions of all Confucian trained scholars regarding the phenomenon in question (learner speech). Instead, each participant spoke of their own personal experience and personal perception. Only after the interviews produced ideographic data regarding the personal experiences of individuals did the research move from bottom (individual) toward the top (common themes). Creswell (2012) makes clear that qualitative research is intended to be emergent in the sense that the data from the
participants drives the direction and even the purpose of the research. Therefore, each individual participant was encouraged to elaborate on the questions as they wished and some went in different directions than others. Furthermore, analysis started with the individual and then only later moved to themes common in the group of participants. Creswell (2012) explained the process as well as the fact that it was exploration of the individual participant’s views (bottom) that are its objective rather than having the researcher try to shape the participants’ views into some predetermined (top) consensus in saying:

An emerging process indicates that the intent or purpose of a study and the questions asked by the researcher may change during the process of inquiry based on feedback or responses from participants. Questions and purposes may change because the qualitative inquirer allows the participants to set the direction, and in doing so, the researcher learns the participants’ views rather than imposing his or her own view on the research situation… Remember that the intent of qualitative research is to understand and explore the central phenomenon, not to develop a consensus of opinion from the people you study (p. 130).

5.2.2 Expert Witnesses

In the present research, the phenomenon under investigation involved learners thought to be situated at the juncture of two contrasting great motors of education. All of the participants, as formerly fully socialized Confucian scholars from elementary through undergraduate school, were uniquely equipped to report relevant and perceptive insights regarding their adaption to the learning environment and practices in Canadian graduate schools. Not only did they have experience in both educational models, all but three of the participants were studying or had studied in some form of educational field. Surely this set of participants satisfied the standard of Reid et al. (2005) that

Participants are experts on their own experiences and can offer researchers an understanding of their thoughts, commitments and feelings through telling their own stories, in their own words, and in as much detail as possible (p. 20).
5.2.3 Rigor of Making Sense of the Data

Like all qualitative research, data is of little use unless the analyst makes sense of it. Reid et al. (2005) makes a number of suggestions regarding the sense making process. First, analysis should reflect a substantial connection to portions of the verbatim data of the participants sufficient to illustrate the importance of the participants’ voice in IPA research. Second, the researcher attempts to play dual roles, one that is of an “insider” to the analysis of the phenomenon under examination developed by repeated reviews of the data together with “commentary” of the meaning of the data and another “outsider” view that attempts to make sense of the views and to apply this “sense” to a particular research question. Reid et al. (2005) explains these dual analyst roles as having a “…balance of ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ positions…” where the analyst

In the former (phenomenological, insider) position, the researcher begins by hearing people’s stories, and prioritizes the participants’ world view at the core of the account. In the latter (interpretative, outsider) position, the researcher attempts to make sense of the participants’ experiences and concerns, and to illuminate them in a way that answers a particular research question (p. 22).

Finally, Reid et al. (2005) writes that this dual analysis “… is underpinned by a process of coding, organizing, integrating and interpreting of data… (p. 22)” which is then supported by other methodological practices such as transparency of results and reflexivity in the interpretation process. Chapman and Smith (2002) provide further details of the coding process that include the steps of reading, analysis with short comments and identification of themes and an organized thematic account of each participant is created. This is followed by making connections across participant cases until superordinate themes for the entire group of participant is organized and connected to underlying verbatim portions of the transcript voices of the participants.

5.2.4 Balancing the Ideographic as well as the Common

Reid et al. (2005) explains that although IPA retains aspects of the participants’ data that represents the individual and distinct (the ideographic) of the participants it also focuses on what
is common among the participants. In the present research there are a number of outlier characteristics that represent the ideographic but they are balanced with some other characteristics that are pretty common in the whole group of participants.

5.2.5 The Successful Analysis Standard

According to Reid et al. (2005) the goal of IPA research (and the goal of this research) is to produce an openly subjective, interpretative process where results are not offered as facts but are still believable, plausible and that are well connected and arise out of the data so as to be transparent to observers and general readers.

5.2.6 Reflexivity

At the heart of IPA research is the idea that researchers who have their own separate subjective views act in collaboration with the participants in order to collect and then interpret their meaning. Reid et al. (2005) makes one of the six basic elements of IPA the process of insuring that researchers are reflexive regarding their role in the process. In the case of the present research bracketing of selected aspects of the background of the researcher has been done to achieve the requirement of reflexivity.

5.3 Data Collection Methods

Interviews were conducted with each of the 18 participants. Reid et al. (2005), Chapman and Smith (2002), and Smith (2004) all note approvingly that semi-structured or unstructured interviews are the most common methods of data collection in IPA. The average period of interviews ranged from one hour and 15 minutes up to two hours per participant. The difficulty of learning about the participant’s genuine attitudes regarding education in their host country of Canada was recognized to be a potentially delicate subject as was the possibility of being perceived as being critical of participant’s educational system in their home cultures and it was attempted to phrase interview questions in as general and non-judgmental way as possible. The same was true
regarding issues of the existence and production of critical thought, teaching approaches of
professors, the degree of the participant’s personal academic effort and the degree of their parents’
educational involvement in the participant’s home cultures.

The interviews were initially centered around a set of questions prepared in advance but
the interview was conducted very loosely with as little guidance as possible such that much of the
interview focused upon unstructured probing regarding every issue contained in the preset
structured questions. The participants were strongly encouraged to freely explore any thoughts
raised by the interview questions, to return to alter or supplement any previously treated questions
and liberally encouraged to range to or from any thoughts that might be generated by our
communications. This resulted in some participants taking different directions in the interviews
than others. The only interference imposed upon the participants as they freely gave their responses
and observations was when they appeared uncertain as to the meaning of a question. In such cases,
following the advice of Creswell (2002), the interviewer attempted to give gentle guidance in order
to keep the narrative of the participant continuing. In essence, the interviews constituted semi-
structured interviews though the sequence of the interview questions was determined by the
researcher. According to Denscombe (1998), semi-structured interviews provide the interviewees
the opportunity to fully consider and elaborate on responses with flexibility based on the particular
mix of communications that the interview circumstances present.

5.3.1 Interview Protocol

The interview protocol included an informed consent letter as well as an invitation letter.
The invitation letter requested the participants’ signatures to agree to be interviewed and audio-
recorded. It also provided information that the participants could ask for a summary of the findings
of this study or to review their completed transcripts. It also explained the request and the purpose
of this study, and included the instructions. It also assured respondents that their confidentiality
would be strictly kept. Finally, the letter indicated that they had the option to skip questions if they were unwilling to provide the answers to particular questions or that they could terminate the interview at any time of their choosing.

Each of the interviews was recorded because of the advantage of allowing the interviewer to make notes during the interview, focus more fully upon the discussions, and to review the data, all advantages of using recordings according to Wiersma (2000).

The interview questions initially focused on topics such as the following but the initial questions then became the springboard for numerous other participant observations raised by the participants as they discussed the initial questions. See appendix E.

5.4 Sample Size, Sufficiency, Characteristics of Participants and Recruitment

In the present research, there were 18 participants. Morse (1994) recommended that phenomenological research directed toward discerning the essence of experiences of participants include about six participants. Starks and Trinidad (2007) noted that “Typical sample sizes for phenomenological studies range from 1 to 10 (p. 1375).” Smith et al., (1999) suggested ten as the upper limits for IPA research but then Smith (2004) suggested even smaller numbers. Reid et al. (2005) noted that 15 was the mean number of participants for IPA research, saying that “IPA challenges the traditional linear relationship between ‘number of participants’ and value of research (p. 22).” Finally, Smith (2004) indicated a degree of flexibility that should allow for the acceptability of the participant number of 18 in the present research in noting that: “One cannot do good qualitative research by following a cookbook. The suggestions I make are only that, suggestions to be adapted and developed by researchers… (p. 40).”

Though the goal of sampling in qualitative research has generally been recognized as the point of saturation, O’Reilly and Parker (2013) point out that the term saturation is often not clearly defined in the research. They point out that in a recent review of a leading journal it was found that
during a 16 months’ period, 18 articles mentioned saturation, yet none of them were transparent about how it was achieved. Saying that “In qualitative research the selection of respondents cannot follow the procedures of quantitative sampling because the purpose is not to count opinions or people but explore the range of opinions and different representations of an issue (pp. 292-293),” O’Reilly and Parker (2013) argued that sampling in qualitative research should be concerned with richness of information rather than amount of data. They further argued that the number of participants ought to be determined by the nature of the topic being researched and the resources available and that the two principles guiding sampling methods in qualitative research should be “appropriateness and adequacy (p. 192).” Saying that “The legacy of quantitative science appears to have left a cultural residue of larger numbers having greater impact. This is not applicable to qualitative work as more data does not necessarily lead to more information (p. 195),” O’Reilly and Parker (2012) argued that “In qualitative inquiry, the aim is not to acquire a fixed number of participants rather it aims to gather sufficient depth of information as a way of fully describing the phenomenon being studied (p. 195).” Based on these principles, they conclude and assert that in qualitative research: “The adequacy of the sample is, therefore, not determined solely on the basis of the number of participants but the appropriateness of the data (p. 195).”

In the present research, the perceptions of the participants are sought not as a way to count opinions or to statistically connect opinions to particular characteristics of the participants. Instead, it is to, as described by O’Reilly and Parker (2013), “explore the range of opinions and different representations of an issue (p. 192).” The range of different representations in this research could be infinite because each additional participant could conceivably offer a view not covered before and therefore, the point of saturation could be unknowable. In such a situation, it is here argued that the test of sampling should not be numbers but rather it should be the richness and the appropriateness of the data that the participants bring to the analysis of the issue. Reasoning that
“…each life is unique and in this sense data are never truly saturated as there will always be new things to discover (O’Reilly and Parker, 2013, p 194),” it is argued that the 18 participants in the present research bring much richness and appropriateness to the exploration of their perceptions of the learning phenomenon under investigation and that by this standard a sufficient saturation was achieved in the present research. After all, “If saturation is not reached this simply means that the phenomenon has not yet been fully explored rather than that the findings are invalid (O’Reilly and Parker, 2013, p. 194).”

5.5 The Research Participants

The interviews of this research were conducted on a one on one basis between February 27, 2013 and August 18, 2014. They were all conducted in the OISE library at the University of Toronto or at Finch public library of the city of Toronto, except for three that were conducted online by Skype. The largest number (10) of participants were from China but there were at least two from each of the four cultures studied. One participant was over 50 and two were between 46 and 50 while the youngest were three participants who listed their age as between 26 and 30. Four of the participants had already received their terminal degree in Canada and the rest were working on either their Masters or their Ph.D. Two reported coming from rural areas in their home cultures while 16 reported having received their educational experience in urban areas. Twelve of the participants were female and six were male.
### Table 3
Research Participants’ Profiles (Current Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender /Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Education rural/urban</th>
<th>Program of study</th>
<th>Degree level</th>
<th>University/Year in the program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M/ Fred</td>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Curriculum Studies and Teacher Development</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
<td>University of Toronto/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Rachel</td>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Ed. D.</td>
<td>University of Toronto/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Lisa</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Rural area</td>
<td>Mathematics Education</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>University of Toronto/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Julie</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Curriculum Studies and Teacher Development</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>University of Toronto/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/ Terry</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban and rural area</td>
<td>East Asian Studies</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
<td>University of Toronto/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Ann</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Curriculum Studies and Teacher Development</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
<td>University of Toronto/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Lily</td>
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<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Language and Literacy Education</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
<td>University of Toronto/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age Range</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Degree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/</td>
<td>Lucy</td>
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<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Adult Education and Community Development</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/</td>
<td>Tammy</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Humanities with Specialization in Racism in Japan</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F/</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Rural area</td>
<td>Adult Education Community Development</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/</td>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Executive MBA</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/</td>
<td>Ryan</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Asian Studies</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/</td>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Language Education</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/</td>
<td>Eric</td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Language Education</td>
<td>Ph. D.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3.1
Research Participants’ Profiles (Former Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Education rural/urban</th>
<th>Program of study</th>
<th>Program of degree (s) received in university/year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M/ Kevin</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>Ph. D./University of Toronto / 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Amy</td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Library science and East Asian studies</td>
<td>Two Masters’/University of Toronto/ 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Teresa</td>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>China (Hong Kong)</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>MA/University of Toronto/1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Katie</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Curriculum studies</td>
<td>Integrated Studies in Education/McGill University/2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numerous participants were recruited by posting fliers in the East Asian culture department in numerous Canadian universities, including the University of Toronto, York University, University of Calgary, McGill University and the University of British Columbia. Recruiting was also done through various Chinese student groups at the University of Toronto campus. Some participants were also discovered as the result of snowballing from participants who had previously responded.

Every learner in Canadian graduate schools no doubt represents some degree of variance. Age, class, gender, religion, language, nationality and intelligence are but a few of the examples
of possible variance. Nevertheless, though there is no perfect individual example of the pure Confucian educational model (or any other model), the graduate students included in this research do all share a common characteristic: they have each spent their elementary, secondary, and tertiary educational periods drinking deeply from the educational environment of the cultures agreed to be the most impacted by the educational model of Confucius and his principles of education and they have all been selected by the standards of their cultures as capable scholars to be privileged to continue their tertiary education beyond the undergraduate level in Canadian graduate schools. This common characteristic arguably makes these students an appropriate focus for qualitative examination of their perceptions of their lived experiences at the crossroads of two very different ways of doing education. Being situated in a space where they are seeking to become a form of hybrid scholar bridging two arguably conflicting educational systems, their reported perceptions regarding the phenomenon not only reveals information regarding how educational policy makers may aid their transition but may also indicate information regarding the continuing dialectical relationship between the Freirean influenced Canadian Western educational approaches and the Confucian influenced educational systems that originally produced the participants.

5.6 Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed based on a recording made of each interview. Participants were given the opportunity to review transcripts and make any clarifications that they wanted to make though none of the participants actually did make any corrections or changes.

Wiersma (2000) saw data analysis as largely consisting of categorizing concepts revealed or discovered in the data. Miles et al. (2013) indicated the goal of qualitative data analysis in saying “The critical question is whether the meanings you find in qualitative data are trustworthy and ‘right’ (p. 277).” For Creswell (2012) coding is the specific process of “segmenting and labeling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data (p. 243).” Creswell indicates that the process
of qualitative data analysis is an inductive one that moves from many pages of transcribed text that are divided into many segments of text that are then identified by codes, that are then reduced in number through elimination of redundancy, that are then further collapsed into 5-7 themes.

The Chapman and Smith (2002), Reid et al (2005), and Smith (2004) suggested use of IPA data analysis procedure was used as the model for data analysis in the present research. It consisted of reading and analysis of individual transcripts, making short interpretative commentary with identification of themes, followed by an organized thematic account of each participant which was then followed by a connecting of the participants’ accounts so as to produce an emergent superordinate set of themes for the whole group.

5.7 Bracketing as Part of Reflexivity

I recognize that my own experiences as a native Taiwanese graduate student in Canadian universities must be acknowledged and that as thick descriptions of participants’ experiences are created, my preconceptions must be set aside in the data collection process so as to gain an accurate understanding of theirs. As cautioned by many, e.g., Gearing (2004), Sokolowski (2000), and van Manen (1990), a researcher must

…be honest and vigilant about her own perspective, preexisting thoughts and beliefs, and developing hypotheses. In phenomenology and grounded theory researchers engage in the self-reflective process of “bracketing,” whereby they recognize and set aside (but do not abandon) their a priori knowledge and assumptions, with the analytic goal of attending to the participants’ accounts with an open mind (Starks & Trinidad, 2007, p. 1376).

According to Tufford and Newman (2012), conversational interviews are an increasingly common method of exploring the lived experiences of participants in qualitative research. Because, as pointed out by Starks and Trinidad (2007), the researcher is the instrument of analysis of all qualitative research, Tufford and Newman (2012) asserted that this “subjective endeavor entails the inevitable transmission of assumptions, values, interests, emotions and theories
It is in order to reduce the impact of these unannounced researcher preconceptions and to increase the rigor of the research that the process of bracketing is introduced. There is substantial disagreement about the process of bracketing as well as its definition. According to Drew (2004), it is the process of identifying the elements of the phenomena being investigated already experienced in some way by the researcher. According to Gearing (2004) it is the process whereby the research suspends or sets aside previous bias or preconceptions in order to then see the phenomena being researched. According to Starks and Trinidad (2007) it involves researchers honestly revealing their preconceptions and perspectives in order to accurately see participants and then to recognize and set them aside (but not abandon them) in order to hear the participants accounts with an open mind. My attempt to satisfy these bracketing concepts is as follows:

I am the product of a Confucian influenced culture and educational system that preceded my experience at the University of Toronto.

I have a number of preconceptions/biases that I identify and set aside, but not abandon, for this research. The most important of these is my belief that learners from Confucian influenced cultures can and do achieve deep thinking as well as critical thinking both when they previously participated in the more learner silent educational models of their cultures as well as when they later participated in Canadian graduate schools. In identifying this preconception, I understand that it is important to avoid allowing it to affect: 1) The selection of research participants; 2) The construction of the research problem and research questions; 3) My interaction with the participants during collection of the research data; 4) My interpretation of the data produced by the interviews; and 5) The conclusions to be drawn out of the data.

A second preconception/bias that I identify and try to set aside, but not abandon in this
research is my perception that Western (Canadian and United States) teachers in my experience tend to be more unconcerned with being role models for their students than teachers from my culture of origin. I recognize that my position as a cultural outsider in Canada colors my understanding of teacher/learner relationships and that my perspective may be colored by the fact that my early educational experience was in the Confucian influenced model and that only later did I experience university education in the Western model. Regardless, it is a bias that I acknowledge and will try to prevent from influencing any aspect of the research.

A final preconception/bias that I identify and try to set aside, but not abandon, in this research is my perception that Western educators may have a tendency to look down upon other cultural approaches to education, including the Confucian influenced model, as being inferior to the Freirean Western learner speech-heavy model that is presently popular in Canada. Though Western educators take pride in avoiding ethnocentrism, the critical thinking that they see as being produced and as being the goal of education in the Western model may not be so restricted to Western approaches as they seem to think. My perception is that even against their assurances and even against some evidence in the research that there is a new Western interest in Eastern educational approaches, there may still be some degree of unconscious educational colonialism that hides in the creases of the Western model and its teachers and shows itself by its reluctance to be taught and instructed by educational models of other cultures. I acknowledge that this bias and preconception is one that is very relevant to this research and therefore I attempt to bracket it very forcefully so as to keep it from preventing this research to be honest.

5.8 Summary

Chapter 5 has introduced, explained, and justified the methodology whereby the lived experiences of 18 participants of this research have been solicited, examined and then interpreted. In general, the methodology is qualitative and in specific it is the use of a procedure known as
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). It is an approach designed to understand the perceptions of participants regarding a particular phenomenon. In this case, the phenomenon of experiencing learner speech in Freirean-influenced Canadian graduate classroom after having been fully socialized in Confucian influenced models of education, is the phenomenon to be investigated. Six basic elements of IPA were offered and it was explained how this research complied with each of the six elements. Other aspects of methodology such as participant recruitment, participant numbers, the interview method and protocol, the participant characteristics, and researcher reflexivity were also addressed.
Chapter 6

Data Analysis

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will review the twofold research question of this research, indicate and explain how the research addresses a research gap regarding analysis of the Confucian educational model and its relationship to the Canadian graduate school Freirean-influenced model, indicate convergences and divergences between the research participants’ narratives and the research literature, introduce the superordinate themes (see Table 4 below) found to be emergent across the participants as a group, and then organize and analyze the data of these themes around the larger issue of what they may reveal of a dialectical relationship between the Canadian and Confucian educational models.

6.2 Review of the Guiding Research Questions

Before proceeding, we should recall the research question that has guided this research. It indicated a twofold inquiry, one having to do with perceptions of the participant/learners of the research and a second having to do with what their perceptions might indicate regarding a dialectical relationship between the graduate school educational system of Canada and of education in Confucian influenced cultures. It is restated below:

1) How do East Asian graduate learners, previously socialized in a Confucian educational model to practice relative silence in the classroom, view themselves and the learning process in the more learner-talk oriented Freirean Canadian classrooms?

2) What might their perceptions indicate about the dialectical relationships of their home educational model and a Canadian educational model?

In examining these questions, this research has attempted in Chapters two and three to present a comprehensive research picture of the educational principles of both the ancient literature
of Confucian education as well as of the modern research literature regarding the Chinese learner and classroom speech. Thereafter, in chapter four it has offered an ideal type of the Confucian model of education as a dialectical thesis and an opposing ideal type of a Freirean-influenced graduate Canadian educational model as an anti-thesis. We now turn to an analysis of the data of 18 selected East Asian Confucian scholars who have attempted to adapt to Canadian graduate school to consider how the report of their lived experiences in Canadian graduate school fits between a Confucian ideal type education model and a Freirean Canadian model as well as to consider what their reports may indicate regarding a Canadian/Confucian educational dialectic. These 18 products of the Confucian, educational model interfacing with the Canadian Freirean graduate school model is offered as a micro-picture outline of what may be expected in the larger dialectic process involving their cultures. As a first, tentative examination of the relationship between the two cultural educational models from a perspective of dialectic it is intended to begin the process of filling the research gap regarding application of the approach of Hegel to the area.

In filling this research gap, we find that the narratives of the participants reflect strong confirmation and continuity with the literature regarding their earlier perceptions of experience in their Confucian education models. From the integrated and intertwined nature of the relationship of the Confucian culture and its educational model, to various characteristics of its authoritarian teacher, to its mostly listening, absorbent, passive learners, and, finally, to its distant and formal, yet sometimes semi-warm teacher student relations, Domain One, P 1-4 (past Confucian model), the narratives of the respondents present a description of the Confucian model surprisingly consistent with accounts in the research literature.

On the other hand, the participants’ narratives begin a significant but not total divergence from the literature regarding their Domain Two, C, 1-2 (change/conflict), reports of a developing confidence/comfort in learning in their new learner speech rich environment as well as in their
reports of respect and admiration for critical thought in contrast to their earlier apparent preference for absorbent and passive learning approaches.

Finally, in Domain Three, A, 1-2 (adoption of Canadian model), the participants’ narratives show the greatest degree of divergence from the literature as some of the narratives indicate significant movement toward meaningful adoption of values of the Canadian graduate school Freirean-influenced model regarding informal and even friendly teacher-learner relationships (A-1) as well as some degree of adoption of the Freirean goal of learner speaking-out of their own realities (A-2).

6.3 Analysis of Participants’ Learner Speech Perceptions

The superordinate themes that emerge from the participants’ responses as a group are organized into three domain categories. Each of the domains are represented below by both the actual verbatim transcript reports of name respondents as well as by my accompanying discussion offering my analysis of the place in the literature as well possible relevance of the data to the research questions that guide the research. The transcript data is indicated by italics and transcript comments made by the interviewer are in parenthesis. The three domain categories are indicated below as well as in more detail in the summary that follows:

Past Experience

Those themes that indicate the research participant/learners’ perceptions of their Confucian educational past.

Present Change/Conflict

Those themes that may indicate change/conflict in the educational values of the participants by virtue of their experience in the Canadian educational model.

Adoption

Those themes that indicate near or signification adoption by the participant/learners of the
educational values reflected in the anti-thesis.

Table 4
Three Domain Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Theme Code</th>
<th>Theme name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past Experience</td>
<td>a) P-1</td>
<td>Cultural survival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) P-2</td>
<td>The authoritarian teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) P-3</td>
<td>The absorbent learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) P-4</td>
<td>Teacher/student relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change/Conflict</td>
<td>a) C-1</td>
<td>Confidence of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) C-2</td>
<td>Respect for critical thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>a) A-1</td>
<td>Teacher/student equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) A-2</td>
<td>Speaking their world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants’ perceptions of their “past” learner speech Confucian educational environments, their perceived speech related “change/conflict” areas in Canada and their Canadian speech related near or significant adoption of values/practices will make up the data analysis and it will be discussed and considered within the context of the dialectic of thesis (the Confucian ideal type) and anti-thesis (the Freirean Canadian ideal type). Consideration of an educational syntheses that may arise from the conflict of thesis and anti-thesis will be offered in a following, final chapter.

6.4 Domain One: Participants’ Perception of Their Past Educational Environments Regarding Speech

As earlier shown, the literature and the research regarding the traditional Confucian learner as well as teacher continues to be disputed and elements of the Confucian educational model presented in the thesis ideal type remain contested. Here we examine the participants’ reports regarding their actual lived experiences in their past learner speech environments.

In examining learner silence in the participants’ report of their educational past, we begin with a participant’s assertion of a theme that learner silence is part of the educational values of Confucian influenced cultures and must continue to be preserved in order that the cultures can survive. Thereafter, we examine reports of the characteristics of the authoritarian teacher (P-2) of
the participants’ past, taking account of his hierarchical position, his centrality (dominance) in the classroom, his right to being respected, an ambiguous relational distance to learners, his lecture approach that tolerates few, if any, learner interruptions, and the role of texts and exams. Following the Confucian authoritarian teacher, we examine the participants’ reports regarding the Confucian learner (P-3) of their past educational experience; one who appears to be an absorber of information in the classroom, who has great concern with face, who rarely speaks out questions, and who is sensitive to the possibility of offending either teacher or peers. Finally, the data is examined regarding the relationship of the Confucian learner and his teacher (P-4) (as a substitute parent) and what effect this might have upon the likelihood of learner speech in the classroom.

a) Theme P-1: Survival of the Culture

There is much in the data of the participants’ interviews that suggests that the Confucian educational model of largely silent learner speech continues to operate forcefully in every one of the four cultures represented in this research and it is not yet clear that increased interaction with Western education is greatly impacting it. Perhaps the most strongly worded participant response of this research suggested that the Confucian model principles (thesis) can and will never change and move toward any compromise with the Canadian or Western model (anti-thesis) for the reason that to do so would be to deny and destroy not just the Confucian educational model but the entire culture in Confucian based cultures. In discussing the question of how China could better prepare its students to be more engaged and comfortable in the Canadian classroom environment, participant Paul objected to the question saying that the question itself was improper. His reasoning was as follows:

Participant Paul: To change important cultural practices in major social instructions is to endanger the culture

Paul: *The question itself is wrong.*
Researcher: Can you explain?

In China the education system is built upon Confucianism. It is the basis that allows the social system to run smoothly and in harmony. In order to prepare a Chinese student to go abroad, most students and teachers see it as an honor so they work together to jointly prepare and produce a Confucian good student. What is a good student? That means when you produce a good product that has the gene of Confucianism. The whole system works on that. You can’t expect the Confucian system in China to prepare some good students for Canada. They never ever will do that because they do not think that is the issue. Only when the whole system in China is not working in the Confucian way, yeah, I know that now some...the best universities in China have professors who graduate from universities in the United States or Canada. Even if they do have good professors, they know the adversarial system in North America but yeah, I still don’t think they will prepare students in the other way. You know, I say other, I mean in North America system and other than Chinese system.

Paul continued to object to the idea that the Chinese should or would ever train their students in Western, Canadian learning approaches, especially regarding the Western education system regarding learner speech, saying:

This a big issue, a big issue. If you intentionally adopt the English (Western) teaching method and the education system Chinese students will have a better chance to engage in the class (orally) when they come to Canada. But the thing is, the price is too high and you pay too much. I am not saying the student, I mean the culture pay too much when you adopt, allow me to say, the Western educational approach. The Confucian system, you will have, especially for a culture like China, that is a communist country, then you will educate someone according to Western principles, Western philosophy, like a democracy? You are making big trouble for yourself, yeah. But even if you do that, take Japan. Like Japan don’t have that problem, they can do that. But now
you know how many Japanese students are in Harvard PhD program? This year none. So the education systems especially for East Asian countries, Japan and Taiwan and Korea included, they have their own cultural way of running their systems and no matter whether Confucian communist or a Confucian democracy like Japan or Korea, if you want to be strong in the economy you need to have a good culturally confident consistent education system. If you want to be culturally confident, you have to follow the guiding principles inherited from two thousand years ago. That is the trick.

As this interview proceeded I became aware that participant Paul had interpreted my question as implying that in order for Confucian trained learners to engage and feel more comfortable in Canadian classrooms that it was solely the responsibility of the Chinese model to compromise its values by teaching their students Western, Canadian methods of learning. I then tried to make my question clearer by noting the possibility of compromise movement by both models. Upon being given further chance to consider the question, participant Paul was less defensive of China’s need to protect its cultural approach to education, saying:

*I know they have some plan for student exchange. By exchange I mean that you not only teach some classes but you bring a bunch of students from here (Canada) to China and then by sitting in the classroom and never being quiet and always talking then Chinese students will know ok, that is how Canadian students survive in their classes. At the same time a bunch of students from China will exchange to here (Canada) sitting in the classroom in Canada and then the Canadian professors here will realize ok, these are the best students in China and even they are so, so quiet...So I mean you need to encourage both sides to do something. Not to just have one sided perspective to everything. That is impossible. You have to make something work from both sides.*

The response of participant Paul reminded me how sensitive he was about having more
powerful cultures erase less powerful ones through gradual replacement of important social institutional values (religion, economics, family, government and education) by the institutional values of the more powerful culture. The argument of Paul that Confucian influenced cultures produce and maintain educational environments of silent learners because adoption of open Western values regarding learner speech might threaten survival of their hierarchical social system is a simple and common sense one. It takes account of the fact that cultures need effective educational systems in order to compete in the economic world, that such educational systems should be based on and confidently support general cultural values, and also that it is difficult and maybe dangerous for cultures to encourage questioning of long used cultural methods and values that are thought to have made the culture great or powerful. The idea that endangering cultural values regarding respect and hierarchy and tradition are too high a price for the Chinese culture to pay in order to have real learner speech in the Confucian educational model is a theme that Zhao (2014) also argued in his book *Who’s afraid of the big bad dragon: Why China has the best (and worst) education system in the world*. The difference between participant Paul and Zhao is that Zhao (2014) argues that continued protection of tradition, hierarchy, and respect is at a price that destroys the educational creativity that is necessary to sustain and create economic greatness where participant Paul seems to argue that preserving the traditional educational Chinese system is necessary for the economic strength that will allow continuance and survival of the Confucian culture. It was a theme frequently implied by many participants but expressly articulated by participant Paul. The Confucian cultural emphasis upon hierarchy and social harmony can simply not tolerate a free and active learner speech approach in a major social institution such as education. The two simply cannot co-exist.

b) Theme P-2: The Authoritarian Teacher and Learner Speech

There is little doubt that the Confucian model of education that arises from the reports of
the participants past includes teachers that appear more authoritarian than in Canada or the West. The data of the participants’ interviews provides significant references that reflect the participants’ perceptions that Confucian model teachers are authoritarian, that they dominate the learning process through lecture, that they receive significant symbolic respect, that they are hierarchically above learners and may require personal favors of them, and that are they are the supreme directors of a learning process which is highly text and test oriented. All of these themes appear to be supportive of the Confucian educational model ideal type (see Table 2, p. 169) drawn from the literature and all have obvious implications for learner speech suppression in that model.

A number of researchers (e.g., Zhao, 2014) have suggested that the Confucian educational model is one where a hierarchical, single voice produces information without confrontation or interruption. Such a one-voice system would seem to encourage the likelihood of homogeneous information being placed before learners that is easily tested in great detail. Furthermore, teacher emphasis of the text makes the teaching easier to test. The approach appears to simplify the learning and teaching process in a way that may make it predictable and therefore comfortable for both teachers and learners. For teachers there would be the comfort of having clear proof that they did good job if students did well on tests and for students it makes learning very clear and direct; do exactly as the teachers says the text explained and what the text says and you are guaranteed to be an expert learner. The job of the learner might be hard in the sense that a lot of information might have to be absorbed but it is easy in the sense that it has a very clear goal which almost all hard-working learners can achieve. The interview data suggests that any change in this process makes both teachers and learners anxious. The following reports of the participants’ lived experiences give shape to the nature of the characteristics of their Confucian authoritarian teachers and shed light on how learner speech may not be a necessary part of the learning experience:

**Participant Ann:** Traditional, controlling, superior teachers
In general, it (referring to the home culture classroom) was quite traditional I would say. Most of the time we were told what to do and most of the time we took notes while the teachers were teaching and lecturing and telling us what is going to be important in the class exams we are going to take and we focused on preparation for those exams...So typically Chinese professor, he controls, he is not that open for suggestions. He believes he is supervisor so maybe he is something higher than you. He knows better than you and he, if he tells you things to do, then you do it, you don’t question. You know, I love him and he likes me a lot. He always treated me well, but just the style, I don’t think it is very helpful for...you know, it is not that friendly, it is not that democratic...I mean, if you say something he doesn’t like, oh you’re in trouble and he will be so pissed off, right?

**Participant Lisa:** text emphasis

*I just feel that in China one thing we have is textbooks but here some teachers use textbooks and some do not.*

**Participant Lily:** Teachers prepare learners for test, provides security for both

*The ones (classes) I had at home (China) were mostly very teacher centered...So yeah, because of the system there (China) even though they (students) were sometimes frustrated about their ways of teaching they had to teach in their certain ways because eventually we are going to take the exams, so they had to prepare us fully with those exams without risking, taking risk, right? The students (in China) were different. Yeah, in China, most students were quite satisfied with the ways the teachers teach. If ever the teachers try to do something new, Oh, they are like, you know so anxious, because they are not ready. They have never experienced anything like that. So how can they adapt to it?*

**Participant Lily:** One voice dominates in the Taiwanese classroom

*Here (Canada) at the university level everybody has his voice so I kind of feel very free to express my own voice here too. However, in Taiwan there is only one voice in the classroom and*
that voice comes from the teacher, instructor or whatever you call them.

Participant Julie: Knowledge depositors, exams, contesting opinions threaten scores

I think that in my own country the teacher will usually kind of like deposit the knowledge in your mind. Like tell you this is the syllabus and this is what you are going to be tested in examinations. Then they will tell you what to do. Here (Canada) there is more space for student thinking. Like the professors here usually like to raise questions and through that you have to think yourself. They, I think they value different perspectives where there is not any right or wrong and you can have your own opinion. But in my country you can’t have different opinions, they may be wrong and you cannot have high scores on the examination. So sometimes in order to get the high marks you have to answer some questions that you don’t like but you know that is the correct answer.

Participant Tammy: Impersonal lecture, teacher/student distance

Oh! A huge difference. I’ll compare universities. My university in my hometown was Fukuoka, I don’t know if you know. It is a big city in Japan. It is more of professors standing in front of class reading his material, reading off of a script saying this is ba, ba, ba. There is no interaction with the students. There is no interaction among the students. In a sense it was not a stimulating situation but at the same time I also enjoyed that kind of teaching style because if you really listen to them, they are saying something interesting but it is really hard to get into listening to them because they just ba, ba, ba. They are not really trying to talk to you.

Participant Sandy: University in Japan easy, teachers and students have good arrangement for both, unchallenged professors become lazy lecturers

...in university (Japanese) like bachelor’s’ degree level you are not really expected to do anything. You know it was so easy to get A plus for me in those classes because people never work. I don’t know, maybe it was just my university but I got the impression that many universities
Japanese) are like that. Because the high school level is finished you are in the great university so you don’t have to work as hard as in high school. Many of my friends said they had no idea what they were doing in the university but they were just going to get a job. So for like undergraduate university courses I am not sure what kind of educational principles that professors had or whether they wanted students to work hard but the students opposed working hard or if the professors really didn’t care and students did not care either. I do not really feel that I got so much coming from my professors at my university. Sorry, but I have to compare...Whereas in Japan, professor do not prepare for their lectures. I am talking about (my city). I do not know what it is like in (other large cities in Japan). It is easy for professors who have been teaching for many maybe 30 years without being challenged so they are just sitting in their own chair you know with attitude of “I don’t have to care, like you guys take my class, I get paid.” So I really like the professors here (Canada). They really do a good job. In this sense I think classes are here (Canada) much more rich in content, rich in information, and rich in critical thinking.

Participant Paul: Confucian teacher requires a respect that means no interruptions or speech contesting

If you do have something to say, especially to the professor, I wait until he finishes everything (he needs to say) and then if he gives me a chance to ask a question about how I think on the topic then I will say something. I think if you don’t ask me I will just sit there and listen. That is the rules we play back in China. You do not contest (the professor) if you want to say something. No, that is forbidden. So that is how I paid respect to the professor during the first two years (in Canada). In the third and fourth years, other students, I figure out ok, you can just shoot (laughing). So that makes a big difference. That is, how to say, a custom. When you are trained to do it the Chinese way and suddenly you come to Canada you will need to fit into the new environment. But it takes time.
**Participant Sandy:** Illustrates the type of teacher respect received in their past cultures regarding interruption of teacher

Yeah. I witnessed in the (Canadian) classroom, witnessed a student say some rude things to the professor. It was not overtly a sort of offensive thing but it was sort of like you know, you don’t say that to someone...I don’t know. I am thinking about the hierarchical relationship, but you don’t say that to professor or teacher or...you know, in the classroom... She said, in the middle of professor speaking, she raised her hand and waited to say. She (the professor) stopped speaking like 5 minutes later and then she (student) said, can we take a break? I am about to burst. And like I thought that was so rude and I know some other international students thought the same. They thought that was rude too and I think some Canadians thought that was rude too but the professor just said ok, let’s take a break. She did not really care. That would not happen in Japan. You are not supposed to say anything to them. In Japan, you should not even raise your hand if one (teacher) is talking. You know when they are speaking. You do not want to interrupt. Until they ask you if you have any question you do not say anything to them.

**Participant Amy:** No challenge to teacher and little personal support from teacher

I think the biggest difference is as I mentioned they in China teachers don’t like students to challenge them but here (Canada) like I think teachers don’t mind that. They they, I think like teachers in China they almost never say you did well or that you did an excellent job but like here (Canada) they really make us feel good. I think even though sometimes it does not mean very much but when heard it is very heartening.

**Participant Kevin:** Teacher dominance of the Confucian classroom

The teaching methods, like I mentioned in the beginning, are that usually in Taiwan the students sit in the classroom, we seldom have classroom discussion, we seldom have the interaction with professors, we seldom have the group presentations or group work or team works
or something like that. Teachers always dominate the classroom discussion. Teachers always dominate the teaching, the lecturing, rather than providing students the opportunities to share their experiences, to include students in the classroom activities.

**Participant Fred:** Rarity of student led classes

_In China the teaching is more like lecture based no matter at what level, the teacher is standing in the front of the desks in the room and just lectures...In all of the courses I have taken at OISE (Ontario Institute for the Study of Education) either face to face or online, it is always the students that lead discussion/teaching. It means that every week one or two students will come out and lead the discussion, the study of the topic of that week. But this kind of scene is not, is very, very rare in China. I don’t say there isn’t any because I experienced one before, but it is the only one I have ever experienced in China in like four years of bachelor’s degree study and three years of Master’s degree study. In seven years study I’ve only had one experience like that but at, in OISE in almost every course you have to do that._

**Participant Katie:** No chance to ask questions of teacher during class and asking questions after class prevents other students from benefiting from questions

_When I had my, like when I was having in my undergraduate education (in China), I usually had a lot of questions where the professor was talking but like I never had the opportunity to ask him or her. Like what I could do was like after the class I could go up to the professor and ask him or her questions but never in the classroom. I think that if you allow students to ask questions in the classroom its ...other students can hear but it is like when students ask questions in the classroom it is like collective learning. It is no longer just individual learning and so other students can listen to the questions and they probably have the same questions and so on. But this is not the case in China._

**Participant Jessica:** Professors are kind of cold in Korea and are not challenged
...like in Korea it is more like teacher centered and teacher usually they are the authority and they give us the information...so I feel like professors (Korean) are kind of cold, but not really cold, but I feel like here (Canada) we (teachers and students) are equal so we can talk about things more freely than in Korea. Yeah, I think because in Korea it is not really, there are not many cases when you challenge your professor. Yeah, you don’t really challenge professors there it is kind of not polite or not accepted. I am not sure now, but it was like that when I learned from the professor in Korea. Nobody was really against their opinion in anything.

Participant Fred: Teacher/student relationships in China are hierarchical

Yeah, the relationship (between professor and student) in China is kind of like hierarchical. Like the teacher is always someone who is superior to you (the learner) no matter what. Their research experience, their knowledge, their moral quality, that kind of thing. Yeah, moral model or something. It gives people the impression that in everything the teacher is better than you. Their knowledge activity, mind, whatever, is better than you... Yeah, it is not only, as I said, that he is supposed to be superior to you in knowledge but also he should be a moral model or something like that but here (Canada) the professor can do whatever they do, they do not have to pretend to be a moral model for you. Of course, you can use them as a model but uh, they are not intending to do that. In China the professors are not educated to do that but they were told, ok., you should be a model and people expect them to be a role model but here (Canada) not...but in China it is more like, ok., the professor is superior to you, he always knows much more than you, he does everything better than you, and so on.

c) Theme P-3: The Absorbing, Quiet Learner

The data of the participants provides numerous references reflecting their perceptions of Confucian model learners as quiet, unchallenging, obedient, memorizing, and modest in their home cultures. The superordinate theme regarding these learners is that they are absorbers. The
following participants’ perceptions regarding Confucian learners focus on how they have become silent, the role of face, harmony, modesty, and respect in their silence, their concern that their speech be significant, their extrinsic motivation, the non-discursive nature of their rare speech, a belief that learners’ speech may be unnecessary, and, finally, the level of difficulty they have when they encounter the learner speech soaked environment of the Freirean-influenced Canadian educational environment.

**Participant Sandy:** The passive role of learners in the Confucian classroom

So I am from (East Asian culture) so in my country definitely students just sit in the classroom and listen to the teacher and do whatever he or she tells me to do.

**Participant Katie:** Characteristics of learners in the Confucian classroom

I agree that normally East Asians are more silent in class. I think we have been educated in that way, right? We are listeners. We are not thinkers. We are not questioners. We do not question the teacher and normally we are not allowed to. I don’t know if the right word is allowed, but normally we are not given the opportunity to ask professors about issues while they are talking.

**Participant Kevin:** Explains how and why east Asian learners are socialized into silence

Well I do agree that East Asian students are more silent in class. That is probably because when we were educated in our country of origin, we were educated that way. We seldom challenged professors. We seldom challenged the teachers say, in anything in the class. And even we have questions, the teachers, professors, might say, “Ok, we are not there yet, we will talk about this” or maybe they just don’t answer but they just say “we are not there yet” or “focus on what I have taught you, you don’t need to learn other than what I have taught you”, or something like that. So this eventually socialized East Asian students not to ask the reason for something because, for one thing, they couldn’t get answers from their teachers, even if they asked questions, for another, they were not encouraged to challenge the professors. So again, the power
relationship in East Asian students with the professors is very tense, I think. So if the students are always challenging the professor in class, the students will be in trouble. That is according to my experience. So eventually the students become silent.

**Participant Amy:** The general culture produces shy learners greatly concerned about face

   Oh yeah, yeah, I totally agree. (That East Asian students are more silent in class than other students.) I think there are several reasons. One is cultural environment. You grow up in an environment where you are not encouraged to speak so you tend to keep quite. And I think, also, more Chinese students, East Asians, are shy than here (Canada). They are. I think it is also cultural because if we are not encouraged to speak when we are kids then you are probably more shy in a larger group. I also think that more Chinese people think that if you ask a question that most people already know then you will be laughed at by others and lose your face.

**Participant Kevin:** Silence is the result of general cultural conditioning

   It is cultural (learner silence) because you were being taught for over 16 years that you should not speak, so how can you become actively speaking when you come to a culture that encourage speaking? Right? You have been taught 16 years by just listening with not talking so you have become accustomed to that situation. You will not be very active in speaking when you come to another environment.

**Participant Jessica:** Difficulty of participating in Canadian classes. The speaking of Confucian model learners is not real discussion…it is learner display of prescribed knowledge

   I mentioned that in Korea you pretty much just go the class and listen to what your teacher says and you take notes then you are ok with the course and getting a score. But here I think they want students to be more active and to be the center of the learning so we have to participate particularly in the class, but I was not prepared for that I think. That was the hard part and I didn’t really participate...This is my major stress because I need to be more active to participate in the
discussions or activities. We didn’t really get trained for asking questions to professors or for challenging professors....even when I was in Korea for graduate school I remember that we don’t really have discussion in the class that much, each student needed to take a part to present some materials, reading materials something but it is more like displaying the knowledge rather than really discussing things or whether I think one way or another. Something like that (what was done) was not like discussion. We just prepared or kind of summarized what we read but not like here where I think there is a lot of discussion going on...it was a little hard for me to start here (Canada) because I haven’t done group work a lot before but here I think, I guess they want us to like learn from each other as well as from teachers...

Participant Teresa: Quiet students

I did have some relatively small classes at university of Hong Kong and quite often the students were relatively quiet and so in most of cases the learning style is really lecture and even quite a number of professors actually many professors did in the colleges encourage students to speak up but classroom was definitely more quiet... was definitely quite quiet generally and so not many students spoke up as far as I can remember. It’s quite long time ago. I didn’t really see too many students being too vocal for sure.

Participant Katie: Even in best Chinese universities discussion is rare

... I would say in China, in the classrooms like we don’t form the small groups to discuss about issues and yeah, I think sometimes the teacher (in China) just doesn’t give us opportunities to discuss issues or critique something. I feel that’s the different thing between the two systems. Still, even though I came from, I graduated from one of the good/best universities in China, still, and you know the teachers there, the professors there are quite open, like some of them actually graduated or studied abroad, but still the discussions are not as...is not comparable (to Canada) I would say.
Participant Katie: Students just receive the finished researched products of the professor

I guess in Chinese university it is like I can just speak from my own experience, like from my former university. Usually the teachers like professor do all the research like she doesn’t really give us a lot to read so we can develop our own understanding of something or we can raise questions. I feel the professor does all the research and then she introduces a concept and then there is really little space for students to do or, you know to share with each other about...share with each other about their understanding about the concepts. It’s like...it’s not so...I feel like the Chinese system sort of does not promote critical thinking. Like you learn when the professor introduces a concept generally but you just memorize it, you know, and you don’t......because you don’t have a lot to read, you just take it, you don’t think a lot about it.

Participant Katie: A Chinese learner indicates the strength of her past conditioning in explaining her difficulty in speaking to her Canadian professor

And the critical thinking thing too because I don’t know if... because my professor (in Canada), like these days, she usually asks us to critique her writing in her articles and to provide feedback and sometimes I hesitate to point out, you know, this is not clear to me and I don’t like this point. You know, when I talk to her I want to be very careful and I think, you know, I don’t want to hurt her feelings (laughing) But sometimes I do think that in some places it could be more clear or in some places she should add something or something like that but sometimes I just... if I have reservations I don’t always speak them out.

Participant Ryan: Taiwanese universities only teach facts; students are only motivated extrinsically by jobs

The first thing they ask of you (students) is to memorize. So most of the professors I remember in Taiwan do not teach how to ask questions...They (students) only study for income. You must get a degree because the degree in Taiwan is very important. If you get a PhD people will say you are very knowledgeable but the degree does not really mean you have knowledge.
They (the culture) only care about getting jobs.

**Participant Julie:** Suggests East Asian students do not speak because of their value for Modesty and because they believe there is often no value in speaking

*I think (East Asian students are silent) because of the way we have been educated. Like we are used to getting taught by the teacher. Like the teacher will give you a lesson and you will take notes to learn. Also, maybe there is a (Chinese) value encouraging us to be more modest and not show off or say, Like, “Oh, I know this, I want to talk.”...*

**Participant Ann:** Suggests that East Asian students speak only because of extrinsic grade motivations

*...most of the time if they (East Asian students) were not asked to contribute, they won’t be that active to initiate speaking but maybe sometimes they are pushed to contribute. They will then do so but not for self-motivation but because they think they have to contribute for a better score or to, you know, favor the teacher and to please the instructor.*

**Participant Tammy:** Suggests that East Asian learners were socialized to be silent because of concern for harmony and face

*...if you don’t know how to communicate to the class you might offend some people or people might think that what you are saying is not worth listening to...*

**Participant Sandy:** Japanese student suggests her former belief that learner speech must be profound to be justified as well as her recognition that this is not true in Canada, also suggests the difficulty of adapting to the new system

*I am not trained that way. I’ve never been told to speak up on my opinions about anything. The other thing is I feel everybody knows what you know. I feel like the thing that I think of probably everybody knows. In Japan, there is kind of like the atmosphere you have to speak the right thing, you have to speak something very correctly. Here (in Canada) it is more like you have to share something you think, you share what you have. So it is like being right in Japan and it is like being a contributor by sharing information in Canada. It is so different. I know, I understand now that*
they (Canadian professors) want my opinion. Just be yourself. But because I have this mindset of like when I speak I have to impress people, I have to be right. I have to be correct you know or the teachers will be yelling at me. It is fear orientated, you know, a controlling atmosphere that kind of still is controlling me and I can’t speak up when I think especially when I think teachers are a little bit scary or the classroom is very big…Also, you feel out of context to them (the class) like maybe everything I think is great, is, you know, their common sense…Why is it (the two educational systems) so different? It is always a comparison between you know before and what you are now learning…I think that people who are originally from here or have lived here a long time a lot of things they take for granted are so new for us…

Participant Ryan: East Asian students fear of loss of face and it produces a different learning strategy than class talking

The first reason (that Korean students are quiet) is that they are afraid of asking stupid questions. I don’t know why. It is probably because face is very important in East Asian societies. Face is very important. They think that once they ask stupid questions other people will look down to them and not want to talk to them…It is weird but I have found that East Asian students become quite active after class. They like to book appointment with the professor and will ask lot of questions in the office hours. So East Asian students have different strategies for learning. They are afraid of the questions that may not be allowed by the professor and they are scared of the professor’s expertise and they are afraid that their questions may result in some bad impression from the professor. So they do not like to ask questions in the class.

d) Theme P-4: Relationship Between the Confucian Teacher and Learner

Both the research literature as well as the Analects stress the role of filial piety as well as the fact the Confucian teacher’s position tends to include rights regarding learners that are parent-like. Such a relationship between teachers and learners might affect the amount and nature of
learner speech in a way similar to when a student’s parent is present in the classroom. The participants’ reports regarding this relationship in their home cultures reveals great concern with showing proper respect toward elders (often teachers are elders) frequently it is reported that there is a distance between teacher and learner. They also report that teacher/student relationships may develop very personal but hierarchical relationships that go beyond the topic of academics. Though student gifts to teachers were referred to frequently, it was never suggested that these were unethical or that students resented them. Instead, it gave the appearance of something that was taken for granted. The following verbatim reports reflect these filial aspects of the Confucian teacher student relations:

**Participant Jessica:** The theme of giving hierarchical respect to Confucian teachers/elders

...Korea was affected by Confucianism so we need to respect elders and we are not really up front in Korea, something like that. We are more distant and professors are older than students, right? We must respect them. Sometimes I am surprised because here (Canada) some professors invite their students to their house and have a party. But in Korea it is not really a common thing. We are more distant in Korea because we feel that old people, we need to respect them and maybe we shouldn’t be friends with them. Like they are teachers so we treat them as a teacher. Sometimes it makes like a distance... In Korea we just call them “professor.” We don’t even call their names at all. We have a certain tone, like for teacher or professor.

**Participant Lisa:** Teachers proud to be teachers and substitute parents for their students and must show good face to students

In China teachers are like parents because of Confucius...In China being a teacher is a high honor so teachers are proud to be a teacher. They feel that they should take responsibility for the student. They traditionally treat students like they are parents of the students. So some teachers have a close relationship with students, some no.
**Researcher:** How about your relationships with your teachers?

*I have good relationships with them because I follow Chinese system, I always respond to my teacher (laughing)...Because of my age and much more tradition compared to young people, teachers were role models, especially a professional knowledge model. In front of student you (a teacher) cannot say, “I do not know.” Instead, you must say “I am busy or another time I will give you the answer.” So the teacher when he goes home then usually solves the problem as soon as possible.*

**Participant Terry:** Suggests a “broader” relationship between teacher and student that includes a pragmatic factor

*...there is no pragmatic factors in your relationship with (Canadian) professors. The (Canadian) professor would not ask you to do something like personal in return for his or her attention to you but that happens a lot in China. You know you have to work for professors or devote your time to the professor for some personal stuff, or something like that. But here (Canada) the relationship is more, you know, like academic.*

**Participant Lucy:** Again suggests that teacher/student relationship sometimes involves gifts

*I think one of the differences I found was very interesting. Like some students in like in China, the students and professor’s friendship is based on some kind of close relationship with the professor if the student give the professor some gifts or something.*

**Participant Fred:** Chinese teacher/student relationship may involve academic distance but also personal relationships

**Researcher:** So you always feel you have distance between you and the teacher in China, but here it is not?

*It depends...academic distance yes, for sure, but personal distance, it may not be the same case. It depends on how close you are with the professor in China. You know here the professor will never ask you to help move furniture in his home but in China I was asked to do that many*
times. Yeah, I remember I went to my professor's home and helped him to move their furniture in his home so this kind of non-academic relationship is mixed. But other students (Chinese) did not have that kind of a thing because the professors did not trust them as they trusted me. But here, you know you will ever see a professor who will ask you to go to their home to help with room decoration.

**Participant Tammy:** Teacher’ hierarchical similarity to elders/filial piety and the hierarchy reinforcing effect of language

*English does not allow you to have hierarchical relationships. I remember in my first class my professor was older, like 65 and I had to say “what do you think” to him and I could not bring myself to say to his face “you” like, you know, if it was in Japan I would be asking the professor, “what does the professor think” or, you know, like, “What does Professor Tanaka think?” So it was a big thing I had to overcome. I think it really represents how flat you can be with the professors here (Canada). Like I see people going to drink with them…with professors, getting invited to their houses, having parties and stuff. Professors don’t seem to expect too much respect from students here (Canada). It is a lot different.*

**Participant Sandy:** Confucian teachers receive great formal respect… may be similar to that given to elderly in the West

*I still feel very uncomfortable with a teacher who says, for example, please call me Dave. I don’t want to call first names. I have never done that in my life. Even in Japan, there was a Western professor named Michelle and she said call be Michelle but nobody called her Michelle. We called Michelle San-se (it means teacher). We thought that is respectful and we felt like it is ok. So like here (Canada), I’ve heard so many times Canadian students telling me like if you don’t call first name professor, professor will resent you because it’s an equal relationship that they want to have but for me it is not equal anyways, you know, they are professors, not students. It is not equal, they are older and I am younger. It is not equal at all and for me this is a very superficial quality they*
want to have. I don’t feel equal so if I don’t feel equal then why I should call you first name? But a lot of professors say like please call my first name and I say, you know, like ok. Then I tried a couple times but at the end of the semester it just always turns that it goes back to professor’s last name, Yeah.

6.4.1 Summary of the Domain of the Participants’ Educational Past

Themes P-1 through P-4 of the participants’ educational past indicate that these learners have been produced by an educational practice of learner silence which may never be allowed to change because to do so would endanger the survival of a larger cultural system built upon hierarchical relationships where inferiors do not orally question or challenge superiors. They also indicate an educational environment wherein teachers are characterized as distant, text/test oriented lecturers who are seen as superior to students in every respect and who are to be respected both as elders and possibly also as substitute parents by silent, non-interrupting learners. On the other hand, learners are described as not only modest, silent absorbers of memorized information but also unquestioning and uncritical recipients of teacher deposited information who see teacher challenge and good scores as incompatible and are extrinsically motivated to choose scores over challenging the teacher. Additionally, learners are described as having somewhat cold and distant relations with their teachers, although these relations can be personal in the sense that learners are sometimes expected to perform personal favors or give gifts to their teachers.

6.4.2 Omissions Regarding Past Learning

There were three important areas that were curiously missing in the data of the respondents regarding their former educational environments. First, there was very little mention of any belief by the respondents that their educational past was productive of critical thought on the part of learners. Participant Katie expressly said that “It’s like…it’s not so…I feel like the Chinese system sort of does not promote critical thinking. Like you learn when the professor introduces a concept
generally but you just memorize it…” One of the participant responses indicating significant (though not necessarily critical) thinking was the statement by Participant Tammy that: “In a sense it was not a stimulating situation (classroom lecture) but at the same time I also enjoyed that kind of teaching style because if you really listen to them, they are saying something interesting…” However, the same participant finished her observation by saying, “but it is really hard to get into listening to them (her home culture professors) because they just ba, ba, ba. They are not really trying to talk to you.” Other than this participant’s observation that professor’s lectures could be interesting, the participants’ responses never in any instance described their past educational environments as stimulating, thought-provoking, challenging, or productive of critical analysis or thought.

A second area where the data of the participants’ responses was silent was regarding any evidence of Confucian model teachers who gave the appearance of being authoritarian but who were actually hand-holding guides who drew students toward learning rather than pushing them toward memorizing. Though the research of Lee (1996) suggested that supposedly authoritarian Confucian teachers might be misunderstood in the West and might be much more sensitive than viewed by Westerners, the interview data of this research failed to identify such qualities. Though this interviewer failed to use the exact phrasing of Lee (1996) in interviewing the participants, there was very little description of the participants’ former college professors that fit the description of Lee (1996) who described the Confucian authoritarian teacher as one “who guides students but does not pull them along, urges students to go forward and does not suppress them, opens the way for students, but does not take them to the place (p. 36).” Although the participants’ focused most of their descriptions of the Confucian authoritarian teacher experienced in their universities rather than elementary and high school experiences, instead of the hand-holding guides described by Lee (1996) the teachers described by the participants of this research appeared to fit
more into the mold of authoritarian pushers.

Participant Terry reflected a typical attitude of the respondents in referring to the teachers of his experience, saying:

*I always felt that they are the authority and I have never been close to a teacher back in China. Like as a kid, if I saw my teacher like somewhere in the street or something, I would run away or hide myself. In the university there was not much chance to see the teacher The teachers were a little bit impersonal and in graduate school I did not feel like I developed like any personal relationship with the teacher even though there was a relationship of degree supervisor it was not close or personal.*

A final element that I found unexpectedly absent from the participants’ descriptions of their past educational environments was any clear evidence of the assertion by Li (2009 and 2012) that Confucian influenced education had a different purpose than Western education. According to Li (2012), the Western (Canadian) purpose of education was based on satisfaction of learner curiosity and exploration of the external world while the Confucian purpose of education was a moral one, to become a better person. Li (2012) explained the how this difference in purpose could affect learners’ speech because the learner’s goal of moral improvement was one of doing and becoming rather than of speaking and discussing as might be expected were the purpose one of satisfaction of curiosity and exploration of the external world. Li (2012) argues that the Confucian purpose of moral improvement in learning moves learner speech to a lesser, secondary position saying, “Therefore, a person’s speaking cannot be divorced from his or her moral character. Speaking is not just one’s cognition and knowledge or any spontaneous, freestanding utterance, but a reflection of one’s moral worth (p. 297).”

The idea that learners are hesitant to speak because speaking suggests or asserts a level of moral development is a subtle concept and one that is difficult to identify. Though the participants’
responses frequently noted that Confucian learners are encouraged to be modest, there was little if any interview data that linked their concern with modesty to moral development. Only one participant expressed the idea that teachers in his country of origin (Taiwan) seemed to have a burden to instruct students in right and wrong and on how to become proper citizens. Otherwise, there was a complete absence of evidence that the respondents viewed education in Canada as having a different purpose than education in their home cultures. It was frequent that participants reported that they felt that learner speech was justified only by very big or very correctly worded statements. An example of this need to speak big or not speak at all was the following (response of participant Sandy):

\[ \text{In Japan, there is kind of like the atmosphere you have to speak the right thing, you have to speak something very correctly. Here (in Canada) it is more like you have to share something you think, you share what you have. So it is like being right in Japan and it is like being a contributor by sharing information in Canada...I know, I understand now that they (Canadian professors) want my opinion. Just be yourself. But because I have this mindset of like when I speak I have to impress people, I have to be right.} \]

It is difficult to tell whether the concern of participants such as participant Sandy might be connected to moral development in the sense that it must be “true” or whether it just reflects a common desire by most learners to stand out and be considered smart. However, other than the comment by participant Ryan that referred to teachers having a burden to teach students right and wrong, the data of the respondents gave little clear evidence for Li’s assertion that Confucian learners are hesitant and modest to speak because it might imply an achievement of an advanced state of moral development.

6.5 **Domain Two: Present Change/Conflict**

Domain One dealt with the participants’ perceptions of their home cultures and their
educational past (thesis). In Domain Two we turn our focus to participant change/conflict. We focus on the evidence of participants’ dialectical struggle (conflict) situated at the center of two very different educational systems and examine this struggle in terms of the participants’ possible movement. Thereafter, evidence indicating that the participants’ struggle has resulted in a significant movement toward adoption of principle(s) of the learning approaches of their new Canadian educational environment (the anti-thesis) will be examined and analyzed in the final section of Domain Three.

There were two theme areas where participants in this research appeared to be cautiously moving toward the learning principles of their Canadian host environment and away from the educational values of their home cultures in terms of attitudes. Whether the following examples of apparent change will translate into significant long term, permanent movement and change in practices toward Canadian educational values remains to be learned but there was data suggesting some change in two attitudes, both of which may have relevance to learner speech: 1) First, participants appeared to have growing confidence in their ability to learn in learner speech-rich Canada; and 2) participants appear to respect the critical thought they associate with the Canadian educational approach.

a) Theme C-1: Learner Confidence-Moving from Fear and Depression to Confidence

Being confident of being able to learn in a new system may be the first small step toward beginning to move toward adoption of the principles and practices of that system. Although being confident in being able to learn may not be the same as actually participating in the construction of learning nor the same as the actual naming of your own reality demanded by Freire, it does require adaptation in previous learning attitudes and this may be an initial small step toward embracing the learning approach of Freire-influenced Canadian graduate schools.

Almost all participants were aware of the stereotypical silent Asian learner, admitted that
they perceived East Asian students to be more classroom quiet than other learners, and said they believed other students also viewed East Asian students that way. Being such an obvious focus of an educational stereotype presented a large challenge to the participants initially. A phenomenological picture of the lived experiences of the participants reveals their interesting type of human struggle. There was frustration and even depression when they began their new Canadian careers but seldom was it externally directed. Also, rarely was the emotion of anger reported. Instead, the participants directed their frustration inward and their descriptions resembled helplessness more than anger.

**Participant Fred:** Spoke of feeling depressed in his first year of Canadian study

When asked about ever feeling disrespected in the Canadian educational environment, participant Fred replied that he had not felt disrespect because he knew that both professors and peers genuinely wanted to hear his opinions and his insights. The problem was that he did not know how to give them orally in class. He described a depression that arose not from anger at his host peers but rather from his own feelings and his frustration seemed to be typical of many of the participants. His description of it was as follows:

*I actually never felt that I was not fully accepted or that I was disrespected or ignored because in every class, even the class I just described, when everyone was looking and me and hoping...they did not really help me speak but they tried to listen to me. Everyone wanted to listen to me, everyone wanted me to say something. So I think they at least paid attention to me...I of course, I felt kind of a depression but it is not because of them, it is because I could not speak about anything...*

Participant Rachel spoke in similar terms of her feelings of a first semester depression that came from being unable to participate orally in class discussions:

**Participant Rachel**
Feelings? I didn’t feel angry, I just felt depressed. Yes of course, I felt depressed. I understood it was because of your culture, your language, and also your personality. You are not so active (orally) so you strategize a way to deal with it.

Though the experiences described above might suggest little prospect of learning success, all of the participants asserted that they had presently worked through their initial frustrations and depression and they now expressed confidence that they were meaningfully learning in their new educational environment. However, for many of them that did not mean that they had embraced the Western use of learner speech as a learning strategy. Instead, their confidence that they were now effectively learning seemed to be based upon having developed some satisfying rationale that justified and supported belief in their ability to learn in Canada even while they continued to remain largely silent in the classroom. In some cases, the rationale suggested that speaking in the classroom is appropriate when dealing with objective learning materials and not with other subjective materials, in other cases the rationale involved a re-definition of the notion of learner silence, in other cases it appeared to assert that when understanding is achieved then continued discussion is unnecessary or pointless, and, in other cases it suggested that East Asian learners use legitimate alternative substitute learning strategies in the place of learner speech as a learning strategy. Regardless of the rationale that was offered, none of the participants spoke of feeling that they could not effectively learn in their new Canadian environment. The following are examples of the rationales offered to support the participants’ assertion that they were effectively learning:

A. Rationale: Speak if a point is clearly knowable; be silent on subjective value issues

Participant Lisa appears to make a distinction between learning materials that are more objective and learning materials that are more subjective or value oriented. In the case of objective learning processes, she argued that East Asian learners are equal to or maybe superior in catching
fine points of the learning that may be inaccurate and they are willing to challenge inaccuracies with either teachers or peers. However, in learning areas like literature or education this participant suggests that East Asian learners recognize that their cultural background requires them to take back seat to other Canadian learners who have a greater cultural knowledge. She expressed the rational as follows:

*But in the class students are thinking. I teach mathematics and science and usually they are following the teacher’s thinking. They are thinking almost as the teacher thinks. The teachers usually do not make mistakes but if they make a mistake then students (East Asian learners) usually discover the mistakes. I do not consider this to be silence. Maybe from the Canadian perspective some think they are silent because they just copy what the teachers say. You know, they are just thinking whatever the teachers say. But if they do not agree, they will argue with the teachers...But the thing is...I say this is just for science and mathematics. I do not know about literature or language studies...Another thing, even if teachers make mistakes in the social sciences or something like curriculum, East Asian students do not know what is correct and because they are concerned with the new environment in Canada, they usually do not argue the issue.*

B. **Rationale: Some learning principles do not require much discussion to understand**

Participant Julie appeared to believe that the listening skills of East Asian learners were sufficient for effective learning and that most learner speech was unnecessary, saying:

*Yeah, I think they can still do well if they are silent because they are, they are listening. It may be that they do not talk because they already understand and they do not see the point to discuss further about that. I have to say that sometimes some questions are like, speechless. I sometimes think, “What do we need to discuss about this?” It is totally a waste of time. Yeah.*

C. **Rationale: Active listening that compares contrasting cultures can be a learning substitute for learner classroom speech**
Participant Sandy suggested that though East Asian learners were largely silent in the classroom, their listening skills and the extreme contrast in their cultural background and that of Canada provided them with a learning resource equal to those of Western, Canadian speaking. She said:

Yeah, people from East Asia do tend to be quite but like, we are learning. Just because we do not speak so much does not mean that we are poor learners. We are learning by the active listening thing. Like we are listening very carefully and thinking about the concepts in our mind. Like, what can we say? What is the difference from what and how we have learned in our home culture and here in Canada? Like why is it so different? It is always a comparison between what you knew before and what you are now learning. That kind of comparison thinking takes more time but I think that people who are originally from Canada or have lived here for a long time, a lot of things they just take for granted are so new and different for us that we take more time processing...I think we are learning. Like, I don’t know. I am learning a lot by being silent. Many times I wish Oh, I wish I could say this or I wish I were more talkative like her. I feel that way a lot because it creates a lot of communication. But at other times a lot of students say things that are so irrelevant and if you are sort of out of that dialogue circle you can really think about the really core meanings. I would like to think it is a contribution to the classroom. If you are quite, is it really contributing to the others in the classroom? This is what I have been thinking about lately. You know, I am learning but is my learning influencing others?

D. Rationale: Written speaking can Substitute for oral classroom speaking

In asserting that East Asian students are effectively learning in their Canadian classrooms, participant Paul suggested that they do communicate with teachers but that they do it in writing rather than orally, saying:

When you write papers, you kind of have a one on one conversation with the professor. So
you may not have talked a lot in the class but you talk a lot in your paper. And if you made a big mistake, like if you did not have a coherent structure in your paper, the professor will then talk to you!

E. **Rationale: After class learning can substitute for classroom oral participation**

According to participant Ryan, East Asian learners use different channels and methods to supplement class learning. They may seldom ask questions and offer challenges in the classroom but they become active after class:

They like to book appointments with the professor and will ask a lot of questions in office hours. It is quite weird because I have found that a lot of East Asian students become quite active after the class...East Asian students have all kinds of different strategies for learning...Yes, I still think they (East Asian learners) learn. They especially learn using their strategies. They don’t ask questions in class but eventually they will ask questions. They will ask questions through different channels. Sometimes they will ask from others that they know. They do not directly ask professors or colleagues in class, but they still ask other people. So they still learn.

F. **Rationale: An internal debate substitutes for external dialogue**

According to participant Jessica, East Asian learners engage in an internal dialogue that can take the place of oral classroom dialogue participation in bringing about learning. After noting that learners in Korea do not have educational experience in showing their opinions, he argues that:

I think we are still learning. Yes, because I am thinking about it (class discussion) but I just do not express my thoughts. I am listening to other people’s opinions and I could say oh, I disagree with this but I don’t really say it in the class. So I think there is thinking going on but I guess other people just cannot hear it. But I think it is still a learning process for me.

G. **Rationale: Extra reading substitutes for classroom speech**
Similar to participant Jessica, Kevin and Katie offer another East Asian learner substitute for classroom speech, saying:

**Participant Kevin**

*Yeah, you learn by focusing on the teaching materials rather than by the topics generated by the classroom discussion because East Asian students seldom engage in the classroom discussions. But we still learn something because East Asian students will read a lot. They will spend so much time learning the teaching materials even though they are not engaged in the classroom discussions.*

**Participant Katie**

*I mean listening to other people is very important for your learning but I do feel that there are many other things that you can learn from like reading. Like, you know, you can read a lot even if you do not speak a lot you can still read and you can understand and you can still learn...But I think if you do not share your understanding or ideas probably you can’t learn as well. Because, you know, sharing is a way to learn so when you talk with other people and when you pose questions normally you learn more.*

**H. Rationale: Learners speak not for voice or to learn but for benefit of self or others**

As will be recalled, research has indicated that Confucian learners tend to be extrinsic in their learning motivation. Numerous participants made reference to the idea that students should be rewarded for active listening but there were also references to the idea that Confucian learners could be persuaded to speak in class when academic credit was given for speaking. Participant Ann suggests that these learners are willing to speak in class when encouraged by class credit or approval of the professor, saying:

*Most of them (Confucian learners) are in secondary education (programs). So in those classes they were quite silent because most of the time if they were not asked to contribute they*
won’t be that active to initiate speaking but maybe sometime they were pushed to contribute, not for their own self-motivation but because they thought they had to contribute for a better score or to, you know, favor the teacher or to please the instructor.

The comments by participant Katie suggested a similar extrinsic motivation speaking theme in indicating that East Asian learners are obligated by concerns of justice to say something in the class as a means of giving back for the contributions they have received from other peers. Her comment suggests concerns of personal fairness and obligation rather than a Freire-like desire to acquire voice in naming her own world or even to achieve a larger social justice:

Sometime I feel well; it is just unfair that you listen to others but then you do not contribute.

b) Theme C-2: Respect for the Critical Thought Believed to be Produced in the Canadian Model

When outsiders show an attitude of great respect for a principle in another educational system, especially a principle that is very central to that system, it, like development of confidence, might also be thought to indicate another first step by them toward the adoption of the new system. The participants’ responses were filled with statements that appeared to represent deep respect and admiration for a concept known in Western education as critical thought.

Just what critical thought involves is the subject of much debate. Tian and Low (2011) say that the concept of critical thought is widely used in Western cultures as an educational ideal that traces back as far as Socrates. Nevertheless, they note that there almost unnumbered definitions of it means and many of them are different and even conflicting. Tian and Low (2011) further note that there has been much discussion of whether the cultural background of Confucian trained learners prevents them from engaging in critical thinking and whether critical thought is a practice that develops only in Western education. Biggs (1997) suggested that when Western
educationalists assume that non-Western learners have knowledge of this concept in the West it may have the effect of marginalizing international students who are not familiar with it thus constituting a kind of educational ethnocentrism or what Egege and Kutieleh (2004) said Biggs (1997) called a form of “conceptual colonialism (p. 76).” According to Egege and Kutieleh (2004) the alternative to this conceptual colonialism was a politically correct, culturally relative approach where Western educational institutions would attempt to “teach students from within their own cultural parameters (p. 76).” However, after considering both alternatives, they then conclude that neither approach is without serious problems, saying: “…it would appear that both ‘cultural colonialist’ and ‘culturally relativist’ models are equally problematic (Kutieleh, 2004, p. 77).”

An example of one definition of the concept of critical thought is that of Lipman (1987) who offered a three-part functional definition of critical thought as “thinking…defined by three characteristics: 1) it is self-corrective thinking; 2) it is thinking with criteria; and 3) it is thinking that is sensitive to context (p. 5). Clearly, classroom thought can satisfy Lipman’s (1987) definition of being critical thought only if there is some interchange of opinions in the classroom that achieves the self-corrective element, but the question remains of whether the element of self-correction can take place in the case of learners who remain silent yet listen closely to other learners who offer different perspectives.

The weight of the present research suggests both increasing learner speech as well as respect for learner speech as a tool of critical thought on the part of the participants. However, there was no data that clearly suggested that the learner speech beginning to be respected by the participants was the social class oriented speech of Freire. Burbules and Berk (1999) in their review of critical thought explain that there are two kinds or schools of critical thought literature: critical thinking and critical pedagogy. They describe the critical thinking school as being focused on thinking critically to become “more discerning in recognizing faulty arguments, hasty
generalizations, assertions lacking evidence, truth claims based on unreliable authority, ambiguous or obscure concepts (3rd para)” while they argue that the critical pedagogy school is more concerned with encouraging learners to recognize and then act to change “the influences of educational knowledge, and of cultural formations generally, that perpetuate or legitimate an unjust status quo… (Burbules and Berk, 1999 3rd para.)” and that the goal of the critical pedagogy school is to educate citizens to develop a critical capacity “to resist such power effects” and, in doing so, to “…take sides, on behalf of those groups who are disenfranchised from social, economic, and political possibilities (Burbules and Berk, 1999, 4th para.).” Burbules and Berk (1999) described Paulo Freire as the foremost representative of the critical pedagogy school.

The data of the participants’ interviews suggests that though they are now mostly silent Confucian learners they have the capacity to value and to become (if they are not already) critical thinkers in terms of the first category (the critical thinking school) and their classroom speech (what there is of it) may comfortably fit into the critical thinking school whose goal is greater cognitive clarity and discernment of faulty analysis but the data of the participants provided little, if any, evidence that they were likely to embrace the social class oriented speech of the critical pedagogy school of led by Freire.

For Freire the act of learner dialogue appears to be deeply sewn into the educational process. He views education as a liberating process and saw the first step in achieving learner freedom as recognizing that “cultural action for freedom is characterized by dialogue, and its preeminent purpose is to conscientize the people” (Freire 1970a, p. 47). Freire saw education as a process where learners and teachers would interact but the interaction would be one of each speaking their truths and then in dialogue with each other moving toward elimination of social unfairness. His education was one of learning to read the world critically and then through dialogue to “formulate and agree upon a common understanding about structures of oppression” and
“relations of domination (Burbules and Berk, 1999, 4th para)” and then to change these structures and relations in the direction of fairness.

To participate in this educational process, it is presumed that teachers will speak less and learners will speak more. It is their own, personal concrete experiences that Freire wants learners to offer into the discussion about building a good culture. Freire (2000) says that “dialogue is a kind of necessary posture to the extent that humans have become more and more critically communicative beings. Dialogue is a moment where humans meet to reflect on their reality as they make and remake it (p. 23).” Dialogue between the teacher and the learners is where they come together to construct a joint reality that belongs exclusively to no one person. According to Freire, “Dialogue is the sealing together of the teacher and the students in the joint act of knowing and re-knowing the object of study. Then, instead of transferring the knowledge statically, as a fixed possession of the teacher, dialogue demands a dynamic approximation towards the object (p. 14).”

In the classroom of Freire, the learner is expected to speak but no one learner is compelled to speak at a particular time. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that there must be a critical mass of learner speakers in a classroom or his version of education cannot take place (Shor and Freire, 1987). The expectations of learner speech in the Freire classroom are pretty plain when we consider his comments regarding how he teaches:

I modulate my voice to conversational rhythms rather than didactic, lecturing tones. I listen intently to every student utterance and ask other students to listen when one of their peers speaks. I don’t begin my reply after the student ends her or his first sentence, but ask the student to say more about the question. If I’m asked what I think, I say I’d be glad to say what I think, but why don’t a few more people speak first to what the student just said, whether you agree or not (p.29).

Though none of the participants in this research expressed complete confidence in being prepared to comfortably play the learner role expected by the Freirean classroom, their responses regarding the concept of critical thought (as well as the related concepts such as learner
independence, class discussion, freedom, and intrinsic motivation) did indicate movement away from their descriptions of their home classrooms (that omitted any discussion of critical thought) toward what they perceived as the critical thought rich atmosphere of the Freirean-influenced Canadian classroom. The following are illustrations of this movement that indicate a high value is placed by them on either critical thought or the class discussion and learner independence that was perceived to be part of it:

**Participant Katie**

*I would say Canadian teaching methods are better for students’ development of critical thinking because when the professor introduces a concept or something like what will allow the students to search for information or to talk with each other to have a deeper understanding of the concepts...I feel like Chinese system sort of does not promote critical thinking. Like you learn when the professor introduces the concept generally and they you just memorize it...when you share your understanding with others, normally you understand deeper, you understand more deeply. You know what I mean? So like, it is real learning...I do wish that every (Chinese) university had such an office so that they can educate professors to sort of promote discussion, promote critical thinking, and promote thinking like independent thinking. I don’t think critical thinking was very well promoted.*

**Participant Ann**

*Much freedom! Much freedom! Freedom for choices...I have started to feel (in Canada) Oh, if you don’t want to do something, for example, if you want to pursue a certain research area then you can actually stop and do something else; you have a choice. Not like you have (in home country) to do something because you started, you have to do something someone else told you to do...The professors here (in Canada) and colleagues here, and friends and mostly myself, asking myself why, why? Starting to reason, so yeah, I’d say it is mostly enjoyable even though it is not*
easy... I love the class discussion (in Canada).

Participant Lucy

*Especially in education (in Canada) we studied a lot of literature about critical pedagogy which is different from my Chinese education and really challenged my mind because I never learned to be so critical of the things I had learned before. So I found that to be a student in Canada you have to be very, very critical and to criticize and challenge previous knowledge. Especially when we read the professors challenge you to see anything that you disagree with rather than just teaching you the author’s opinion, it just challenges your understanding and raises a lot of questions. At OISE it is even more critical and that critical level is different than the Vancouver one was. That one was at the Master’s level. At the PhD level the professor (in Canada) will teach you to think critically. Not only to think critically but to ask you why you think critically. So they will fundamentally encourage you to think theoretically to criticize the authors. So it (Canada) is still a critically thinking environment but a little bit different variety.*

Participant Ann

*They (Canada) are trying to be innovative and trying to get students to contribute their voices...to ask them what do you want to learn? to ask them, what do you think? So the teacher (in Canada) is not the one, the center of the course.*

Participant Ryan

*I think the major difference is that in Canada people teach you how to think. For example, when you study Chinese history there are a lot of historical facts to learn so if I was in Taiwan people would ask you to remember a lot of historical figures and historical events and stuff that they call history. But in Canada they ask you to ask questions as a way of finding the answers to your own historical questions...This is one of the major differences between Taiwan’s educational system and Canadian education. Here (in Canada) the method is more like question oriented and*
in Taiwan it is more like memory oriented. They (Taiwan) ask you to memorize a lot of stuff but I do not think it is very efficient. Here (in Canada) you may have a question and in order to resolve your question I will do a lot of work to solve and answer the question. So it is actually more efficient (in Canada) and it helps you to discuss with others because you are discussing questions rather than historical facts.

**Participant Fred**

When I first came to Canada I would probably like to have more lecture based learning because I did not speak in the classroom...I am now in my 8th year of study (in Canada) and I now like discussion based, not lecture based learning, because it is more effective and speaking is not a big problem for me now. Yeah, I like the discussion based learning, Yeah.

**Participant Ann**

I like the discussion and getting to contribute your own experience (in Canada). That’s the two things I like.

**Participant Kevin**

I think the biggest difference between the two is that the Canadian education encourages students to think about questions, to think independently. Pretty much different from what I have, what I was taught in my country of origin. The reason is I think Canadian students have more autonomy, but, of course, you have to take control of yourself rather than receiving all of your guidance from the professors.

**Participant Julie**

But here (Canada) I think there is more space for thinking. Like the professors usually like to raise questions and through that to make you think for yourself.

**Participant Terry**

...the Canadian educational system emphasizes more participation and independence
when it comes to study. I think that probably you are more on your own. (but) the teacher or the educational system does not teach you a comprehensive set of knowledge and you are on your own to explore. (This participant actually favored some aspects of the Chinese system. For example, he perceived it as providing greater learning context than the Canadian system, saying: Whereas, in China the teacher would somehow try to deliver what, like the whole comprehensive knowledge of the field that the teacher knew to you...)

Participant Sandy

I like it a lot more in Canada. Like I really like how teachers teach here and especially in the Master’s program I am in, teachers are very creative and give a lot of freedom for students to think. So, for example, one professor just gave this question in the beginning of the class, divided the class into four groups in seven or eight people in each group and then said, like o.k., I give you 15 minutes to solve this problem together and come back and report.

Participant Ryan

I have found that in the class or after the class, with my peers, I found that we can ask all the questions that we want to ask (in Canada). They do not think that you are stupid. Even in classes where a lot of students know a lot of stuff and are quite knowledgeable, stupid questions are allowed. So I feel very comfortable asking what are sometimes very stupid questions. They (Canadian teachers/students) listen well and say it is a very good thing to think about. I think it is an attitude. They allow every question and they keep very open-minded. So I quite enjoy this kind of atmosphere.

Participant Lily

...I remember here (Canada) I asked questions and the professors responded and said a lot of things and gave me literature right away and offered to add more things, like what kind of books and what kind of literature you should consult. In Taiwan the professor would probably not
do that. They would probably just give you the correct answer. They would not give you enough time to do all the other things. Here (in Canada) they give you a lot of time to think. You do your own critical thinking and it is easier to develop your own ideas here (in Canada). There (in Taiwan) they basically cram a lot of knowledge in you so you do not get to have your thoughts because your thoughts are overridden by other different kinds of knowledges. So that is not good.

Although the participants failed to ever mention critical thought as a part or practice of their educational background and though their background may have, in fact, discouraged engaging in the practice of critical thought, the point here is that it is a concept that many of the participants viewed as desirable in education and they identified it as being the product of or at least related to their new Canadian educational environment. It was a concept that they frequently identified with their new Canadian educational experience while never identifying it in regard to their earlier Confucian influenced educational systems. Whatever definition of critical thought is adopted, it is a concept that has been idealized in Western education (Tian and Low, 2010) and the participants’ praise for it must be considered as a significant attitudinal movement toward the Freirean-influenced Canadian ideal type and away from the Confucian-influenced ideal type. As is the case with much change in human activity, changes in attitude precede and prepare the way for later changes in conduct and practice.

6.5.1 Summary of the Domain of the Participants’ Conflict/Change

Themes C1 through C2 suggest relatively small though significant movement away from the ideal type of Confucian education toward that of Canada has occurred with the participants during their educational experience in Canada.

First, on theme C-1 they appear to have moved from initial cultural shock, fear and even depression to the point that they universally expressed confidence that they were effectively, and to some extent comfortably, now learning in their Canadian educational environment. However,
their present confidence does not generally seem to indicate that they have fully adapted to the talk-rich ways of Canadian learners but rather that they have adapted various learner skills probably acquired in or present in their earlier home educational environments to deal with the challenges of their new Canadian environments. By their own accounts these skills are believed to have led to successful learning in Canada by either replacing learner classroom speech or largely supplementing it. By greater effort, greater out of class discussion, greater perspective provided by their two-culture analysis, greater use of teacher office hours, greater listening skills, greater introspection and internal debate regarding learning materials, greater use of papers to express individual thought, greater focus on speaking only on issues that are objectively measurable, and greater focus on extrinsically motivated speaking as when it is done to favor the teacher or to acquire additional academic grade credit, these participants appear to be confident that learning has been achieved although relatively few indicated they participated in classroom learner speech to the extent their Canadian peers practiced in Canadian graduate classrooms and certainly not in the sense that Freire sought. Whether because of language or because of previous educational conditioning, participants reported that they did not employ learner classroom speech as much as other learners but, except for one participant, they did report some level of increased oral classroom participation over time and their increased learning confidence may indicate at least preliminary movement toward greater future oral classroom participation.

Theme C-2 also indicates that the participants have moved attitudinally in a positive way toward the Canadian educational principle of critical thought, a principle that was never mentioned as being a part of their previous educational experience in their Confucian influenced home cultures. There are many definitions of critical thinking and whether they qualify as critical thinkers or even whether their relatively classroom silent approach to learning can be productive of critical thought, there is little question but that they have developed strong, positive attitudes
toward the concept of critical thought and that they associate it with the learner speech rich educational environment of Canada. Again, this movement or change toward the Freirean-influenced Canadian ideal type is one of attitude but attitudes are often the front end of change in practices.

6.6 Domain Three: Data Suggesting Participants’ Movement Toward Approval or Adoption of Speech-Related Principles of the Canadian Freirean Anti-Thesis

Domain One focused on the research participants’ descriptions of the speech-related principles of their Confucian-influenced educational past (thesis) and Domain Two on the conflict/change aspects of their apparent movement toward the Freirean-influenced Canadian model (anti-thesis). Domain Three now focuses on areas wherein significant numbers of the participants appear to have moved toward approval (or near approval) of the Freirean-influenced anti-thesis in regard to principles and practices likely related to educational speech practices.

As will be recalled, the educational principles included in the ideal type of Freirean education included the following: 1. Perception of oppression, 2. Articulation of an alternative reality, 3. Confrontation of oppression by naming their world, and 4. Participation in actively recreating the world through problem solving done in an attitude of hope and love that is inclusive of the othered, in partnership with peers and a true teacher-brother who is doing the same. Learners of the Freirean environment would be critical in recognizing and identifying realities alternate to that offered by oppressors, they would be vocal in advocating their own reality and they would cooperatively, hopefully and lovingly problem solve toward a better and more just reality in a working partnership with their peers and their teacher. Such an educational process would be a loud but respectful process and it would seem that it might also be enjoyable and even exciting for both learner and teacher participants.

Of the 18 participants in the research it would be an exaggeration to say that the data of
their interviews gave evidence of them becoming complete converts to the educational principles of Freire. However, on two principles of the Freirean model the interviews suggested that there were many participants who, like King Agrippa, in his encounter with the apostle Paul, had reached a state of being “almost persuaded (Ac. 26:28 King James Version).”

The first principle of the Freirean model toward which many participants moved involved their preference for the more equal Freirean teacher-learner relationship over that of the father-teacher of the Confucian ideal type. The second principle of the Freirean model toward which some participants moved involved Freire’s expectation of an active, independent, creative, personal, loving, joyful naming of the reality of their respective worlds in collaboration with peers and teachers to solve problems. The following data from the transcripts indicate the strength of their movement toward these two pro-Freirean attitudes:

a) **Theme A-1: Preference for Canadian Equality in Teacher-Learner Relationships**

More than half of the participants expressed significant preference for the more equal relationships of teachers and learners found in the Freirean-influenced ideal type of Canada. Freire (2000) argued for a much more equal relationship between teachers and learners than the hierarchical traditions of the Confucian model provided, saying:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. In this process, arguments based on ‘authority’ are no longer valid; in order to function, authority must be on the side of freedom, not against it. Here, no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. People teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking education are ‘owned’ by the teacher (p. 80).

Learner classroom speech may be related to many practices and attitudes but the relationship between teachers and learners must be a central factor in the type and amount of learner speech found in the classroom. Surely any major change in the relationship of teachers and
learners in learners’ (and future teachers) attitudes about these relationship is an issue that deserves further investigation. For Freire, there seemed to be an almost religious-like insistence that the teacher lay down and give up his official authority in order to allow learners a true voice in naming their own world. He called this teacher sacrifice of power a type of Easter experience saying, “I call it ‘making Easter’ every day, to die as the dominator and be born again as the dominated, fighting to overcome oppression (p. 18)” Adoption and approval of such attitudes would suggest an important attitudinal movement of the participants; one of approval of the Freirean concept of the crucifixion of the teacher where the teacher-learner lays down his authority so that learner-teacher may pick it up. Such a blurring of the statuses of teacher and learner would also seem to violate one of the most basic principles of the Confucian model, the principle of superior and inferior positions that serve to organize and create the positional matrix of the Confucian ideal society.

It appears clear that Freire desired not only that teachers come down in teaching authority but also that learners move up. The research participants’ responses frequently indicated a cautious willingness to pick up the surrendered power of the teacher in Canada and to enter into a more equal teaching-learning partnerships with their Canadian teachers, even to the point that, at times, they rejected the traditional role of the Confucian teacher as a general role model. Though there were participants that disagreed, the following responses illustrated a significant preference for movement toward the Freirean-influenced educational model of Canada of teacher-brother and away from the hierarchical relationships and role model emphasis of their past Confucian-influenced models of teacher-father.

**Participant Kevin**

*As a Canadian student here I think the difference is that students have more freedom. They can exchange, negotiate and argue with the professors without any fear, without worrying about*
the power relationship. I think the professors here are quite open minded. They listen to what you say. They understand what your learning needs are and support you in any way they can to help you learn in your study. I think the biggest difference between the two is that the Canadian education encourages students to think about questions, to think independently.

Participant Amy

The difference (between the two educational systems) is I think that the teachers (in Canada) are more approachable and they encourage you to talk to them...They encourage students to have questions and you have the freedom to...it is not like in China.

Participant Teresa

...after one semester so then I got used to it...the relationship (between teachers and students) is more like peers...so that is why the classroom dynamic can be quite different because the students have a very different opinion sometimes they can kind of argue you know, have different arguments whereas the professor you know could be just listening and may not necessarily be involved in too much of those discussions...

Participant Kevin

So this is very comfortable say, you know, teachers, professors respect students a lot rather than um, bossy, than you know you just request students to do whatever they don’t like. This will be the biggest difference and this will be the thing that I feel the most comfortable with.

Participant Amy

I think that they are very different (teacher-student relations). I think in general the professors and students’ relationship is closer than in China and there is more interaction between students and professors.

Participant Teresa

Yes, I think it is quite different and yes I think here, you know, I mean yes, of course, you
know, your professors grade you and they are professors so there is a hierarchy. It is not totally erased. It is still there but then it is so casual you can just call your professors at home and you can go to coffee with your professors and you can chat and laugh and it is just very casual. It is almost like they are peers and so your professors are like your colleagues more than the hierarchical relationship of the student and teacher.

**Participant Sandy**

> You feel like you are trusted by teachers (in Canada). If you are trusted, you know it. And like the opposite is happening in Japan. You guys cannot do it so I (the teacher) am going to give you instructions: you have to do this, do this, you have to be quiet, sit still. With a lot of instructions, you feel like these teachers (in Japan) do not really trust us. Our ability to do like whatever, we are smart enough to plug things in but before we do anything teachers (in Japan) give us some instructions and that just discourages learners.

**Participant Fred**

> ...here (in Canada) you feel like professor is at the same level as you and when you talk to the professor or when you learn from the professor it is not really learned from him (the professor) but as though it was learned from each other. You know, I don’t think the professor really learns anything from you but it gives that impression that you can give your ideas and talk to him (the professor) at the same level.

**Participant Paul**

> In China you know it is a Confucian system. Teachers and professors have a high social status. It is a hierarchical system so you have to respect them and not matter what they say you have to follow their instructions. Yeah exactly, but here in Canada you can address the professor, just use his or her name, like John, Linda, or Susan. That means you are kind of equal to the professor in a kind of intellectual setting. So you can make a mistake, anyone can make a mistake,
that is how you learn something by making a mistake. That is the spirit of the classroom (in Canada). You are equal to the professor. I know it is not true because the professor gets paid...So you know you can’t be really equal to the professor. But in the classroom from a knowledge perspective you can feel that way. Yeah, that is very happy for the student in learning.

Participant Ryan

...in Canada the professor is more like your friend but in Taiwan there is a hierarchy between students and teachers...In Canada we (teachers and students) immediately become friends with each other and they respect you in your choices, they respect you in your thinking. But in Taiwan it is more like they are the authority, they assume they know everything and that is their opinion and it will not be changed...Cultural models? ...They seem to have this burden to teach the youth about right and wrong. So they support their student to become a future internal citizen in this society who can teach other people to wake up and become a new citizen.

Participant Lily

The difference (between Canadian and Taiwanese teachers) was in professors’ feedback to my presentation. The feedback I got here was very insightful and you could feel that the professor cares a lot about you, a lot. So for example, in one of my term papers I wrote something about collaborative learning and my professor, who is my supervisor now, he asked me what was my goal in doing this and he also wrote some very suggestive things and spent a lot of time writing those feedbacks. So my paper was only fifteen pages but I got two pages of feedback. I was quite touched by this kind of system. In Taiwan normally it is just a grade and a couple of sentences. It would be feedback that would not give you further ideas to work on but here they give you further ideas to do.

Participant Kevin

I don’t see any role models (in Taiwan). Even those teachers, you know, now from my
retrospect I find that even when they (teachers from his home country) received their education overseas, they do not even try to integrate what they have learned into their teaching in Taiwan. This is something that I am, you know, doing...reflecting, thinking about how they teach, what their teaching pedagogies are and how they educate from the perspective of my current experiences. As I studied in business education (in his home country) I noticed that many of the faculty members (of his home country) graduated from the United States but I don’t think they integrated the United States way of thinking into their way of teaching. They still dominate in the Confucian way of teaching. They dominate most of the teaching. They request students to do this, they request students to do that, they seldom provide students with, um space for critical thinking, independent thinking or anything like that. So I do not see them as a role model.

b) Theme A-2: Participants who Appear to Have gone Far Toward the Freirean Ideal of the Active, Independent, Creative, Personal, Loving, Joyful Learner-Naming of the Reality of their Respective Worlds in Collaboration with Peers and Teachers to Solve Problems.

Certainly not all but some of the participants in the research appeared to be close or even nearing the type of “world naming” learners that Freire desired. That there were at least some of them that exhibited some elements of the characteristics he desired is evidenced by the following statements. Participant Ann included the element of mutuality, some of the joyfulness of the Freirean dialogic sharing, and also appreciated the chance to name her world with no pre-conditions except relevance to the discussion and to do it in collaboration with professor, colleagues, and mostly herself. Her interview also reflects how much she has changed during her period in Canada regarding her use of learner speech. Participant Ryan valued the tolerance of the teacher and other learners to allow her to ask the questions arising from her own personal reality even if they might be objectively stupid questions. Participant Katie expressed feeling validated as a learner by speaking out and contributing her truths and insights. Finally, Participant Lucy explains the necessity of keeping an open mind and of being truly “critical” rather than merely
engaging in a negative and contrary criticism so that in the end the learner will finally be able to
discover claim his/her own personal knowledge.

**Participant Ann**

*These (Canadians) are good people and they want the learning to be mutual. Not only are you learning from them. So this feels really good...so they are interested to share, like to listen to my cultural background and experience and stories and, at the same time, they share about their experiences to me.*

*The professors here, and colleagues here, and friends and mostly myself, asking myself why, why? Start to reason, so yeah, and I’d say it is mostly enjoyable, even though it is not easy, it is challenging but (Researcher: Do you like class discussions and presentations?) Oh, um, I love the class discussion. I love the open discussion and I love how professors and colleagues and classmates they appreciate your contribution no matter what you say as long as they are interested in what you say which is related to yourself and related to the topic and related to their teaching lives... You know like at the beginning I was so reluctant to open my mouth until I was fully prepared about what I wanted to say but after just a short time, I started to adapt...*

**Participant Ryan**

*This is the joy of doing learning because any kind of question will be allowed and people will take you seriously and will discuss with you. Even if they think it is not a very good way to approach the issue, they will still provide their own feedback. So this is the major reason I love Canadian education.*

**Participant Katie**

*My participation in classroom speaking has increased because I think I am more used to the way other students participate. And I do think that giving your voice, letting it be heard is important because I guess it is one way, you know, everyone wants to be an active learner and you*
want to show that you are a learner and that you know something and you want to share something that you want to speak out. You know, you sometimes feel it is unfair for you to listen to other people and you take their ideas but not let them take your views and ideas…And it is rewarding. Like sometimes you do not feel the respect from others. If you do speak, people will nod their heads and it says, well, that makes sense. You kind of feel that oh, you are recognized, you are respected by others…and I think that that feeling is good.

Participant Lucy

The most important thing is to keep open minded because if you are close minded when you to Western countries (Canada) you can learn the theories and the literatures but you will never absorb them as your own practice and as your own experiences. When you experience this kind of educational style and system you have to be like really, really open minded. It is really important that you consider all the different opinions from all the different people both students and professors. Then you will be able to start to locate yourself in specific locations that allows you to begin to understand who you are, why you can be in that location, and what you want to learn about. Then you will have direction for your learning…The second thing I would suggest is to be critical because the Western culture is more complex and people require more critical thinking. But being critical is not like being ready to fight or to disagree with the system. It is not only disagreement. It is being critical so that you can find a way to fundamentally change the knowledge system being offered or challenge the existing ideology so that you can then achieve and have your own personal knowledge. So being critical in this sense is very important.

6.6.1 Summary of Domain Three: Data Suggesting Participants’ Movement Toward Approval or Adoption (or Near Adoption) of Speech-Related Principles of the Canadian Freirean Anti-Thesis

The data of the participants’ interviews gives little evidence that any of the participants has
been fully transformed into a pure Canadian Freirean learner. However, it must be noted that there is no suggestion in this research that the speech rich environment of Canadian graduate schools constitutes a pure version of Freirean education. Instead, it has only been argued that Canadian graduate education is a Freirean-influenced educational environment. It must also be noted that this research presents no evidence regarding the extent to which native Canadian learners qualify as pure Freirean learners.

However, it is clear that significant numbers of the participants did move in a significant way toward adoption of some of the elements that Freire desired in learners. Many of the participants embraced either in attitude or practice the learner speech of Freire. Some appear to have seen learner speech as a way of naming their own personal reality though it was unclear whether they all distinguished their reality from that of an oppressor reality. A significant number appeared to have a Freirean-like joy in the dialogic method of learning that also involved a willingness to learn together with other learners and the professor. Finally, a significant number appeared to prefer the teacher-brother partnership approach to learning of Freire over that of the teacher-father model associated with the Confucian ideal type model. Though the participants’ educational values and practices do not seem to have been completely transformed in the relatively few years of their experience in the Canadian educational environment, there has been movement. There were minority statements in the participants’ interviews that ran counter to those reported and analyzed in the data analysis and, taken as a whole, the data is conflicted. However, the fact of significant movement is nevertheless evident. In fact, it is the slow, gradual and conflicted movement expected of a dialectical process.
Chapter 7

Closing Thoughts, Limitations, Conclusions Implications for Future Research

7.1 Closing Thoughts Regarding Methodology

So far as the research literature shows, this research is original and unique in two respects. First, it employs a methodological approach first developed in the field of health Psychology called IPA, and applies it to the area of higher education. Secondly, it employs the terminology of Hegel’s dialect and Weber’s concept of ideal types within the context of a phenomenological approach in order to discuss and analyze the personal lived experiences and perceptions of Canadian graduate school learners making a transition between greatly different educational approaches regarding the topic of learner speech.

It is suggested that a number of criteria regarding the research have been satisfied such that research complies with the standards of IPA. Smith (2004) says that the characteristic features of IPA can be “captured in an alliterative three-part list: idiographic, inductive, and interrogative (p. 40).” The research reflects all three qualities. It is idiographic in that it begins with the perceptions of single individual participant. It is inductive in that it “foregrounds induction (Smith, 2004, p. 40)” as it builds from the individual phenomenological perception of lived experiences of single participants toward a discovery of general principles or qualities that unite them. Finally, it is interrogative in that, setting preconceptions and hypotheses aside, it focuses inquiry upon the reports of the expert witnesses to the phenomena under investigation through careful and extensive semi-structured interviews.

It is further suggested that the topic of the educational transition being made by the participants of this research was an appropriate focus for the application of IPA as one form of phenomenological investigation. Smith (2004) makes it clear that IPA is growing in both
popularity as well as in the diversity of the areas it is employed. In encouraging the increased use of IPA in areas beyond its origination in the health field, Smith (2004) specifically mentioned education as an example of an area appropriate for the application of the IPA approach.

It is additionally suggested that this research includes reasonable interpretations and analyses of the reports of the participants’ attempts to make sense of their perceptions as they transition between the educational systems of their home cultures and Canadian graduate school. These reasonable interpretations thereby meet the challenge of Smith (2004) regarding IPA to “…make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their personal and social world (p. 40).”

It is also suggested that this research has successfully avoided imposing any hypothesis or other similar preconceived, anticipated direction of the data of the participants’ interviews, thereby satisfying Smith’s (2004) observation that: “Thus, IPA researchers do not attempt to verify or negate specific hypotheses established on the basis of the extant literature; rather they construct broader research questions which lead to the collection of expansive data (p. 43).”

It is further suggested that the data of the research has been closely and quantitatively (in terms of volume of participants’ observations) illustrated, emphasized, and connected to the research, thus showing in the research a sense of the concrete lived experiences of the participants, and thus, according to Osborn and Smith (1998), providing a source of internal validity to the research. Moreover, it is suggested that, although 18 is a relatively large size sample for IPA, it is not excessively more than the mean number of 15 participants in IPA research noted by Reid et al. (2005).

Finally, it is suggested that the research has thoroughly integrated the data of the participants in such a way as to satisfy the Smith (2004) standard of good research applicable to IPA in that the research constitutes an openly subjective, interpretative process where results are
not offered as facts but yet are still believable and plausible and are well connected and arise out of the data so as to be transparent to observers and general readers.

7.2 Limitations of the Research

There are a number of limitations that must be noted in this research. First, the data of the research should be considered within the context of an inherent problem of getting Confucian learners trained in seeking harmony to be open, frank and candid evaluators of the educational environment of their Canadian educational hosts. The research was by virtue of the nature (or nurture) of its participants one of seeking potentially critical information from reluctant critics.

A second limitation was the problem inherent in using ideal types. They are theoretical constructs created for purposes of facilitating academic discussion and analysis and therefore can never fully and completely reflect the specific variations of the real world. There obviously is no single Confucian learner that fully matches the ideal type that served as the thesis of this research nor any single Canadian graduate learner who fully matches the ideal type that served as its antithesis.

An additional limitation is that the choice of educational models represented by ideal types employed in the research was to some degree arbitrary. There are, no doubt, ideal types representing other educational models that could have been chosen. An educational model with an ideal type that focused on Dewey or Socrates could have been chosen instead of Freire to represent Canadian graduate education model. On the other hand, the Confucian learner model could have been represented as being mid-way along a continuum between an ideal type of the Islamic madrassa educational model or the traditional African educational model and the Canadian model.

Finally, there is a limitation regarding educational level. This research focused wholly upon tertiary levels of education in Canada and to a lesser extent also in the four Confucian cultures that were examined. Variations probably exist in all educational model based upon the educational
level of the learner and it is always questionable to assume that observations made at one level are applicable at another.

7.3 A Confucian-Canadian Synthesis

The research data of the participants showed them to be have become confident learners in the Canadian model (C-1) though it also showed a strong reliance upon their earlier acquired, mostly silent learning skills, it showed that they have great respect for critical thought that they perceive to be an outgrowth of the learner speech approaches found in the Canadian model (C-2), that at least some of them have become quite vocal in their classrooms and frequently their vocalizations involve some level of criticism (A-2), and that many of them appeared to have moved far in the direction of preferring the Canadian speech-friendly relationship of teacher-brother over the speech-repression relationship of the Chinese model teacher-father (A-1). It is clear that their relatively short exposure to the Freirean-influenced Canadian model of education has had significant impact on their learner-speaker values and to some extent on their learner-speaker practices. As they return to their cultures of origin it also seems probable that the synthesis model of education they have absorbed by virtue of their Canadian experience is a synthesis model significantly more friendly to learner speech than was the model they practiced when they arrived in Canada. Participant Ann was probably the most extreme of all of the participant convert to the Canadian model regarding learner speech but her attitude toward learner speech was supported to a lesser extent by many of the other participants. The impact of her Canadian experience seemed so great and so genuine as to justify re-considering it here. Can change in attitude regarding learner speech such as is below reflected not greatly impact her Confucian model of education as she returns as a teacher to her home culture and can teachers who project such a model fail to initiate change in her home culture?

Participant Ann
The professors here, and colleagues here, and friends and mostly myself, asking myself why, why? Start to reason, so yeah, and I’d say it is mostly enjoyable, even though it is not easy, it is challenging but (Do you like class discussions and presentations?) Oh, um, I love the class discussion. I love the open discussion and I love how professors and colleagues and classmates they appreciate your contribution no matter what you say as long as they are interested in what you say which is related to yourself and related to the topic and related to their teaching lives. So because before I felt like, oh, do I have to say something really profound? You know like at the beginning I was so reluctant to open my mouth until I am fully prepared about what I am saying but after just a short time, I started to be so adaptable and I started to just say anything. Maybe I am not that shy so I feel like quite open to contribute my opinion. I am not shy about oh I am so embarrassed if I say anything wrong, I just express honestly, speak out loud, like you know, maybe this is stupid but it is what I think and it relates to me, and it is important to me so, yeah, which I have never experienced in China.

Participant Ann continued describing her new Canadian approach to learning through learner speech and how it has profoundly changed her, saying:

So it has been an exchangeable and interactive atmosphere (her Canadian classrooms) and I mean, maybe because of my personality I’m quite talkative, so like yeah like I won’t stay silent for some time and they actually, my colleagues, they have an impression about me. They say I always ask questions; I am always curious. At the beginning, I wasn’t like this. At the beginning, sometimes I was reluctant to ask questions whatever I have them because I thought what if they just talked about this and it is something I just don’t get it. What if I was the only one and I didn’t get it? But that was just at the beginning. So, because of this I started to change the way I dealt with them. I worked with them because everyone was supportive and they encouraged me to just contribute whatever I had. So I felt trustful, I felt trusting. So I was always willing to just express myself. So
now I always interrupt, or I say, what were you saying? Or, you know, I didn’t get it, did I miss something? Or, I didn’t get that part of the question and would you mind explaining more? …Those words. So I always ask. I am like a question mark. Yeah.

Though the educational model synthesis that participants such as Ann will take back to their home cultures appears to clearly be more speech positive and even be more speech-critical, it must be noted that there was very little evidence in the data that it will be the kind of learner speech directed at social class criticism and social class critical thought that Freire desired. Though there was much evidence in the interview data that the participants are moving toward increased learner speech and that it a learner speech that can fairly be described as critical speech, there was almost no evidence that it was the Freirean learner, critical speech of naming one’s own reality and then participating with others in reconstructing the world away from the reality of the oppressor and in the direction of greater social justice for members of all social classes. Rather than the Freirean social class critical thought and speech, the kind of critical speech and critical thought favored by most of the participants appeared to be of the category of critical thought Burbules and Berk (1999) called the Critical Thinking school. According to Burbules and Berk, critical thought of the Critical Thinking school includes learners who use speech in the process of becoming “more discerning in recognizing faulty arguments, hasty generalizations, assertions lacking evidence, truth claims based on unreliable authority, ambiguous or obscure concepts, and so forth, (Burbules and Berk, 1999).” (See the Burbules and Berk discussion and their distinction between the critical thinking school and the critical pedagogy school reported in Chapter 6.)

As the participants return to their original cultures, the data of their interviews suggests their influence as educators may encourage the creation of an educational hybrid offspring of the union/marriage/synthesis of their Confucian and Canadian classroom educational parents. This educational synthesis suggests that in the Confucian classroom of the future, learner speech might
be frequent and it may even be loud and enthusiastic. It may be conducted in an almost friendly and informal classroom atmosphere by a first-name teacher found not behind the lectern at the front of the room but sitting on a table in the middle of the students as both teacher and learners excitedly pursue learning in a critical way. However, a perceptive listener to this new, hybrid classroom discussion might recognize that though the speech of this classroom might superficially resemble the classroom of Freire and the Canadian classroom of learners each individually naming their own realities and prescribing methods of reconstructing society toward greater social class justice, that it was actually a Confucian version of a different vocal pursuit of critical thought. And this perceptive listener might further recognize that the learner discussion he heard was not aimed at social class oppression and achievement of social justice at all but was instead, aimed at the achievement of clarity, logic, and reason. And the really perceptive observer would recognize that these noisy, earnest learners and their casual and friendly junzi teacher were actually focused upon using classroom speech to pursue, not social class inequity, but the meaning of how individuals can grow relationally so as to merge their individual sense of self in the maze of hierarchical positions that make up their collective culture and thereby become both more human and more moral. In other words, this most perceptive observer would recognize that these learners had borrowed from their Canadian experience the classroom means (speech and the relaxed teacher/learner relations that encourage it) in order to pursue the Confucian goal of moral development through clear and logical discussion of the Way of the Heavens and progress along the Dao.

So how have the thesis and anti-thesis models resolved conflict into a synthesis? The Freirean revolutionary notion of class oppression does not fit comfortably inside the Confucian matrix of vertical and hierarchical social relations and the harmony of the Dao. The Confucian classroom speech of the participants’ descendants may well be boisterous and it may well be
critical (in the sense of the Critical Thinking school) and it may well be led by casual, informal, and friendly teachers, but it is unlikely to fail to be Confucian. Though the speech sounds of the classroom might sound Canadian, the spirit of the learner speech will still surely be Confucian. The Confucian themes of social hierarchy made harmonious through li will still linger in the atmosphere of the class. Learners will discuss but always with the limits of knowing that to challenge the traditional Way of the Heavens is to threaten the “external” reference point by which an “orchestra” of humanity becomes impossible. Without the Dao as the single “Way” by which to organize the hierarchical social maze of relational selves, Confucianism dis-integrates leaving only the Freirean chaos of individually conflicting dogmatic realities ceaselessly clashing over where humanity should go and what humanity should be. Confucius built the social system of the Analects in order to emerge from the social chaos that preceded his time. Confucian observers realize that it is unlikely that his descendants will choose a form of education that promises a return.

It seems that sometimes clashes between thesis and anti-theses models involve non-negotiable elements. The writing of Freire does not tolerate flexibility or compromise. It is insistent on social revolution. The writing of Confucius is equally insistent on hierarch and social harmony. As is so often the case with irresistible forces and immovable objects however, there is room for a Confucian and Canadian educational model synthesis but it appears to lie not so much between the poles of learner silence verses learner speech as between different kinds, categories, and schools of speech.

7.4 Complexity of the Dynamics by Which a Synthesis Emerges

Hegel’s pattern of the dialect is often presented as a straight forward competition between thesis A and anti-thesis B from which synthesis C springs fully developed. Unfortunately for observers and analysts of change, this theoretical simplicity seldom appears in the real world. It is
likely that the same will be true as researchers seek to understand the dialectic relationship between the educational model(s) of East Asia and of Canadian graduate schools. In the real world there are regional variations of both the Western educational model (e.g., the U.S., the U.K. and Australia) as well as regional variations of the Confucian educational model (e.g., each of the cultures of East Asia) which make for unspeakable complexity in analyzing the dynamics by which a synthesis emerges in any particular region. Therefore, the actual dynamics of the competition and conflict between Western and Confucian educational systems in any particular geographic area involves numerous aspects that yet remain to be examined in further research. No doubt the resolution of this regional competition/conflict of educational systems into an overall emergent educational model synthesis will be slow. It may for a long time appear to vary from culture to culture and it clearly may involve cultural considerations and conflicting values within particular cultures beyond merely the actual educational virtues of the competing educational modes. Waters and Leung (2014) presents an illustration of this complexity involving internal cultural considerations that take place within the context of the larger competition of educational models in Hong Kong.

One of the many central actors in determining the results of the clash and competition between educational models are learners. As reported in Waters and Leung (2014), non-elite higher education learners in Hong Kong (those whose entrance test scores were insufficient to gain entry to Hong Kong domestic universities) who pursued their higher education through continuing education programs supplemented later by a “topped-up” Western education model, judged their Western influenced education as inferior to that of their peers holding degrees from domestic (Confucian model) universities. The reports of these learners, situated at one of the interfaces of a Western educational model (mostly British, Australian, and the United States) and the Confucian influenced model of Hong Kong, demonstrate that the ultimate outcome (synthesis) of the conflict
between the Western and Confucian educational models, at least in Hong Kong, is more complex than a mere contest of educational pedagogy, epistemology, and phenomenology. Waters and Leung (2014) found that though these learners noted some pluses regarding their Western influenced educational experiences, they viewed it as inferior to that of their peers educated in the domestic (Confucian) model for the reason that the general Hong Kong Chinese culture viewed it as inferior. In other words, regardless of the relative merit of the two educational models, it was the learners’ perception of their future economic opportunities, of their parents and friends’ opinions, and of the general opinion of the public regarding the value of the two educational experiences that shaped their conclusions rather than the substantive merits of the two educational models. The 70 participants in Waters and Leung (2014) were described as beneficiaries of a recently developed transnational educational program consisting of domestic continuing education topped up by a Western foreign educational model who would otherwise had no opportunity to participate in higher education. Yet, contrary to the belief of the Western providers of much of their education, these students were discovered to strongly prefer the domestic, more Confucian, educational model. Waters and Leung described their findings and the strength of their findings as follows:

Many of the UK provider institutions that we interviewed for our project talked openly about the wide ‘appeal’ of a British qualification for Hong Kong students. However, during interviews with young people it became quickly apparent to us that the ‘overseas’ nature of the qualification was incidental (even, in some cases, problematic), and certainly not an attraction. A small number of interviewees discussed their ‘preference’ for UK top-up programmes (over Australian) as they felt these were (or at least, would be seen to be) of better quality. But all would have preferred, given the option, a degree conferred by a local university (p. 64).
Concluding that “Local and national hierarchies of educational credentials are far more complex than a postcolonial reading of the internationalization of education would suggest (p. 64)” the research of Waters and Leung (2014) illustrates just one of the complexities in understanding and tracing the process by which the pattern of dialectic will finally yield an educational model synthesis. Though it is clear that the dialectical relationship between these educational systems involves competition/conflict, the specific dynamics of their resulting synthesis will likely more resemble the complicated, intertwinement of the combatants of present day Syria than the straightforward, head to head combat of World War One and will possibly involve a multitude of considerations much beyond discussion and analysis of the characteristics of each model. The research of Waters and Leung (2014) appears to suggest that entrenched educational hierarchies arising from subtle values embedded within the cultures where competition between educational models take place is probably only one of many considerations that will demand future examination and research.

7.5 Implications for Future Research

Sources of Confucian Learner Adaptability (Creativity)?

In some ways research provides answers but in other ways it invariably generates new questions. This research is no different. The research has revealed a significant adaptability on the part of Confucian model learners in their new Canadian environment; one that confirmed Wang (2013), who found that Chinese students displayed an unusual flexibility in their learning when subjected to other educational systems and said that the “adaptive characteristic of Chinese students is seldom identified among students in the Western context (p. 284).” If the ability to use prior learning experience to succeed in new environments is seen as creativity, then it seems to suggest that the participants’ former Confucian educational model was not wholly unproductive of learner creativity. This research makes clear that it was neither the critical thought nor the
learner speech of their home cultures that produces this “creativity.” What elements in their former
Confucian model socialization account for it? Were the participants to be interviewed again, I
would focus in a much more specific way on the educational virtues of the Confucian system that
Li (2012) so strongly advocated; especially those regarding learning listening skills and especially
whether the virtues of learner listening are necessarily inconsistent with the skills of learner speaking.

The Limits of Learner Speech in Confucian Cultures

My research also raises another broader question which I think demands further research.
It involves the question of the degree to which Confucian cultures can encourage or tolerate
meaningful learner speech. The statement by Freire quoted at the beginning of this research would
seem to suggest that systems are either closed and integrate individuals or they are open and they
free individuals. I wonder if these categories are so fixed as he says. Confucianism is a set of values
and beliefs and practices that shape cultures. It is not a totalitarian political system that tries to
regulate all speech. Even though it does seem to lean strongly toward the side that Freire says
integrates into the logic of the system and even if speech can threaten hierarchy and social stability,
surely it is a system that can allow some degree of free speech by learners without being destroyed.
It seems that advocates of the Confucian model should examine this question and describe the
ability of the Confucian model to tolerate freedom learner speech. From the other view, it would
also be interesting to examine the question of how free the learner speech of the Freirean model is
when learners challenge its basic notions of social class oppression when they use speech to attack
the spoken realities of other groups as inferior or even evil. These questions need research. It may
lead to the conclusion that all systems that are offered for human organization prohibit/discourage
learner speech that questions their most central values.

Whose Educational Model to be Facilitated?
A final area for future exploration laid bare by this research involves the participants’ descriptions of their confidence of effective learning in their new Canadian environment. This confidence raises a very fundamental question about the Canadian educational model. Can the Freire-influenced Canadian model recognize the learning of their Confucian guest scholars as the full equivalent of the learning envisioned in its model? Stated in a different way, is learning largely absorbed through reading and careful intentional listening, largely absorbed through observation of discussions by others, largely absorbed through internal reflection, and largely through a type of critical speech that fails to include social class criticism, as valid as learning that is individually learner constructed through the speaking out of learners’ social reality in relationship to social class criticism and to the spoken realities of other learner-teachers and teacher-learners? Can the mostly Confucian-influenced, mostly silent learnedness produce the scholarship envisioned (demanded?) by the Canadian classroom of Freire? Or would the learning of the participants in this research be condemned by Freire as a Confucian form of the banking model of education? The question raises issues of how far in the direction of cultural relativity Canadian education should go in facilitating its international guest learners, especially in light of the fact that Confucian learners appear to produce learning results (grades) that is equal to or superior to native learners. Making the question even more difficult is the fact that Confucian learners are but one of a variety of different learner models coming to study in Canada and Canadian concession to one learner model would require consideration of others. Egege and Kutieleh (2004) raised a very similar question and concluded that “…it would appear that both ‘cultural colonialist’ and ‘culturally relativist’ models are equally problematic (p. 77).” Having expressed skepticism regarding either approach, Egege and Kutieleh (2004) then pursued the question of how the Canadian educational model can chart a path that is neither ethnocentric in demanding all learners to learn as Canadians
do, yet avoid the fracturing of educational approaches that such political correctness might require. In any future research it seems that their analysis would be a good start in resolving this question.

Maybe such a question is just a normal challenge involved when host educational cultures attempt to provide for a diversity of international learners. On the other hand, it does raise a power related question of whose learning approach is to be facilitated, whose is to be ignored, and what factors should go into resolution of the question. Learners from the four Confucian influenced cultures examined in this research now represent cultures that rank 1st, 5th, 14th, and 21st in the world in gross domestic product (Central Intelligence Agency, 2015). What of those learners coming to Canada from other cultures with significantly contrasting educational pedagogies but less economic power with which to support and speak for their educational needs? Whose educational approaches are most valid and how is validity to be evaluated when educational models collide? In the past the relative political and economic power of educational providers and educational consumers probably answered these questions. However, should it? It would be ironic if Freire were to learn that his version of a Marxist approach to education had become the only accepted and permitted model of learning because of the power of an “oppressive” Capitalist West.
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APPENDIX A

Author Summaries of Sections of the Analects Possibly Relevant to Learner’s Speech Organized by Book in the Analects

Book 1
1) 1:1 the pleasure of study and practice; also definition of junzi
2) 1:2 be filial and fraternal are not likely to offend against their superiors.
3) 1:3 fine words not associated with true virtue.
4) 1:4 mastering and practicing the instructions of my teacher is third after faithful in business, and sincerity in intercourse with friends.
5) 1:7 You have learned if you do this.
6) 1:8 the scholar must be grave, importance of friends
7) 1:14 He is careful in his speech.

Book 2
8) 2:3 learner must have a sense of shame
9) 2:4 at 15 mind bent on learning, at thirty….etc.
10) 2:5 filial piety is serving parents with propriety
11) 2:11 cherish old knowledge so that you can acquire new and you can be a teacher
12) 2: 17 when you know hold to it; when you do not know admit it.
13) 2:16 Study of strange doctrines is injurious.
14) 2: 18 Hear much and put those things you do not understand; speak cautiously about the others.
15) 2:20 the leader presides gravely, advances the good and teaches the incompetent
16) 2:13 the superior man acts before he speaks and then speaks through his acts
17) 2:15 learning without thought is labor lost and thought without learning is dangerous

Book 3
18) 3:13 one who offends Heaven has no one to pray to
19) 3:17 you love the sheep, I love the ceremony
20) 3: 26 High station with generosity; ceremonies without reverence; mourning without sorrow, should I contemplate these?

Book 4
21) 4:1 Virtuous manners constitute the excellence of a neighborhood.
22) 4:5 The superior man does not abandon virtue.
23) 4:9 a scholar who is set on the right way and who is ashamed of bad cloths and bad food
should not be associated with.

24) 4:14 a man should not be concerned that he has no place but should fit himself for one, he should be unconcerned that he is not known but should seek to worth of being known

25) 4:16 the mind of the superior man is conversant with righteousness; the mind of the low man is on gain.

26) 4:18, 20 and 21 how a man should serve his parents

27) 4:24 the cautious seldom error

28) 4:25 the superior man wishes to be slow in his speech and earnest in his conduct

29) 4:25 Virtue is not meant to stand alone, he who practices it will have neighbors

**Book 5**

30) 5:5 what good is being ready with the tongue? Smartness of speech procures hatred

31) 5:10 at first my way was to hear words and give credit for conduct, now it is to hear words and observe their conduct.

32) 5:12 do not do to men what you do not want men to do to you

33) 5:13 the Master’s personal displays of principles and descriptions of them can be heard, his discourses about them cannot.

34) 5:15 The Master said, “He was of an active nature and yet fond of learning, and he was not ashamed to ask and learn of his inferiors! –On these grounds he has been styled Wan.”

35) 5”16 Characteristics of the superior man: humble, respectful, kind, and just

36) 5:20 think twice; then act

37) 5:25 Fine words, excessive respect, insinuating appearance…hypocrisy is condemned.

38) 5:26 the master’s wish for the aged… to give them rest, for friends…sincerity, for the young, to treat them tenderly.

39) 5:28 In a hamlet of ten families there may be one as honorable but none that love learning as much.

**Book 6**

40) 6:3 the master admires the short lived Yen Heiu who loved to learn like no other

41) 6:13 be a scholar after the style of the superior man

42) 6:19 man is born for uprightness

43) 6:20 the man that knows truth is not the equal of the man who loves it and he is not the equal of one who delights in it

44) 6:21 to those above average the highest subjects may be announced

45) 6: 27 the superior man studying all learning and following the rules of propriety will not stray from virtue

46) 6:29 Perfect is the virtue which is according to the constant mean
47) 6:30 the man of perfect virtue in seeking to enlarge himself seeks to enlarge others and can judge others by what is nigh in himself.

Book 7
48) 7:1 I am a transmitter, not a maker….lover of the ancients
49) 7:2 a treasurer of knowledge, learning without satiety, instructing others without weariness
50) 7:3 leaving virtue without cultivation, not discussing what was learned, gives the master solitude
51) 7:7 the master teaches every one of every station
52) 7:8 if a student is not eager I will not teach him. I lift one corner…he must lift other three or I will not do again.
53) 7:15 the master said if he has some course rice and an elbow to lay his head he is satisfied.
54) 7:16 fifty years of additional life would be spent in study to become perfect
55) 7:18 Importance of the rules of propriety
56) 7:20 Never discussed strange things or ghost stories
57) 7:22 Can learn from anyone
58) 7:24 the master concealed nothing from his disciples
59) 7:28 some act without knowing why….seeing and hearing much is good
60) 7:30 I wish to be virtuous
61) 7:33 in letters I am perhaps equaled but carrying out in conduct what I profess is my goal
62) 7:36 Better to be mean than insubordinate
63) 7:38 the master was mild, majestic, and respectful

Book 8
64) 8:12 It is hard to find a man who has learned for three years without becoming good
65) 8:17Learn as though you could not reach your object and as if you could lose it

Book 9
66) 9:4 Four things from which the master was free: no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predetermined conclusions, no obstinacy and no egoism
67) 9:10 The master by orderly methods skillfully leads men on and teaches them
68) 9:18 The prosecution of learning may be compared to raising a mound….it is the choice of the learner
69) 9:22 A youth must be regarded with respect….if he has not made himself heard of by 50 then he is not due respect
70) 9:28 The wise are free from perplexities, the virtuous from anxiety and the bold from fear
Book 10

N/A

Book 11

71) 11:11 If you do know not about life, how can you know about death?

Book 12

72) 12:3 The man of perfect virtue is cautious and slow in his speech.

73) 12:3 When a man feels the difficulty of doing, can he be otherwise than cautious and slow?

74) 12:6 Who is intelligent (enlightenment)? He that is not affected or influenced by slander nor hurt by words that cut the flesh.

75) 12:11 Good government is when the ruler is ruler and the father is father

76) 12:19 What about thieves? Should they be killed? The master said why should you use killing at all. Be good and the people will be good.

77) 12:20 To be excellent listen carefully to what others say, watch facial expressions, and be humble

78) 12:22 What is benevolence? It is to love all men. What is knowledge? It is to know all men.

Book 13

79) 13:3 If words be not in accord with reality language is not in accord with the truth of things…..rectification of names-- a superior man makes sure that the names he uses may be spoken appropriately and that what he speaks may be carried out appropriately.

80) 13:9 First employ people then educate them

81) 13:18 Duty to father over duty to state for the son if father steals sheep

82) 13:21 To be in the middle way (moderate) needs men who are part adamant and part cautious

83) 13:23 The superior man is in harmony with others but does not follow the crowd but is not adulatory.

84) 13:25 The superior man is easy to serve but difficult to please….he uses his employees according to their capacity…he has a dignified ease without pride while the mean man has pride without dignity.

85) 13:28 What qualities does the scholar have? Earnest, urgent, and bland. Among his friends earnest and urgent and among his brothers bland.

Book 14

86) 14:2 Perfect virtue is when the love of boasting, resentment, …..are repressed.

87) 14:5 Those who are virtuous will always speak correctly but those who speak well may not be virtuous.

88) 14:8 Can there be love that does not lead to strictness? Can there be loyalty that does not
lead to instruction of its object?

89) 14:11 To be poor without murmuring is difficult; to be rich without pride is easy.

90) 14: Is it true that the master speaks not, Lighs not, and accepts nothing?

91) 14:21 Speak humbly or you cannot carry out your words.

92) 14:23 Serve a ruler by not imposing upon him but withstand him to his face.

93) 14:25 In the past men learned for their own improvement, now for the sake of approbation of others.

94) 14:28 The superior man in his thoughts does not worry what is beyond his control

95) 14:29 The superior man is modest in his speech but exceeds in his actions.

96) 14:36 What do you say about injury being recompensed by kindness? Then what recompense for kindness?

97) 14:39 The superior man becomes free of the world, then land, then lust and then language

98) 14:46 In youth not humble as befits a junior, in manhood not producing to hand down, and living to old age…this is a pest. (parasite)

99) 14:47 He is fond of occupying the seat of a full grown elder, he walks shoulder to shoulder with his elders. He is not one that wishes to make progress in learning.

Book 15

100) 15:2 Do you think I memorize a lot? Yes but maybe not. No was the answer. I seek a unity all pervading.

101) 15:5 If his words be not sincere and truthful and his actions not honorable, who will appreciate him?

102) 15:8 The determined scholar and the man of virtue will not seek to live at the expense of injuring students’ virtue.

103) 15:9 The mechanic who wishes to perform well must first sharpen his tools.

104) 15:15 When a man is not in the habit of saying, “what shall I think of this?” What shall I think of this? I can do nothing with him.

105) 15:19 Superior man worries about what his reputation will be after he has passed away.

106) 15:23 Golden rule of Confucius

107) 15:26 Clever words disrupt virtue

108) 15:31 The superior man is anxious lest he not get truth. He is not anxious about money.

109) 15:35 Let every man consider virtue as it devolves on himself. He may not yield the performance of it even to his teacher.

110) 15:36 The superior man is precise but not rigid.

111) 15:37 In teaching there should be no distinction of classes.

112) 15:40 Speak only enough to make the point.
Book 16

113) 16:2 When right principles prevail in the kingdom, there will be no discussions among the common people (applicable to classrooms?)

114) 16:4 Friendship with the glib tongued is injurious.

115) 16:6 Three errors: may speak where it does not come to them to speak (rashness); may speak where it comes to them to speak (concealment) and speak without looking at the face of his superior (blindness)

116) 16:8 The superior man stands in awe of three things: He stands in awe of the words of sages.

117) 16:9 Classes of men: Those born with the possession of knowledge; those who learn and readily get knowledge; those who are dull and stupid yet learn; those who are dull and stupid but do not learn.

118) 16:10 Nine thing that are subjects of those that contemplate: see clearly, hear distinctly, benign countenance, respectful demeanor, sincere speech, careful in business, anxious to question others on his doubts, aware of the problems anger brings, and sees righteous as gain.

119) 16:13 The superior man maintains a distant reserve of impartiality from his son.

Book 17

120) 17: 2 all men are similar except for how much they work

121) 17:14 To lecture on the Tao before actualization of it is to throw away virtue.

122) 17:18 Confucius says he would prefer not to speak, fine words seldom associated with virtue, heaven does not speak

123) 17:24 He hates the low man who slanders his betters.

Book 18

N/A

Book 19

124) 19:5 He who remembers what he has attained as well as what he has to do loves learning.
APPENDIX B

Analects: Relevant Portions for Selected Educational Themes

Learning: Love for learning with friends 1:1…Learning by asking, even inferiors… Love of learning in a hamlet 5:28… Love of learning (best student) 6:3…learn for your improvement, not approval of others 14:25… I may be equaled in letters, but conduct as professed is my goal 7:33…Remember what you know as well as what you need to know and you will love learning 19:5…fifty years of extra life to be used to study toward perfection…

Hierarchy: Filial-hierarchy concern for superior 1:2… Filial piety 2:5…better mean than insubordinate 7:36…you serve a superior by withstanding him to his face 14:23…Confucius hate those who slander their betters 17:24…good government (relationships) when ruler is ruler and father is father (first two of the five relationships; others come later) 12:11

Speech: Fine words not virtuous 1:3 Speaking, acting… Speech, slowness conduct… Speech causes hatred; what good the tongue 5:5… Speaking, carefulness 1:14… hear words but observe conduct 5:10… conduct… , principled conduct is heard, lecture is not 5:13… fine words, hypocrisy condemned 5:25…hear much speak cautiously about other 2:18…acts first and speaks through acts 2:13…seeing and hearing much is good 7:28…man of virtue is cautious and slow in speech 12:3… the burden of doing, not just saying, forces caution and slowness 2:3…virtuous will have correct speech 14:5…speak humbly or you cannot carry out your words 14:21…words sincere and actions honorable 15:5…Clever words disrupt virtue 15:26… speak only enough to make the point 15:40…friendship with glib tongued is injurious 16:4…Three speaking errors: rash speaking (when there is nothing to be said), concealment (to not speak when there is), and to speak without watching superior’s face (blindness)16-6…Confucius preferred not to speak, heaven is silent 17:18…

Study: Learnedness and mastering lessons 1:4…Learnedness results 1:7…Learning Seriousness 1:8…Course of life learning 2:4…3 years of learning makes one good 8:12…Learning goal is virtue 4:16…learning style- as though you cannot get your object or could lose it 8:17…

Humility and Shame: Shame 2:3…Humility, admit when you do not know 2:17…Enlightened (intelligent) is one who is immune from injury by words 12:6…
Filial and Ritual: tradition, cherish old knowledge 2:11...loves Ritual, ceremony, “li” 3:17...transmitter, not creator 7:1...ritual and propriety insincerity denounced 3:26...strange teaching dangerous 2:16...manners make the neighborhood 4:1...how to serve parents 4:18, 19, 21...importance of propriety 7:18

Junzi/Confucius as teacher: presides seriously with gravity 2:20...knowledge and teaching w/o weariness 7:2...discussion expected by 7-3...teaching strictness, three corners (7:8)...Instruction with candor, intimacy 7:24...not ashamed to learn from inferiors 5:15...can judge qualities in other by reference to himself 6:30...teaches every one of every station 7:7...characteristics were mild, majestic, and respectful 7:38...open minded without ego or preconceptions 9:4...is orderly and skilled teacher/leader 9:10...teaches little by little and student must choose 9-18...respects youth but not without performance by youth 50 9:22...his wisdom simplifies and virtue removes fear 9:28...Does not kill thieves but leads them to good by good examples 12:19...listen carefully, watch facial expressions and be humble to be excellent 12:20...speech, must be accurate and careful and in accord with actions (reactivation of names) 13:3...friendly but not a follower 13:23...Love leads to strict instruction, loyalty leads to instruction 14:8...does master speak not and laugh not?—he laughs and speaks when appropriate 14:14...cannot be sincere without teaching 14:8...does not worry about what he cannot control 14:28...modest in speech but exceeds his speech in action 14:29...the non-learning child seeks adult’s seat when young, walks shoulder to shoulder with adults, 14:47...Confucius does not memorize but seeks unity in knowledge 15:2...would die before injure student’s virtue 15:8...requires students that seek virtue to sharpen their tools 15:9...demands that students have attitude of “What shall I think about this?” 15:15...Memorization discouraged, thinking preferred 2:15...discouraged action w/o understanding 7:28...every man must consider his own virtue even to point of challenging his teacher 15:35...is precise but not rigid 15:36...there is no social class in teaching 15:37...When right prevails in classroom there is no discussion among students 16:2...reserves distance from his son 16:13...all students similar except for work quality 17:2...to lecture on Tao before actualizing it is to throw away virtue 17:14...Superior man (characteristics)...“Superior” man (scholar), Superior man pursues learning, propriety and virtue, Superior man does not abandon virtue 4:5...does not stray from virtue 6:20...avoid the scholar ashamed of bad cloths 4:9...scholar does not seek to be known but to be worthy of being known 4:14...conversant with righteousness 4:16...slow in speech and earnest in conduct 4:24...humble, respectful, kind, and just 5:16...be a scholar after style of
6:13…benevolence is to love and to know men 12:22… teacher discovers students’ abilities and is dignified 13:25…scholar is urgent, earnest, and bland with colleagues 13:28…give good for evil? Then give what for good? 14:36…becomes free of world, land, lust, and language 14:39…the “pest” is not humble in youth and produces nothing but lives long 14:46…worries about his reputation following his death 15:19…is anxious about missing truth 15:31…stands in awe of words of sages 16:8…classes of men: born knowing, easy to get knowing, hard to get knowing, do not get knowing 16:9…Nine patterns of the superior man: seeing clearly, listening sharply, observing faces sees warmth, in behavior is courteous, in speech he is sincere, in serving he is reverent, in doubt he questions, in anger is aware of difficulties, his gain is righteousness, not material 16:10…reserves distance from his son 16:13…never discussed strange things or ghost stories 7:20

**Heaven:** no one to pray to 3:13…If ignorant about life, how to know about death? 11-11…

**Goodness:** Virtue and the constant mean 6:29… Virtue enlarges others 6-30…avoids boasting and resentment 14:2…

**Materialism:** Righteousness, materialism… elbow to sleep enough (7:16)…poor w/o complaint harder than rich w/o pride 14:11

**Caution and error:** Caution, care in thinking/acting 5:20…cautious seldom error, part adamant and part cautious leads to “middle way” 13:21…

**Social collectivism:** virtue is interactive 4:25, golden rule morality 5:12…first employ and second, educate 13:9…family (father) over ruler (state) 13:18…Golden Rule of Confucius 15:23

**Treatment of young:** tenderness 5:26…

**Purpose of man:** to be upright, righteous 6:19… I wish to be virtuous 7:30… Truth, the way (love better than knowing) 6:20…

**Equality of students,** tracking 6:21… Equal chance to learn (7:7)

* Little of the Analects appears to directly address the following: reason, empiricism, science, debate, individualism, subjectivity, religion, and social class conflict.
APPENDIX C

Ethical Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH

PROTOCOL REFERENCE # 28765

March 25, 2013

Dr. Njoki Wane
DEPT OF SOCIOLOGY & EQUITY STUD. IN
EDUC.
OISE/UT

Ms. Shu-Chen Tsai
DEPT OF SOCIOLOGY & EQUITY STUD. IN
EDUC.
OISE/UT

Dear Dr. Wane and Ms. Shu-Chen Tsai,

Re: Your research protocol entitled, "East Asian graduate students in Canadian universities: Silent but engaged"

ETHICS APPROVAL

Original Approval Date: March 25, 2013
Expiry Date: March 24, 2014
Continuing Review Level: 1

We are writing to advise you that the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education Research Ethics B has granted approval to the above-named research protocol under the REB’s delegated review process. Your protocol has been approved for a period of one year and ongoing research under this protocol must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Please ensure that you submit an Annual Renewal Form or a Study Completion Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your current ethics approval. Note that annual renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry.

If your research is funded by a third party, please contact the assigned Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Wakefield, Ph.D.
REB Chair

Dean Sharpe
REB Manager

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APPENDIX D

Information Letter and Informed Consent for Present and Former Graduate Students

Thank you for offering to participate in this research project by sharing your thoughts in an interview. You have special insight regarding the educational atmosphere of your graduate studies in Canada that my research seeks to explore. This letter explains what is involved in the interview so that you can make an informed decision about taking part in it.

My name is Shu-Chen Tsai and I am conducting this research as part of my Doctoral research from OISE/UT at the University of Toronto. The title of the research is: East Asian Canadian Graduate Students, Silent but Engaged: A Dialectical Exploration of Classroom Learner Speech in Competing Educational Models. In this research I hope to discover the perspectives of Canadian graduate students from four East Asian Countries regarding their experiences in graduate school at the University of Toronto.

Participating in the interview may take up to an hour and it can be done at a place of your choice. The interview may be recorded and notes will be taken but will then be offered to you for editing and approval. Your own name as well as the real names of other people and places mentioned by you in the interview will be replaced with pseudonyms to protect your confidentiality and the confidentiality of those you may mention.

There is but a small risk that you may feel uncomfortable or become upset recalling your Canadian educational experiences but should your discomfort become significant you can terminate the interview at any time by simply indicating orally that you would like to terminate it. Though the research has no direct benefit to you other than giving you a chance to voice your thoughts, it may benefit future graduate students from your country who come to study in Canadian graduate schools.

Before you start the interview I would like to assure you that as a participant in this project you have several very definite rights.

- First, your participation in the interview is entirely voluntary.
- You are free to refuse to answer any questions.
• You are free to withdraw from the interview at any time. Withdrawal may be indicated orally by simply saying that you want to stop the interview. Should you choose to withdraw or terminate the interview it will have no consequences to you and any data supplied by you will be deleted without retention in any way by me.

• Excerpts from notes made during this interview may be included in published accounts, but under no circumstances will your real name, other names that you may mention, or identifying circumstances be included.

• Participants can contact the Office of Research Ethics at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273, if they have questions about their rights as participants.

• All information contained in this interview is confidential and anonymous. Only I know the names of the people who are being interviewed, and there will be only one copy of these names, which I will keep under lock and key/saved as an encrypted file.

• Participants will be entitled to any non-confidential information/feedback produced by this research that was supplied by them that they specifically request.

I would like to express my appreciation for your participation in this project. Signing below indicates that the study has been explained to you, that you have had the chance to ask questions, and that a copy of this document has been given to you. Should you have any questions you are welcome to contact the supervisor Instructor, Dr. Njoki Wane by phone (416-978 0446) or e-mail (njoki.wane@utoronto.ca). If you give your consent to be interviewed and feel you understand your rights as a participant in this project, please sign below.

_____________________________ (Signature)

_____________________________ (Printed name)

_____________________________ (Date)
APPENDIX E

Letter of Invitation to Participate in Research

My name is Shu-Chen Tsai. I am a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto. I am conducting a study that examines and analyzes the feelings and perspectives of Canadian graduate students from the East Asian countries influenced by Confucian educational philosophy (China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan) regarding their educational environments in Canada.

The research is in two parts:

1. One-on-one interviews with graduate students from the above four countries now studying in Canadian graduate schools or who have already graduated.
2. One-on-one interviews with selected professors of these East Asian countries who are former graduates of Canadian graduate schools.

Both the interviews will be audio-taped. Each interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

You have been identified as a possible participant for this study. Participation in the research is voluntarily and your confidentiality and anonymity will be highly respected and protected. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time of your choice without the need to offer any explanation. Should you withdraw from the research, any information you have provided to the time of withdrawal will be expunged from the research.

Your participation may help guide policies at the University of Toronto that will increase the probability of success of graduate students from the above countries in their Canadian graduate school careers.

If you are willing to participate in this research, please contact me by replying to this e-mail invitation. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Shu-Chen Tsai
PhD Candidate in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
shuchen.tsai@mail.utoronto.ca
APPENDIX F

Interview Questions for Current/Former Students

Introduction

a) Gender:
b) Age: 21-25  26-30  31-35  36-40  41-45  46-50 over 50
c) Was your educational experience in your home country rural or was it urban?
d) Nationality
e) Your program of study in Canada/ in your home culture:
f) Degree(s) received in your home culture/ in Canada?

General Question Areas

1. Could you please discuss your thoughts about what it has been like being a student in Canadian graduate school? Your teachers, your activities, your pressures, your tests, just whatever you think important.

2. Could you please discuss what you see to be general differences in the two educational models?

3. Could you discuss how you view student/teacher relations in the two models?

4. Could you discuss the role of teachers as moral role models in the two models?

5. Could you discuss your views regarding peer relationships in the two educational models?

6. Could you discuss your experiences and thoughts regarding learner classroom speaking in the two models?

7. What are your views about the usefulness and benefits of learner speech in the classroom of the two models?

8. Could you discuss what you think encourages/discourages learners to speak in the classrooms of the two models?

9. Could you discuss the relationship of classroom learner speaking/not speaking and teacher respect in the two models?

10. Could you discuss the relationship of classroom learner speaking and classroom harmony in the two educational models?

11. Could you discuss the classroom harmony in the two educational models?

12. Could you discuss the relationship of filial piety (parent respect) and school learning in your home culture?

13. Do you see differences in the general goals and purposes of the two different educational models?

14. Could you discuss your learning experience in Canadian graduate school in terms of changes in your education-related values?
15. Could you discuss the idea of critical thought, its relationship to classroom learner speech and its relation to the two educational models?

16. Could you discuss the preparation that your home educational model gave you to participate effectively in the Canadian graduate model? Especially regarding classroom learner speech?

17. How aware are you of the influence of Confucian thought in your home educational model? How much emphasis was expressly given to Confucius and his thought in your previous educational model?

18. Would you discuss your perception of your Canadian teachers’ apparent knowledge of Confucian thought?

19. Could you discuss your view of your Canadian teachers’ attempts to include you or learners from your background in classroom discussion?

20. Could you describe your major learning related stresses as you have progressed through your Canadian graduate experience? How were they different than in your home educational model?

21. How do you think learners can best show respect (or avoid showing disrespect) for your Canadian teachers?

22. Are the ways of showing respect for teachers different in the two educational models?

23. Could you discuss your feelings about classroom harmony and respect in the Canadian classroom by both teachers and learners?

24. Did you have Canadian or Western trained teachers in your past educational model? Were they different as teachers than teachers trained in your culture?

25. If you return to teach in your culture, how do you think your Canadian experience will affect your teaching approaches?