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# Mapping the Contact Zone: A Case Study of an Integrated Chinese and Canadian Literacy Curriculum in a Secondary Transnational Education Program in China

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy

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MAPPING THE CONTACT ZONE: A CASE STUDY OF AN INTEGRATED  
CHINESE AND CANADIAN LITERACY CURRICULUM IN A SECONDARY  
TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN CHINA

(Spine title: Integrated Chinese and Canadian Literacy Curriculum in China)

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Zheng Zhang

Graduate Program in Faculty of Education

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Ph.D. of Education

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
The University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario, Canada

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
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## Abstract

This case study using ethnographic tools was conducted in an Ontario transnational education (TNE) program in China where Ontario secondary school curricula were integrated with the Chinese national curricula. Curricula are seen by TNE researchers as key to successful TNE programs (e.g., Hughes & Urasa, 1997). However, little is known about how literacy-related curricula are exported across borders and what happens with them in local contexts. The study investigated how literacy was conceived and practiced at the various levels of curriculum at the elite secondary school (Pseudonym: SCS), namely, intended, implemented, lived, hidden, and null curriculum.

The theoretical tools of the study included: multiliteracies, curriculum ideologies, theories on internationalizing curriculum, and various levels of curriculum.

Sources of data included the documents that underpinned the school's intended curriculum, interviews of Chinese and Ontario policy makers to obtain information about the local/global factors affecting decision-making, interviews with Chinese and Canadian instructors about implementing literacy curricula in a cross-border context, observations of 84 periods of their English and Mandarin literacy-related classes, and interviews with students and the eliciting of their multimodal artifacts to illuminate the scope of their learning experiences and how local and global discourses limited and/or expanded their literacy and "identity options" (Cummins, 2001, p. 17).

Findings concern the ways in which various local and global curriculum discourses interacted and competed with one another to create a contradictory social space at the school, for instance, educational entrepreneurship, neoliberal impacts, Canadian and Chinese ministries of education, and their inherited educational philosophies. This unique space of local/global nexus enabled new forms of literacy and fluid identities as is shown in students' assignments and multimodal artifacts, but it also restricted the transnational education students' opportunities of developing certain literacies.

The study recommends curricula that expand students' literacy and identity options in globalized schooling contexts through the implementation of critically oriented cosmopolitan literacy education that has the potential to legitimate educators' and students' agentic roles

and enhance policy makers', educators', and students' cosmopolitan sensibilities. The study enriches the existent understanding of the situatedness and complexity of literacy-related curriculum issues in TNE communities.

## Keywords

Transnational education; multiliteracies; intended curriculum; implemented curriculum; lived curriculum; hidden curriculum; null curriculum

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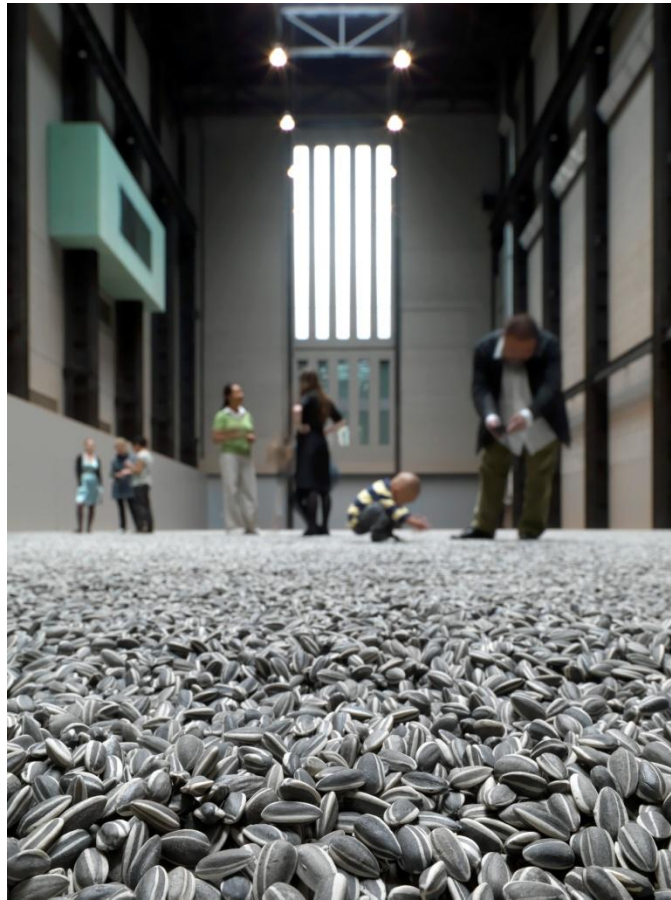
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## Chapter 1

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background to the Problematic: Challenging Conformity & Seeking Educational Alternatives



**Figure 1: Ai, Weiwei's Sunflower Seeds 2010 Exhibition © Tate, London 2012.**

Working with thousands of Chinese artisans, Chinese artist Ai, Weiwei hand-crafted 100 million porcelain sculptures of sunflower seeds. The millions of sunflower seeds metaphorically represent the “grey mass” of “identical” Chinese citizens (McLean-Ferris, 2010). Ai, Weiwei's installation disrupts the notion of conformity in Chinese society and ignites debates about suffocated individualism. The sunflower seeds normally appear uniform and characterless. The unique characters of individual seeds can only be uncovered by the viewer when they are picked up and examined closely. Like any work

of art, this figuratively and literally hefty art piece (it weighs 150 tons) may engender a spectrum of interpretations, because of people's varied realities and biases. Within my own life boundaries, something clicked and resonated with me when I first viewed the work. It triggered for me images of the student participants in my doctoral study and their unique personhoods. These adolescents participated in my qualitative inquiry into a private high school in China using both Chinese national and Ontario provincial secondary school curricula. They pursued ways of celebrating individualism and resisted being educated as identical citizens. As part of the research they communicated their perspectives of themselves through a multimodal activity that asked them to create representations of who they are and what they have experienced in a globalized schooling context. Their identities and lived experience were crafted in varied ways. There are cartoon images that represent students' desires to shake off the shackles of test-oriented public education. There are also self-portraits showing enjoyment of a "freer" educational environment in this Sino-Canada program. They used auditory modes (speeches, piano music, and self-written songs) to depict their optimistic expectations of becoming global citizens. Some also shared visual stories about their disengagement with school-literacy and the globally dominant English literacy. Their individual stories in turn give flesh and blood to the larger story of education in China in these new times.

In China, educational democracy (e.g., to provide equal educational opportunities for underprivileged groups and value individual students' strength [Xu & Han, n.d.]), individualism, and students' investment in learning are valued and evident in the *New Curriculum Scheme for Normal High Schools (Pilot)* (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003a). Nevertheless, high-stakes assessment frameworks at the national (e.g., Gaokao---the national university entrance examinations), provincial (e.g., Zhongkao---the provincial high school entrance examination), and municipal levels might not validate the transplantation of those curricular mandates into practice. Gaokao has acquired a nickname "Du Mu Qiao" (a single-log bridge) because of its competitiveness and decisive power over students' destiny. In 2008, about 10 million Chinese students took Gaokao, with only 6 million of them being admitted to higher education (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2009). On one hand, resisting the "Sink-or-Swim" concept, students, parents, and educators started to seek

educational alternatives for students who are eliminated from the elite public education system (i.e., key secondary schools certified by the government). On the other hand, following the commercialization of other public spheres, education became subjected to profit-pursuit (e.g., Lin, 2007; Xie & Wang, 2008). The neoliberal ideology and China's globalized ambition to modernize its education system have made enormous strides into educational spaces in China (Xie & Wang, 2008). Enabled by transnational mobility of educational programs and global capital, local and global entrepreneurs started to follow the trend of privatizing education in China. Intersecting factors (e.g., parental choices, commercialization of education, and globalization of education) work as a grid and pave the way for the emergence of transnational education programs at various levels, which "serve" students from families with higher socio-economic status.

## 1.2 Transnational Education: Definition and Status Quo

The Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE) (1997) defines transnational education as:

any teaching or learning activity in which the students are in a different country (the host country) to that in which the institution providing the education is based (the home country). This situation requires that national boundaries be crossed by information about the education, and by staff and/or educational materials. (p. 1)

McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) use "student mobility", "program mobility", and "institutional mobility" to differentiate types of educational mobility. "Student mobility" is more often referred to as a form of *international education* when students cross borders to receive education in another country. "Institutional mobility" (e.g., international branch campuses) and "program mobility" refer to educational programs that are delivered across borders with or without a local institutional presence (p. 22). These two types of educational mobility are more often used as forms of *transnational education*. Overseas educational activities in terms of program mobility and institutional mobility have been termed as "offshore" programs. Later, scholars in this area have tended to use its alternative "transnational education". In China, due to Chinese authorities' regulations, transnational education programs are required to cooperate with government-approved local institutions. This form of strategic alliance is specifically known as

Chinese-foreign (Sino-foreign) cooperation in running schools (Chinese State Council, 2003).

Developed countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia have been competing in offering “quality” transnational education programming to less developed countries. In the meantime, as one of the largest education importers (Dunn & Wallace, 2008a), China has witnessed a rising number of transnational education programs at various levels.

Until 2011, 22 foreign countries and regions have cooperated with Chinese higher education institutions and have so far set up 507 tertiary transnational education programs in China (See Table 6 in Chapter 5). The United Kingdom has 121 tertiary transnational education programs or Sino-UK cooperative programs in China. The United Kingdom enjoys a leading 25% market share. Australia (85 programs), the United States (85), and Russia (80) together take 53% of the tertiary transnational education market in China. So far Canada has 39 transnational education programs at the college and university levels in China. Its market share in tertiary transnational education programs is ranked as the fifth among 22 countries who have educational consortia with Chinese colleges and universities.

China has also seen transnational education programs that follow Canadian provincial curricula or integrate Canadian provincial and Chinese national curricula (See Table 8 in Chapter 5). Up till 2011, Canadian elementary and secondary transnational education programs extended to 11 provinces in China, four cities that are administratively equal to provinces, and two special administrative regions (Hong Kong and Macau). Six Canadian provinces have planted their educational flags in China (i.e., British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Alberta). In 2011, the total number of “Canadian Curriculum Schools in China” was 48.

### 1.3 Coming to the Research

For the academic with a taste for adventure, an insatiable desire to know and experience a wide range of exotic ‘others’, a willingness to board the entrepreneurial bandwagon, a hankering after airport departure lounges, and an immunity to the effects of long term exposure to radiation at 10,000 metres above

sea level, the internationalization of higher education is an enticing and intoxicating cocktail of possibilities. (Ninnes & Hellsten, 2005, p. 1)

Sharing a similar willingness to board the entrepreneurial bandwagon, I came to Canada to pursue my graduate studies and planned to run my own business upon graduation in the field of international education. Teaching English language and culture for years, I had shared a yearning for the otherness. I, therefore, ventured to experience the exotic others. After studying and living in Canada for five years since 2006, I started to see the features of the exotic Other bubbling in my own veins. I was a follower of the Doctrine of “Mean” (Zhong Yong “中庸”: the crucial principle of which is to maintain harmony and balance without acting in excess) and a willing surrenderer to totalitarian authority. I now become a big “fan” of critical thinking and risk-taking. I embraced the neoliberal trend in education. However, after being immersed for five years in a Canadian educational milieu that, I feel, has an implicit purpose of educating people for a just and democratic society, I often debate with myself the ethics of providing education as a business. As a part-time international project coordinator of a Canadian company, I have been involved in dialogues between Chinese and Canadian agencies and institutions about Sino-Canadian cooperative educational programs. I saw specific scenarios where involved parties made decisions about how to integrate Canadian and Chinese curricula, whose curriculum to use for different stages, what forms of literacy and knowledge to prioritize, and whose language to employ as medium of instruction (MOI). A corporate ethos was unavoidably evident in decision-making. Diplomatic compromises between differing educational ideologies were also salient. Some Canadian colleges and universities for whom we recruit transnational education students complained that transnational education institutions in less developed countries were treating transnational education students irresponsibly and unethically by making false promises. By that, they meant the educational quality that some transnational education programs offered was less satisfying so that most of the transnational education students might not be well prepared for their future overseas study in tertiary education with English as the MOI. The Canadian colleges and universities that we represent used to admit transnational education students with dual Canadian and Chinese secondary school diplomas like local Canadian secondary school graduates. Now many of them raise the bar and require scores

of standardized English tests (e.g., IELTS or TOEFL) to further gauge transnational education students' qualifications.

My desire to develop an in-depth understanding of transnational education curricula, especially literacy curricula, has driven me to explore the questions of: (a) What ideologies (if any) have been driving the decision-making process in for-profit educational institutions like transnational education programs: be it neoliberal ideology, socialism, liberal education ideals, or something else? (b) How do transnational education actors handle the tensions (if any) that are embedded in differing curricular landscapes? (c) Why are certain forms of literacy privileged? and (d) How do transnational education students perceive their literacy learning experience and identity formation in the cross-border habitats?

I was also curious about how the local/global flows of power/ideologies (if any) and the “human agency<sup>1</sup>” (Ong, 1999, p. 4) might intertwine to shape what/how to teach and what identity/ies to forge in transnational education programs. I was once an international student in Canada. Now I hold a Canadian passport. I often find myself in a temporary space that facilitates my “becoming” (a Canadian) while clinging to my “being” (a Chinese). Being an English literacy teacher in a metropolitan city in China and a transnational education practitioner in a globalized milieu for years, I am well aware of similar spaces where some of the Chinese transnational education students might reside. I am eager to learn whether/how their multiple choices of leaving a familiar place and entering a new one might necessarily validate new identities. I also wonder how the interlocking transnational education actors might enable or constrain transnational education students' fluid identities and optimal educational experience. I, therefore, in the process of data collection and analysis, put on a different hat at different times (i.e., a literacy educator, an academic, a transnational education practitioner, a Chinese, a Canadian, and a Chinese Canadian) in order to distance myself from a certain role and interrogate related preconceptions.

---

<sup>1</sup> The notion of “agency” accentuates humans' active engagement with the environment with their varying reactions to the conditions of the environment.

## 1.4 Research Context, Theoretical Tools, and Research Methodology

My doctoral study was situated in an Ontario secondary transnational education program<sup>2</sup> (i.e., SCS---Sino-Canada School) in an urban area of China. About one century ago, this area was a French concession---part of the city's identity that would not fade away. The city's first encounter with foreign "stuff" was the French invasion. There are four cannons that have been standing beside the lake for a century. French ships pulled in to shore there and the cannons have served as living evidence of the local history of resistance to outsiders. Architecture inherited from the colonial history was restored and highlighted as new tourist attractions. Local pubs and restaurants are open to foreign foot traffic with people coming from various regions of China and all over the world. The number of foreigners with different skin colours and languages also swell in local high-end residential communities. The city retains its heritage of resisting foreign invasion. It also exhibits a salient acceptance of the global flow of knowledge, popular culture, and trade. The city has kept its heritage of encouraging free trade for more than 200 years (even before China's Open Door Policy in 1978). It thrives in international trade in almost every conceivable area. Utilitarianism seems to prevail. As a "contact zone" (Pratt, 1991, p. 35) of various cultures, races, and ideologies, this city has welcomed foreign trends to the extent that they can "benefit" the local economy and well-being. Note that "well-being" might be defined differently by the local.

At SCS, the Ontario secondary school curricula were integrated with the Chinese national curricula. Chinese students in this transnational education context studied both the Ontario and Chinese curricula and would be granted the Chinese high school diploma and the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The latter was promoted to be an educational privilege that facilitates global mobility, especially through successful application to tertiary education around the world.

---

<sup>2</sup> Information regarding the region, the program, the classes observed, and the participants might be reported differently at times to ensure the school and participants are not traceable.

The somewhat scant literature on transnational education literacy practices reveals that transnational education programs are contact zones where various ideological configurations encounter, compete, and compromise with one another (e.g., Corbeil, 2006; Kell, 2004; Li, 2008; Ziguras, 2008). Responding to the paucity of research on transnational education literacy curriculum, my study used a case study methodology to investigate how literacy is conceived and practiced at the various levels<sup>3</sup> of curriculum in the transnational education program. This study asked the following questions:

1. How is literacy presented and practiced at various levels of an integrated transnational education curriculum?
2. What are the ensuing implications for learners' literacy learning opportunities and identity options?

Being aware of the situatedness and complexity of curriculum issues entrenched in specific cross-border education communities, this study is undergirded by an array of theoretical tools to investigate the designed, implemented, and lived literacy curricula at SCS (e.g., Aoki, 1993; Apple, 1971; Eisner, 2002; Hayden, 2006). I examined relationships between *intended curriculum* (i.e., what is planned in documents), *implemented curriculum* (i.e., what is actualized in class), and students' *lived curriculum* (i.e., students' educational experience). I also explored the *hidden curriculum* (i.e., imparted values that are not stated in intended curriculum) and *null curriculum* (i.e., where the absence of teaching something may have an effect). I focused on how local and global educational ideologies meet, clash, and interact. I also gave credit to "the human 'creation' of locality" (Robertson, 2001, p. 466) in the transnational space. I looked at how individual actors play a role in designing and playing out literacy-related curriculum and how they engage themselves in shaping curricular discourses and transnational education students' identities.

Students enrolled in transnational education programs are inevitably engaged in a wide array of literacy practices. A cursory glance at the content-area curricula of Canadian secondary transnational education programs in China shows explicit preferences over

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<sup>3</sup> By using the term "levels", I have no intention to view different types of curriculum as hierarchies in this dissertation.



certain forms of literacy (e.g., business literacy and information & technological literacy). Further, following an *integration* rationale of international curriculum (Thompson, 1998), some transnational education curricula intended to bring together “best” practices from both Chinese and English content area curricula.

Considering the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the globalized world, the New London Group (1996) has coined the term *multiliteracies* and called for a broader view of literacy. As is contrasted with “mere literacy” (p. 64), multiliteracies theories highlight diverse modes of representation and celebrate new forms of literacy that are responsive to rapid technological changes and the new global order. The multiliteracies framework also accentuates linguistic and cultural differences so as to increase local diversity and global connectedness. The multiliteracies framework has, therefore, been a key guide for my study. It enabled me to ask questions such as whose literacies are dominant or marginalized and what discourses are enabling or constraining.

The ethnographic case study approach is a good fit for literacy inquiries that focus on local particulars and complex sociocultural dynamics (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). I examined multiple sources of documents that underpin the intended Sino-Ontario literacy curricula. Content analysis of curriculum documents was triangulated with interview data with both Chinese and Ontario policy makers who had been involved in transnational education curriculum development. Perceptions elicited from both sides provided a more complete picture of how local/global actors or ideologies might interplay to affect decision-making (i.e., the intended curriculum). I observed Mandarin and English literacy-related classes instructed by Chinese and Canadian teachers. Data collection was concentrated on how literacy curriculum was operationalized by the teachers and students within classrooms. I interviewed the Chinese and Canadian instructors regarding their opinions of implementing the integrated literacy curricula. I also collected students’ literacy-related assignments and interviewed the students to document their lived curriculum (Aoki, 1993). Before conducting semi-structured interviews with transnational education students, I invited them to use their preferred communication modes (e.g., pictures and audio-/video-recordings) to depict their learning experience and identity formation in the globalized schooling context. Using multimodal artifacts made

the succeeding interviews more relevant to students' local practices in the contact zone of Chinese and Canadian education.

## 1.5 Justification of the Study

Competition to quench Asian countries' thirst for "quality" transnational education is greatly increasing among developed countries, but there is a dearth of research on Canadian transnational education programs. Curricula are seen by TNE researchers as centrally important to successful transnational education programs (e.g., Hughes & Urasa, 1997); however, little is known about how the home country's literacy curricula are adapted or integrated with the host country's curricula and how they might affect transnational education students' literacy learning experience in the cross-border transnational education contexts.

Research on English linguistic imperialism and Western-centric knowledge in the transnational education terrain is emerging (e.g., McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Ziguras, 2008). Nevertheless, little is known about how local particulars and differing ideological configurations might counterbalance the dominance of English language literacies and Western-centric curriculum. It is also worthwhile to interrogate how the local particularities in China, as a transnational education host country with its own social, political, and economic interests, shape the landscape of transnational education literacy curriculum. More shall be explored regarding: (a) for what combinations and blends of literacy practices are transnational education programs preparing students? and (b) how global and local particularities and stratified ideological agendas have been combined to determine what types of literacy are to be learned in that context?

Admittedly, literature on underprivileged groups' periphery multiliteracies lent a valuable lens to the study to examine literacy issues in terms of power, epistemology, and identity. However, there is a scarcity of literature that documents the contested realities of multiliteracies within an elite education discourse like transnational education programs.

Existent literature has shown the inextricable link between literacy and identity. However, little is known about how literacy and identity are entwined in the transnational education

contexts where students are acquiring different languages, cultures, and knowledge systems. Despite the abundance of ethnographic studies on identity issues related with periphery multiliteracies (e.g., Cummins, 2000a, 2001a; Pahl & Rowsell, 2005). The identity issues of elite multiliteracies in transnational education programs are under-documented. Little is known about the formation of the so-called global elite's "hybrid identities" (Marginson, 2001, n. p.) as shaped by the potentially polemical local and international literacies. It is also worth exploring whether/how the global elite might accept or resist certain types of literacy and identity.

## 1.6 An Overview of the Study

In Chapter 2, I synthesize the literature on transnational education as pertaining to literacy curriculum and identity formation.

Chapter 3 presents a theoretical framework that is comprised of carefully selected theories appropriate for investigating and understanding literacy-related curricula and students' identity formation in the globalized schooling context. This set of theoretical tools includes: various levels of curriculum, curriculum ideologies, strategies for internationalizing curriculum, and multiliteracies.

In Chapter 4, I describe the multiple methods that I used to tap into the particulars of transnational education curriculum. Unlearning my privilege as a researcher and author, I also document the methodological considerations to legitimate my participants' intersubjective knowledge building about globalizing and localizing transnational education literacy curricula.

Chapter 5 sketches SCS's institutional and programmatic curricula in terms of its ideal to connect the East and the West, the key features of curriculum hybridity, the credit recognition systems, and its complex evaluation system. In this chapter, I also document the scope and tensions of re-contextualizing the Ontario provincial and Chinese national secondary school curricula at SCS.

In Chapter 6, descriptions of Chinese and Canadian teachers' classes and their own narrative accounts illustrate teachers' challenges, exploratory journeys, and creativity in a

globalized schooling context. Specifically, the unique sets of events in Chinese and Canadian teachers' classes demonstrate the particularities, dynamics, and irregularities in transnational education teachers' practices.

Chapter 7 focuses on data that reflect students' emic perspectives (i.e., participant's/insider's perspectives [e.g., Pike, 1954]). Students' multimodal artifacts and writing samples show the nuances of these adolescents' self-reflection upon a hybrid education model that confronts the interactions of local and global knowledge and ideologies.

In Chapter 8, I discuss the key findings pertaining to the nature and function of literacy-related curriculum at SCS. This chapter depicts the clashes and interplay of local and global curriculum discourses that networked and competed with one another to shape SCS students' literacy/identity options and its curriculum at various levels. Chapter 8 also seeks to expand the imaginable spaces of transnational education by accentuating the importance of incorporating "asset-oriented" (Heydon & Iannacci, 2008) cosmopolitan sensibilities in multiliteracies education and transnational education curriculum and instruction in cross-border educational contexts.

## Chapter 2

### 2 Literature Review

Given the emerging interest in transnational education, there is a surprising scarcity of literature on literacy curriculum in diverse transnational education contexts. In this chapter, I give special attention to existent, yet limited, research accounts about transnational education literacy curricula, transnational education students' literacy development, and their identity formation in Asian countries (China in particular). The major findings of the literature review refer to the impacts of the changed landscape of economies and educational governance<sup>4</sup> upon transnational education programs. Researchers in the transnational education field have given a thrust to the neoliberal ideology that has facilitated globalization of education as a commodity. Existing studies also report that another key element that has boosted the growth of transnational education is the decentralized and "supranational" educational governance (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007, p. 10). I also document a number of local and global ideologies that resist the blurred educational sovereignty in the transnational education sector. This ideological spectrum has been explicitly or implicitly shaping transnational education curriculum and transnational education students' literacy learning experience. The isolated nature of relevant literature on the localities of transnational education justifies an in-depth investigation into transnational education literacy curriculum and its ensuing implications for students' literacy and identity options.

#### 2.1 Globalized Bases of Formalized Education Systems: Changed Governance and Economies that Incubate Transnational Education Programs

Torres (2009) contends that for contemporary discussion on education to have meaning, "it must move beyond assumptions about national boundaries and goals internal to national agendas" (p. 114). Existent literature on transnational education discloses

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<sup>4</sup> Neuman (2005) defines "governance" as the allocation of "responsibility for decision-making and delivery within and across administrative departments, levels of government, and public and private actors" (p. 130).

troubling issues that have emerged from the “globalization of the two traditional bases of formalized educational systems: governance and economics” (p. 114).

Much of the literature states that the expanding application of neoliberalism in education and decentralized educational responsibilities reflect some of the major changes in globalized educational systems. Neoliberalism emphasizes a free market that increases the ubiquity and speed of production (Stromquist, 2002). The neoliberal ideology has extended to the educational arena and been assembled in a grid that facilitates globalization of education as a commodity. In that grid, decentralization also plays a key role in promoting privatization of education and competition of education among developed countries. Changes to funding regimes for education have forced many educational institutions in developed countries to engage globally through transnational education programs with increased recruitment of offshore international students (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Ninnes & Hellsten, 2005; Pyvis & Chapman, 2007; C. Zhang, 2003).

When talking about plans to counterbalance the impacts of the 2009 recession on Canada’s educational sector, Usher and Dunn (2009) also highlight education export and encourage educational institutions to be more globally mobile. They maintain that education’s growth market does not lie in attracting an increasing number of international students, but rather in mobilizing more offshore programs by “modularizing knowledge, delivering it in locally-appropriate forms through international educational partnerships, and certifying students at the end of a course or period of studies” (p. 29).

Since 1995, British Columbia (BC) has used transnational education programs as a key to enhancing the Sino-Canada international trade. In 2002, through *Bill 34*, British Columbia further extended the role of the market in the funding mechanism for public schools. It has encouraged British Columbia school-districts to further develop marketing strategies to deal with budget shortfalls and a decentralized education system of high accountability (Cosco, 2011; Fallon, 2006; Kuehn, 2002). Kuehn contends that decentralized educational governance allows school boards and educational institutions to be entrepreneurial and innovative. The purpose of British Columbia’s Ministry of

Education in generating revenue from overseas transnational education programs is implicit in its offshore program certification rationale, which ostensibly is more focused on educational and cultural exchanges (Ministry of Education, British Columbia, 2010). Nevertheless, Schuetze (2008) contends that its ultimate goal is to use transnational education programs as a “door opener to the Chinese market for other BC products” (p. 8). In the meantime, by charging students high tuition fees, private and public schools in less developed countries in cooperation with British Columbia are actually “buying the Dogwood [the secondary school diploma of British Columbia]” (Kuehn, 2002, n. p.). The Ministry of Education of British Columbia and New Brunswick’s Early Childhood Development charge a range of certified program fees for curriculum licensing and service delivery (Education and Early Childhood Development, New Brunswick, 2011; Ministry of Education, British Columbia, 2010). Nevertheless, before its 2005 accreditation moratorium, the Ontario Ministry of Education did not certify Ontario transnational education programs to yield revenue (J. Sebastian, personal communication, June 23, 2010). According to Sebastian (2006), the Ontario Ministry of Education’s six-year initiative launched in the 1990s aims to foster innovation and entice the private sector by minimizing government regulations. Seeing education as a tradable commodity, a rising number of less developed countries started to import education from developed countries through both private and public sectors (Hayden, 2006; Hill & Roskam, 2009; Kell, 2004; Ninnes, 2005; C. Zhang, 2003). For example, education at various levels in China has seen a growing body of Sino-foreign education consortia with an increasing market demand from parents and students seeking educational alternatives (Kell, 2004; Knight, 2002; Lin, 2007; Mok & Lo, 2009; Schuetze, 2008).

After the adoption of the Open Door Policy in 1978, decentralization, privatization, and commercialization of education have become popular mechanisms in the educational governance in China (Mok, 2003). Privatized education, including transnational education programs and foreign international schools, rapidly emerged in China (Schuetze, 2008). The first upsurge of the Sino-foreign cooperative programs, which used foreign curriculum or granted foreign degrees/diplomas, occurred in the 1990s in the tertiary education area in China after the issue of the *Interim Provisions* in 1995 (Huang, 2008). According to Sun and Zhang (2009), the number of transnational education

programs (i.e., Sino-foreign cooperative education institutions) has increased from 450 in 2000 to 1300 in 2006. Up till 2011, the total number of tertiary transnational education programs in China was 507 (See Table 6 in Chapter 5). The tertiary transnational education programs have expanded to 20 provinces in China and four cities that are administratively equal to provinces (i.e., Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing). The cooperative universities or colleges are from 22 foreign countries or regions (See Table 6 in Chapter 5).

After several developed countries started to open higher education to free international competition, a series of new pieces of educational legislation (Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2009) have emerged in Canada to free up secondary education. Up till 2011, Canadian elementary and secondary transnational education programs extended to 11 provinces in China, four cities that are administratively equal to provinces, and two special administrative regions (Hong Kong and Macau). In September 2011, the total number of Canadian Curriculum Schools in China (including Hong Kong and Macau) amounted to 48 (Education and Early Childhood Development, New Brunswick, 2011; Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2011; Ministry of Education, British Columbia, 2011; Ontario Ministry of Education, n.d.; Province of Nova Scotia, n.d.) (See Table 8 in Chapter 5).

With respect to provincial efforts, in 1995, the Ministry of Education in British Columbia certified its first offshore pilot basis in Liaoning Province, China. In 1998, the two provincial governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding (Schuetze, 2008). Since then, BC has inspected and certified 21 (out of 26 in total) offshore BC programs in China (Ministry of Education, British Columbia, 2011). Since Ontario's six-year initiative in the 1990s, eight offshore Ontario programs have been set up in China (8 out of 20) (Ontario Ministry of Education, n.d.). Overseas Ontario private schools were purportedly initiated to fulfill missions of showcasing Ontario curriculum and increasing the province's name recognition (Sebastian, 2006). Similarly, recognizing that education for international students in Canada has become a growing export business and is turning into a major revenue stream for the federal government (worth over \$6.5 billion in 2008) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010; Gates-Gasse, 2010; Lee & Wesche, 2000),



both BC and Ontario initiated overseas Canadian curriculum programs in order to bring more international students to Canada's tertiary education (Cosco, 2011; Sebastian, 2006).

Transnational education is not just enabled by the home and host countries. Its advent and development are also driven by multiple layers of transaction, coordination, and governance. Trade policies in various configurations showcase how these multiple systems interact. Ziguras and McBurnie (2008) abstract three types of trade policies that validate trade liberalization: multilateral, regional, and bilateral (See also Education International, 2004; Li & Zhao, 2010). For example, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (the GATS), a multilateral agreement that is administered by the World Trade Organization (WTO), liberalizes trade in education and grants developed countries free market access to less developed countries. As of 2006, 48 WTO members made commitments on liberalizing education at various levels (Raychaudhuri & De, 2007). With regard to examples of regional agreement, since 1998, the European region's "Bologna Process" of integrating higher education has covered 40 countries based on agreements produced from inter-ministerial meetings (Education International, 2004, p. 14). British Columbia's Ministry of Education's first consociation with Liaoning Province of China is a typical example of bilateral governmental initiatives.

Governmental involvement is salient in most Canadian elementary and secondary transnational education programs, though with varying provincial commitments. These Canadian transnational education initiatives have been driven by the changing landscape of educational governance and legislation, especially at the provincial level (Cosco, 2011; Fallon, 2006; Schuetze, 2008). However, governmental involvement has started dwindling when more educational responsibilities are delegated to school districts and educational institutions (Cosco, 2011; Sebastian, 2006). Upon the introduction of *Bill 34*, BC became the only province in Canada that has delegated more freedom to school-districts to start overseas BC schools and "act as fee-based service providers" (Cosco, 2011, p. 3). Since its 2005 accreditation moratorium, ensuing Ontario transnational education programs started to happen at the institutional level (Sebastian). For example, the Canadian International School in Vietnam was established in partnership with the

Niagara District School Board, though not officially accredited by the Ontario Ministry of Education. According to Cosco (2011), Branksome Hall, a private school in Toronto, Ontario, operates an overseas campus in South Korea, which is not officially accredited by the Ministry either.

Existing literature shows how changed economies and educational governance have joined in the process of creating and developing transnational education programs at various levels. Admittedly, a plethora of actors seem to be joining hands to make transnational education grow. Nevertheless, we also hear discordant voices that interrogate the “unidirectional” mobility of education from the North to the South (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 296). In the following, I document a number of local and global ideologies that resist the blurred educational sovereignty and the neoliberal ideology in the transnational education sector.

## 2.2 Global and Local Ideological Spectrum Resisting Blurred National and Educational Sovereignty

Proponents in both home and host countries embrace the concept of transnational education for these major reasons: (a) potential to build international cooperation in education (UNESCO & OECD, 2005), (b) improved educational choices for students as learners/consumers (Huang, 2008; UNESCO & OECD, 2005), (c) potential to train graduates with international perspectives (Huang, 2008), (d) capacities to counterbalance inadequate educational funding and resources in host countries (Huang, 2008; Li & Zhao, 2010; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Schuetze, 2008; Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008), and (e) potential to improve host countries’ education systems/services at the administrative and pedagogical levels (Huang, 2008; Li & Zhao, 2010; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; UNESCO & OECD, 2005; Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008).

Oppositional voices to transnational education are heard mainly as follows: (a) ideological opposition to the idea of education as a commodity. The United States is the largest education exporter, but most of their transnational education initiatives are opposed to trade liberalization in education (Education International, 2004; Madugula, 2006; Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008); (b) protectionist views concerning brain drain for host

countries (Education International, 2004; Li & Zhao, 2010); (c) deterioration of education ideals such as social responsibility, collective agreement, and impartial generation/dissemination of knowledge for the public good (e.g., Education International; Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008); (d) bogus degrees and qualifications (e.g., Jelfs, 2008); (e) cultural and linguistic imperialism<sup>5</sup> (e.g., Chambers, 2003; Education International, 2004; Ziguras, 2008); and (f) difficulties in educational quality assurance due to distance (Cosco, 2011; McNicoll, Clohessy, & Luff, 2005), poor quality students (“bottom-feeders”, [Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008, p. 8]), and lower standards of education service providers (Jelfs, 2008; McBurnie, 2008; Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008). In the following section, I focus on major criticisms toward transnational education (i.e., trade liberalization of education, cultural and linguistic imperialism). Relevant accounts will shed light on how major local and global actors combine to shape the curriculum landscape and language practicalities in transnational education.

### 2.2.1 A Resented Love Story: Trade Liberalization of Education & Its Ideological Opposition

Mok (2003) remarks that following the tidal waves of worldwide trade liberalization and convergence of human activities, the major paradigm shift in nation-states’ governance is from “maximizing welfare to promoting entrepreneurial culture, innovation and profitability” (p. 119). According to Mok, this shift, together with the weakening state capacity against the globalization backdrop, has pushed restructuring and reforming in education to cater to the globalized economy and the changed nature of knowledge as affected by the prominence of information technology.

Emerging as an innovative educational mechanism that provides education to global markets, transnational education diversifies and expands students’ education choices around the world (Huang, 2008; Jelfs, 2008). For example, Huang finds that the Sino-foreign cooperative university programs are expected to lend a hand to the Chinese

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<sup>5</sup> Linguistic imperialism is a linguistic notion coined by Robert Phillipson (1992). It refers to the transfer of a dominant language to other contexts. This language transfer is often paired with the transfer of cultural and economic power associated with the language.

government's educational development goal to enhance Chinese students' access to tertiary education through the elite-, mass-, and universal-access stages. However, most transnational education programs in Mainland China have only ensured certain groups of students' access to this special form of elite education by charging high tuition fees (e.g., Lin, 2007; Kuehn, 2002). Gajaraj Dhanarajan, the ex-head of Commonwealth of Learning who participated in establishing distance education systems in Asia in the 1980s, shared in his interview with Guttman (2000) that transnational education might further demarcate two camps of students in less developed countries, that is, an "underprivileged class" that attends a local educational institution and a "privileged class" that has access to a brand-name foreign education (p. 35). Regarding the Chinese government's initial expectation of certifying transnational education programs to expand Chinese students' education access, Huang states that "there is no clear evidence that they have led to a wider access to higher education or contributed substantially to China's mass higher education, as expected by the government" (p. 32). In a similar vein, Ziguras (2008) challenges transnational education programs' potential to spread a neoliberal ideology and justify "elite privilege" while ignoring the majority others (p. 44).

Moreover, as Kuehn (2002) contends, transnational education programs' ideological preference for market competition gives more attention to profit-seeking; therefore, students' real needs might be potentially neglected. Accountability issues in transnational education programs thus incur heated discussions among scholars (e.g., McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Schuetze, 2008; Ziguras, 2008). McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) contend that most components of an educational institution's prestige are generated and retained at the core (the home campus) and dwindle at its peripheries (offshore programs). The simultaneous pursuit of educational and commercial goals has put the educational quality of transnational education programs at risk given their conflicting values (Dunn & Wallace, 2008a, 2008b; McNicoll, Clohessy, & Luff, 2005).

Education International (2004), a global federation that attempts to develop and promote a positive concept of international education, argues that in the core debate over commercial transnational education lies the fundamental clash of values between globalizing education as a commercial venture and espousing education as a human right

and a public good. Education International holds an ideologically oppositional view toward a love affair with capitalism and privatization. Education International argues that market forces alone cannot guarantee accessibility to education and its quality enhancement. On the contrary, market-driven transnational education might well beget unfair competition, discourage the capacity building of local public institutions (See also McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007), and deny admission to students from families with lower socioeconomic status.

### 2.2.2 Homogenization or Heterogenization of Language Practicalities: Linguistic Imperialism or Pluralistic Approaches

Besides concerns over the unidirectional education mobility from developed countries to the less developed, transnational education programs have ignited debates regarding linguistic imperialism and elite literacy (e.g., English literacy) (Dunn & Wallace, 2003; Kell, 2004; Wallace & Dunn, 2008).

McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) differentiate four types of language practicalities in transnational education programs: (a) the language of the curriculum (the printed or electronic learning materials), (b) the language of instruction, (c) the language of explanation (used by teacher/facilitator in tutorial sessions or in consultations with students seeking specific guidance or clarification), and (d) the language of assessment (in which assignments and exams must be submitted). Given the dominant presence of English in the four fields of language practicalities in transnational education, a scholarly fear emerges and concerns that imported education will jeopardize local languages and cultures and result in cultural and economic dependence (e.g., Thaman, as cited in Evan & Tregenza, 2002). Wallace and Dunn's (2008) study exposes the hegemony of English in transnational education programs and globalized communities. Student participants in their study link English proficiency to the cultural and social capital that would sharpen their competitiveness in the globalized labour market. Kell (2004) contends that in post-colonial Asia, English proficiency is an avenue to good jobs, overseas study opportunities, and possibility of migration to developed countries. Lee (2009) also points out, international languages like English are "often equated with the achievement of

economic prosperity on both personal and national levels” (p. 2). It is fair to conclude that English language as a commodity has further fueled the tide of strategic education cooperation in less developed countries due to the “promise” of higher socioeconomic status associated with mastery of English language and mainstream Anglophone culture.

Against the backdrop of globalized education, less developed Asian countries need to address the tensions between raising English literacy levels to participate in the global economy and maintaining the local literacies for their own nation-state projects (e.g., Kell, 2004). McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) expound on political contests around language(s) of instruction (LOI) in transnational education programs. Indonesia requires that half of transnational education courses must be taught in Bahasa Indonesia. Similarly, the Malaysian government once resisted the practice of using English as LOI in transnational education programs because it saw English language instruction as potentially exacerbating ethnic divisions. In Malaysia, the *Private Higher Educational Institutions Act 1996* required private colleges to use the national language (Malay) as the LOI. This act also gave the Ministry of Education authority to grant and revoke approval to teach courses in English. According to McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), the key motivation of imposing the use of Malay as LOI was to affirm the hub status of the Malaysian language and culture and address social inequality. Nevertheless, this nationalist view was later replaced by the neoliberal developmentalism that seeks to secure Malaysia’s participation in a globalized economy driven by information technology (Kell, 2004; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). According to Kell, English has thus been revived at all levels of schooling. In a similar vein, the Chinese government is rapidly building its own capacity and infrastructure for English-language teaching and bilingual education (Lim & Moufahim, 2008; Z. Zhang, 2007). According to Z. Zhang, English education in higher education in China has officially, yet slowly, become reoriented from foreign language education toward bilingual education since the College English education reform launched by the National Education Ministry in 1999. Similarly, the government also espouses dual language instruction in English and Mandarin in transnational education programs since such instruction has the potential to prepare students for the global market and might improve education standards in China (Schuetze, 2008).

Besides the contestations around LOI, there are pedagogical considerations of whose language(s) to use in transnational education. Pyvis (2008) suggests that insisting on delivering transnational education curriculum in the language in which it is written does not necessarily guarantee the quality of implemented curriculum. Educators in Pyvis's (2008) study expressed their dilemmas in delivering Australian university curricula to Mauritius. When the language of instruction (LOI) (i.e., English) is not students' first language, it jeopardizes the faithful delivery of message and knowledge (Debowski, 2005; Pyvis, 2008). Delivering curriculum in culturally and linguistically different contexts also "penalize[s]" the local students (Pyvis, 2008, p. 231) and influences the quality of their learning experience (Goodfellow, Lea, Gonzalez, & Mason, 2001). Non-native English speaking students enrolled in the transnational distance education programs encounter significant impediments in their study (Chambers, 2003; Goodfellow et al., 2001). Goodfellow et al. (2001) bring to light the major difficulties: time spent in responding appropriately in English, the effectiveness in argument, understanding of messages from native speakers, and the presentation of self through accurate use of language.

Addressing criticism of linguistic and cultural imperialism in transnational education programs, a few scholars advocate pluralistic approaches that challenge the privileged Western-centric language and knowledge systems. These approaches attempt to be inclusive of the host countries' local languages, cultures, forms of knowledge, and educational practices (e.g., Chambers, 2003; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Decrying cultural and linguistic imperialism in transnational education programs, opponents of transnational education call for a reinvention of "knowledge as emancipation" that can liberate "others" from imperialism by catering to the local needs (Santos, as cited in Tikly, 2004, p. 192). For example, McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) highlight the importance for native English-speaking educators to be reflective about the cultural biases embedded in the Western-centric curriculum and approaches. Ziguras (1999) advocates multiple forms to communication to enable students' expression and representation. Goodfellow et al. (2001) propose a component of multilingual communication in transnational education programs and call for space for free expression of social behaviour without constraints of operating in a second language. Instead of

simply transmitting the Western-centric cultural and linguistic norms, Chambers and Goodfellow et al. refer to an attention shift from transnational students' deficiencies in English language to their culture- and language-related histories and repertoires.

### 2.2.3 Homogenization or Heterogenization of Transnational Education Curriculum: Contested Curricular Configurations in the Meeting Place

Responding to the linguistic “woes” of transnational education, studies have emerged that specifically interrogate transnational education's contested curricular and pedagogical configurations. Existent literature presents study findings germane to different levels of curriculum: (a) the intended curriculum (i.e., “what is planned in the way of aims, content, activities, and sequence” [Eisner, 2002, p. 32]); and (b) the implemented curriculum (i.e., what occurs between teachers and students and between students and students when the intended curriculum is transported to different classrooms in different locations [Eisner]).

Students who chose to study an Australian degree in Singapore and Malaysia were driven by the prestige of Western awarding institutions and privilege of the Western ways of knowing in the globalized world (Dunn & Wallace, 2003; Pyvis & Chapman, 2007). Education International (2004) maintains that many less developed countries, as host countries, have no control over contents of curricula in transnational education programs. Thus, transnational education initiated from industrialized countries often exerts cultural hegemony and further undermines national cultures of the less developed countries.

Opposing transnational education's cultural and linguistic homogenization and its one-way traffic of knowledge flow, Education International proposes that courses and curricula offered by developed countries should be screened, in part by the nation-states, to verify their relevance to the diverse cultures of the host countries. In a similar vein, UNESCO & OECD (2005) recognize the diversity of educational development in varying territories and accentuate the importance of less developed countries' national sovereignty over transnational education (See also Cheng & Cheng, 2007). UNESCO & OECD (2005) thus recommend that additional national initiatives and international



cooperation and intervention should be in place to ensure that transnational education curricula are socially, culturally, and linguistically sensitive to the receiving countries.

Ziguras (2008) defines Education International's stance as "interventionist and protectionist" (p. 47). He argues that such an "unsophisticated, neomarxist" (p. 46) stance offers little practical policy advice to transnational education. Ziguras thus proposes a "simplest" (p. 48) but controversial way of transplanting curriculum; that is, to produce a standardized, globalized curriculum which abstracts "the curriculum from real-world contexts" (p. 49). According to McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), in tertiary transnational education programs that advocate standardized curriculum, curriculum development, assessment oversight, and quality assurance are supposed to take place in the centre (home campus). The periphery (offshore program) delivers educational services and should be closely scrutinized by the centre. The rationale is to retain the consistency of curriculum, quality of content, and efficiency of curriculum delivery. In my view, the "cult of efficiency" (Stein, 2001) and "Taylorist assault on the professionalism of academic staff" (Schapper & Mayson, 2005, p. 198) are salient in the standardization of curriculum. Highlighting the efficiency rationale and managerialism in the field of transnational education quality assurance, Dunn and Wallace (2008b) expound on the contradictions embedded in the education quality assurance guidelines at various levels. These guidelines require transnational education programs to have equivalent curriculum and abide by similar standards for both onshore and offshore cohorts. Nevertheless, unchanged curriculum often turns out to be inappropriate to the local contexts by virtue of forms of knowledge and needs of stakeholders. The key examples Dunn and Wallace provide are the appropriateness of teaching Australian industrial relations system and Western human resource management practices to Asian students. Debowski (2008) contrasts the dynamic adaptive curricula deployed at the local Australian university with the "fixed and immutable" curricula in their transnational programs (p. 206). The intended curricula can be seen as international in certain senses as they cross borders, but the local is missing. Teaching and learning materials have been seen as lacking cultural sensitivity (e.g., Debowski, 2005, 2008; McBurnie & Ziguras; Pyvis, 2008; Ziguras, 2001). Debowski (2005, 2008) finds that students were seldom encouraged to explore the local complexities of covered issues in the implemented curriculum and in assessment.

Dunn and Wallace also confirm that even though sometimes there was curriculum adaptation, it went no further than adding local examples.

To further the discussion on curriculum adaptation, Leask (2006) accentuates Hong Kong transnational education students' perspective of the importance of modifying Australian designed curriculum in the new context. Leask proposes that curriculum for transnational education contexts could be both internationalized and localized. Both international and local perspectives on knowledge should be developed and assessed. She maintains that a transnational education curriculum should encourage transnational education students to explore the ways and cultures of their own and others and shape knowledge and professional practice within the local contexts. Blickem and Shackleford's (2008) study cites a real-life example of internationalizing New Zealand English language training curriculum in China by adapting teaching materials and teaching approaches to the local context, though with particular details left unreported.

Irrespective of the insistent presence of generic and standardized curriculum, different delivery approaches emerge in the transnational education social practices when the intended curriculum is transplanted to diverse periphery contexts. Teachers' decentred roles in curriculum are thus revitalized when there is a need for transnational education curriculum to be contextualized to the local discourses. Leask's (2004) case study highlights educators' inter-cultural<sup>6</sup> experience in an Australian higher education transnational education program in Hong Kong. Decrying the Western-centralism in curriculum planning and delivery, the Australian educators proposed a "united, egalitarian" (Leask, 2004, n.p.) teaching team involving both host and home country educators on the assumption that such an egalitarian model might influence both the content and structure of curriculum and teaching and learning activities.

Adopting a more strident approach of liberal education, Davidson and Scudamore (2008) attempt to incorporate local issues and experiences of the Malaysian academy into the

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<sup>6</sup> "Inter-cultural" focuses on the interaction between people or discourses from different cultures while "cross-cultural" involves a comparison of discourses across cultures (e.g., Cheng, 2003; Fries, 2006).

Nottingham-based curriculum. They report that their efforts to put in place a negotiated curriculum rather than a generic program ended up with more challenges than an “‘imperialist’ route” (Davidson & Scudamore, 2008, p. 116). The different notions of criticality, the deferential attitudes to authority, and a prevailing culture of consensus (rather than critique) are seen as impediments to a programming more responsive to the local context. Luke and Luke (2000) echo similar issues, saying that when Australian educators attempted to teach Thai students to be critical, many questions emerged because of the long-standing Confucian and Buddhist traditions of respecting pedagogic authority. Local Chinese teachers in Schuetze’s (2008) study expressed their concerns about the “anti-authoritarian manner” that Canadian teachers adopted to engage students. Canadian educators’ approach seemed to be at odds with the dominant Chinese model that is more “text-based, subject-oriented, and teacher-centred” (p. 20).

In contrast, challenging the Western stereotype of Chinese educators as preferring knowledge transmission and as “harsh authoritarian figures” (Kelly & Ha, 1998, p. 26), Kelly and Ha’s (1998) study finds that many local Hong Kong educators employed many student-centred teaching approaches and carefully orchestrated lessons to cater to individual students’ learning needs. Different from their Australian colleagues, local Hong Kong teachers were committed to act as guides and mentors beyond formal class time. Kelly and Ha also indicate that Hong Kong students might not find acceptable the Western educators’ operating within classroom boundaries and their distance from students. Countering the stereotypical view of Asian students, Kelly and Ha find that like their Australian counterparts, Hong Kong students in offshore programs tried to develop a deep level of understanding. They did use memorization as a part of a step-by-step learning process. For these Hong Kong students, imitation or memorizing basic facts was not an end in itself but a prerequisite to creativity.

Seeing transnational education programs as a meeting place of different cultures and languages, scholars accentuate that home country teachers need to have a better understanding of the cultural, political, economic, and legal contexts of the host country in the inter-cultural space (Gribble & Ziguras, 2003; Hicks & Jarrett, 2008; Kelly & Ha, 1998; Ziguras, 2008). Ziguras (2008) suggests a generic transnational education

curriculum model with the location-specific content removed. He also contends that transnational education teaching staff lack certain forms of cultural knowledge as identified by Leask (as cited in Ziguras, 2008, p. 51), that is, local culture(s), teachers' own culture, and students' social, cultural, and educational backgrounds (though Ziguras's "culture" seems to be very broadly defined in his chapter). The fly-in-fly-out lecturing model results in little preparation, little pre-departure or ongoing training, limited time for reflection, and varying levels of conflict and resistance (Hoare, as cited in Ziguras, 2008, p. 51).

Focusing on professional development for educators in transnational education programs, Hicks and Jarrett (2008) push the inter-cultural understanding a bit further. According to them, the dominant forms of knowledge and ways of delivering knowledge are inherently colonial with the assumption that transnational education providers are knowledgeable while the recipient countries and institutions are "knowledge deficient" (Hicks & Jarrett, 2008, p. 242). Concurring with Manathunga (as cited in Hicks & Jarrett, p. 243), Hicks and Jarrett propose a move out of the colonial framework and forge a two-way, reciprocal exchange between host and home country educators. Dunn and Wallace (2008a, 2008b) admit the intervention of workload, geography, national borders, and institutional practices in their book *Teaching in transnational higher education: Enhancing learning for offshore international students*. However, in the last chapter, they suggest that there is a need to design and deliver transnational education curriculum with a localized (yet) international content and teaching approaches based on common, (yet) negotiated goals of internationalizing education without homogenization (See also Ziguras, 1999).

In Gribble and Ziguras's (2003) study, Australian teachers in the transnational education sector found that there were regional differences in curriculum adaptation. For transnational teaching in metropolitan cities in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Kuala Lumpur, little adaptation was needed because local students' goals and aspirations were similar to students in Australia. In contrast, Gribble and Ziguras (2003) identify a necessity for curriculum accommodation in Mainland China and Vietnam. Evan and Tregenza (2002) tell a different story about transnational education in Hong Kong. The Australian educators found that Hong Kong transnational education students were not

familiar with the reflective practice, assignment expectations, and critical thinking approaches to learning which were expected in the Australian professional courses. Differing study findings indicate that given the complexity of individual and regional educational circumstances, explanation and analysis of transnational education students' learning experiences should not be reduced to cultural stereotypes (e.g., Pyvis & Chapman, 2005; Robinson, as cited in Evan & Tregenza, 2002).

Scholars argue that host and home countries should not be seen as having internally homogeneous cultures (Chambers, 2003; Pyvis & Chapman, 2005; Ziguras, 2001). For example, in China, the regional differences in culture, educational development (e.g., Tsang, 2001), and attitudes to education further complicate the picture of curriculum delivering and receiving in transnational education programs (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Understanding the local and global as sedimented in transnational education territories, Ziguras (2001) cautions that while acknowledging tensions between global trends and local practices in transnational education content and curriculum delivery, there should be no clear-cut demarcation of local and global knowledge and practices. Ziguras's (2001) view concurs with Rizvi's (1997) conceptualization of cultures as fluid, hybrid, and constantly developing when they encounter foreign ideas, knowledge, and changing circumstances. Ziguras (2001) warns that host and home country cultures shall not be perceived as binary oppositions, such as collectivism vs. liberal individualism, interactive teaching approaches vs. spoon-feeding approaches.

#### 2.2.4 Conflicting National & Global: Host Countries are Not Lambs among Wolves

I fear this [national cohesion] is in danger of being damaged for a number of reasons including a mismatch between offshore curricula and local hopes of building national cohesion, maintaining cultural integrity and addressing local resource needs. What we are seeing with offshore courses is the dumping, at an international level, of products created for domestic consumption. (Guttman, 2000, p. 35)

In his interview with Guttman, Gajaraj Dhanarajan shared his opinion that transnational education serves as a threat to national cohesion of the host countries. Dhanarajan's quote reflects a prevailing criticism toward transnational education, that is, transnational education is a new form of cultural invasion and exploitation when knowledge is

transplanted from the developed countries to the less developed. Internationalizing curriculum and educational products that are initially designed for students in developed countries jeopardizes host countries' local diversity and national cohesion.

In contrast to Dhanarajan's critique of hegemonic and homogeneous trends in globalized education contexts, scholars highlight ways in which the world is displaying increasing heterogeneity (e.g., Luke & Luke, 2000; Robertson, 2001). Admitting the overwhelming forces of globalization upon local collectivities or individuals, Robertson attends to more sophisticated analyses of the local/global nexus. The key to the situated analysis lies in the attention to the "significance of the human 'creation' of locality" which involves boundary-making and institutionalization (Robertson, 2001, p. 466). In the transnational education sector, host countries have exhibited their capacity to counterbalance the national governments' deteriorated authority to regulate internationalized education.

The General Agreement on Trade in Services' (the GATS) "modes of supply" defines host countries' commitments to transnational education and legally constrains their regulations on transnational education (Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008). To fight against the GATS's lack of transparency and clarity, certain host countries have formulated transnational education regulations by specifying educational products they wish to see based on their own political and ideological ends (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Growing into a major political and economic power worldwide, the Chinese government exemplified a nation-state's imposition of stringent transnational education regulations. These regulations help restrict transnational education programs' licensing, monitor their curricular development, and control degree/diploma conferring (Chinese State Council, 2003; Huang, 2003, 2008). "Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools" regulates against political, military, and religious education in transnational education programs (Chinese State Council, 2003). Huang (2008) highlights the major criteria that the government has used to review and recheck Sino-foreign cooperative programs established between 1995 and 2004, for example, religious components in the programs, protection of faculty members' and students' rights, and "compulsory, political, or any other fields that are forbidden by the government" (p. 27). The Chinese government's transnational education regulations also

reflect Chinese authorities' concern that western values and ideologies introduced by transnational education programs would compete with the Chinese cultural and ideological traditions in training socialist citizens (Cheng & Cheng, 2007; Schuetze 2008). In 2006, the Chinese government modified its transnational education regulatory objectives as to "strengthen political sensitivity and solidly establish the consciousness of education sovereignty, so as to maintain national security, social stability, and normal educational order" (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2006, n. p.). The Ministry of Education of China also emphasizes the importance of developing a guidance catalogue that specifically defines what subjects and programs should be encouraged, permitted, restricted, and prohibited by the state in transnational education programs. Regarding governance at various administrative levels, central government acts more like a regulator while shifting more responsibilities to local provincial and municipal governments and educational institutions (Mok, 2003). Quality assurance in tertiary transnational education is directly conducted by the central and provincial governments while requiring foreign partner institutions' surveillance (Huang, 2003).

Seemingly aware of the overarching power of globalization in placing limits on "state autonomy and national sovereignty" (Torres, 2009, p. 114), China tries to regulate what should be taught in transnational education programs and ensure that "China's sovereignty can rest with the Chinese side" (Huang, 2008, p. 29). Some schools in China use both Chinese and Canadian curricula. Addressing these schools, Schuetze (2008) points out the discrepant educational goals of British Columbia (Canada) and China. British Columbia education intends to prepare young people for a "democratic and pluralist society", while the objective of Chinese education is to educate students for patriotism, collectivism, and socialism (Schuetze, 2008, p. 5). The discrepancies in abstract educational goals have generated no real conflicts, but Chinese authorities' sensitivities to certain historic issues such as the Tian'anmen Square, Taiwan, and Tibet pose potential conflicts in curriculum design and delivery. The teaching of potentially subversive issues must be in accordance with the official textbooks. The Vancouver Sun (2007) reports an instruction in a British Columbia offshore school's handbook that asks Canadian teachers not to mention the above-mentioned sensitive topics. One of the school's former principals saw this instruction as "anti-democratic" (The Vancouver Sun,

2007, para. 17) and commented that the Chinese governmental officials and some school owners kept a “tight lid” (para. 18) on what was being taught in the British Columbia offshore schools.

The Chinese government’s transnational education regulations provide glimpses of China’s localization of global influences and its attempts to harness the global dynamics to serve its national agenda. Nation states, especially those that are less developed, compromise their national or educational sovereignty in the transnational education arena. However, they are still “powerful” actors in employing globalization discourses and resolving “global-national tensions” in their own specific ways (Mok, 2003, p. 126). As McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) argue, “Individuals and nations constantly demonstrate their ability to balance and utilize apparently competing ideologies” in transnational education (p. 13). The Chinese government’s political governance in transnational education exemplifies how localities, as “relational categories” (Doherty, 2008, p. 162), collaboratively shape the transnational education curricular landscape. That said, transnational education as buttressed by global and local institutions should not be “interpreted as an ideological decision in favour of the global over the local” (Robertson, 2001, p. 466). Host countries of transnational education programs are not “hapless victims” under the “tenacious grip of Western hegemony” (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 276).

### 2.3 Students’ Lived Curriculum and Identities in Transnational Education Context: Local, Global, or Glocal?

Hall (1996) remarks that within the new world order, the individual subject has become more “segmented”, “incomplete”, and “pluralized” as shaped by various social spaces s/he inhabits (p. 226). Within the transnational education contexts, an emerging but sporadic scholarship has traced the trajectory of transnational education students’ lived curriculum (i.e., students’ lived experiences within the curricular landscapes) (Aoki, 1993) and their discursive identities within the globalized local education contexts (e.g., Chapman, 2008; Chapman & Pyvis, 2006a, 2006b; Pyvis & Chapman, 2007; Wallace & Dunn, 2008).



First of all, existent literature indicates a marketing discourse in transnational education sectors that implicitly or explicitly constructs an image of transnational education students as consumers of commodified transnational education products (Kuehn, 2002; Lim & Moufahim, 2008). Knight (2002) brings to light a consumer-oriented rationale of transnational education to provide a wider range of opportunities to students as consumers. Yang and Hsiao (2006) also remark that the key to marketing development strategies of transnational education in Asia is to follow student customers' needs, wants, and desires. Students compare different educational products and make decisions accordingly. Kuehn points out that the Asian students studying in British Columbia offshore schools were paying for the British Columbia curriculum and buying the Dogwood secondary school diploma. The latter provided higher education status for students and easier access to post-secondary education in British Columbia.

When students shop for satisfying educational alternatives, they tend to choose transnational education products to overcome the limitations of their own parochialism and procure international identities as “‘international’ beings” (Pyvis & Chapman, 2007, p. 236). It is partially students' desire to engage in a mix of the local and global and seek to be more culturally mobile (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). The “twain” of the local and the foreign (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007, p. 60) meet in students' experience while shaping what they think and who they are.

Despite students' receptiveness of foreign educational experience based on their “self-transformative” investments in education (Pyvis & Chapman, 2007, p. 236), transnational education students have to face challenges incurred by the disjuncture in teaching and learning styles (Debowski, 2005; Pyvis & Chapman, 2005). Pyvis (2008) and Debowski (2005) find that Asian students had to move from a model with authoritative source of guidance to a more eclectic, inquiry-based model where students were supposed to interact and critique knowledge, its application, and their current thoughts. Debowski (2005) argues that such transformative learning processes in the transnational education contexts might extend to other spheres of students' life and thus result in a profound shift in awareness and identity. However, she also remarks hybrid foreign and local teaching

strategies might lead to transnational education students' inconsistent expectations and confusion.

Pyvis's (2008) findings otherwise suggest that students liked the interactive model of learning and teaching because they could be engaged with the learning community through talking, sharing, seeking help, and getting to know more about what others might think. New forms of learning and teaching might require transnational education students to reshape their sense of self while students seek membership of differing learning communities, though strong senses of belonging and engagement with the parent educational community is hard to obtain (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006a, 2006b; Debowski, 2008; Pyvis, 2008; Pyvis & Chapman, 2005).

Wallace and Dunn's (2008) study findings indicate a relationship between transnational education students' sociocultural capital accumulation and their identity formation. When students were relying on enhanced English proficiency and the Western-centric skills to optimize their career opportunities, they were also aware that the acquisition of social and cultural capital through acquiring English and the Western-centric knowledge in the transnational education contexts was restricted because of the mode of curriculum delivery (See also C. Zhang, 2003). McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) bring into light the transnational education communities that simply transmitted generic knowledge from their Western centres to "students who are made to feel peripheral in relation to the home institution" (p. 66). The Mauritius students in Pyvis's (2008) study reported restrictions that hindered them from achieving their aspirational learning experiences and identities: (a) limited resources (e.g., library, computers, equipments in film and television laboratories), (b) parent university's stricter ethical requirements for students to conduct research than the host country, and (c) limited contact with students learning the same curriculum in the home country. Students felt alienated when realizing that they did not seem to be a part of the community. A key question thus arises: how well can the host countries or educational institutions "honour their promises of fellowship to transnational students" (Pyvis, 2008, p. 236)?

Scholars investigate how student's identities are constructed through membership of multi-layered learning communities---the international community, the classroom community, and the professional community (Chapman, 2008; Chapman & Pyvis, 2006b; Pyvis & Chapman, 2005). Transnational education students in Chapman's (2008) and Chapman and Pyvis's (2005) studies entered professional doctorate programs which advocated democratic discourses in education through participation and collaboration. These doctorate students' journey started with a strong sense of community, engaging and collaborating with a group of doctorate students. Later, the discursive practices of participation and collaboration succumbed to a more solitary identity and experience when their study wedged into the phase of research and dissertation writing.

Concerning the fluidity of students' identity formation, Doherty (2008) offers a glimpse of students' experience in an Australian transnational education MBA program offered online in a Malaysian college. The Australian and Malaysian students were placed in this online unit and connected to each other within "lived through virtual realities" (Doherty, 2008, p. 160). Doherty brings to the front the "'simultaneity and inter-penetration' of locally anchored identity positions and more globally oriented identity processes" (p. 162). Concurring with Robertson's (2001) critique of positioning the local and the global as the opposite ends of a continuum, Doherty conceives of global and local identities as a both/and nexus instead of either/or dichotomous dualism. Being situated in Malaysia while participating in Australian tertiary education, students experienced a "range of foci" that captures the contingency and adjustability of the local boundaries (Featherstone, 1995). Both Malaysian offshore and Australian onshore students displayed their flexibility to uphold local boundaries and move along the varying range of foci. The Malaysian students resisted the exclusion they felt in the program, but they had to succumb to the contractual arrangements. The Australian students grieved about their local university being too inclusive of transnational students with deficient English, but they still had to engage in the mixed group discussions.

As is shown in the literature, the wide spectrum of transnational education programming (e.g., twinning program, online education, and offshore campus) begets differing social

practices of learning; new discursive identities thus emerge as students engage in the situated learning of specific transnational education contexts (Pyvis & Chapman, 2005).

## 2.4 Summary

Existent research on literacy curriculum and students' identity formation in transnational education programs appears in a scattered and isolated manner. There is little to no research that systematically addresses how various levels of local and global discourses interact with or pit against each other to shape transnational education curriculum and students' literacy learning experience. Unsystematic research of the local and global agendas can easily result in simplistic dualist view of oppressing/oppressed (e.g., Education International [2004] pitted "powerful industrialised countries" against "weaker" less developed countries [p. 3]). Pratt (1991) introduces an intriguing notion of *contact zone* to illuminate that the postcolonial world actually comprises a spectrum of "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (p. 34). In the post-colonial contact zones like transnational education programs, a clear-cut demarcation of colonizers and the colonized might no longer be applicable to interpreting the dominant discourses regarding globalization and education. That said, in a post-colonial era, especially in the unique discourse of transnational education, researchers can hardly account for the impacts of globalization using the "colonizer/colonized, centre/margin dualisms" (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 280) and the "determinist, causal, and unidirectional terms: north to south, west to east" (p. 296). A situated perspective of the local particularities is needed to supplement critiques that see transnational education as unidirectional cultural and educational hegemony from developed countries to the less developed. Ideological configurations such as socialism, educational equity, linguistic imperialism, Western-centrism, and the free-market ideology are closely related to transnational education curriculum. However, little systematic research is available to document how relevant issues are mapped out in the development and implementation processes of literacy curricula. Transnational education programs have been an "experimental leading edge of efforts" (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007, p. 2) to deliver curricula to multiple student groups in different spatio-temporalities. However, little is known about how literacy curricula

are developed and played out in secondary school transnational education programs given the dynamic networks of local and global stakeholders and agendas.

Research on linguistic imperialism and Western-centric knowledge in the transnational education terrain is emerging (e.g., McBurnie & Ziguas, 2007; Tikly, 2004; Ziguas, 2008); however, relatively, there is a silence in the literature on the global, local, and institutional discourses that embrace, resist, or reshape English-related literacy. In order to further the binary dominance-resistance understanding of the linguistic issues in the transnational education terrain, it is necessary to examine what “third spaces” might have been created by various actors and what local practices of literacy might be constructed in cultural and linguistic encounters (Kramsch, 1993; Pennycook, 1999). Rather than imposing an artificial distinction of the marginalized and the dominant (Goodfellow, 2001), Pennycook’s postcolonialist concept of “third spaces” demands that we contextually explore the roles that English plays in particular contexts with respect to specific sociologies of those contexts. “[S]ituational logics” are needed to depict “the multiple embeddings of cultural, historical, economic, and social change that frame and punctuate the uses and effects of globalization” (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 276).

Little research is available about how “multidirectional traffic of ‘flows’ of homogenizing and heterogenizing forces” (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 287) have been shaping various levels of transnational education literacy curricula. Systematic exploration is needed to “reconnoiter and deconstruct imperialist histories and institutions” (Luke, 1995-1996, p. 4). As Luke and Luke (2000) contend, “only through situated, local, and self-critical analyses can we begin to see the two-way, mutually constitutive dynamics of local-global flows of knowledge, power, and capital” (p. 276).

## Chapter 3

### 3 Theoretical Framework

A key message from the Literature Review chapter shows a necessity to adopt conceptual tools that can guide the interrogation of the “push-pull dynamics” (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 291) that might shape literacy-related curricula in the transnational education programs. Cognizant of the situatedness and complexity of curriculum issues entrenched in the transnational education communities, in this chapter, I present a theoretical framework that is comprised of carefully selected theories appropriate for investigating and understanding literacy curricula and students’ identity formation in the globalized schooling context. This set of theoretical tools includes: various levels of curriculum, curriculum ideologies, strategies for internationalizing curriculum, and multiliteracies. The discussion about curriculum theories provides entry points into literacy as it intends to tease out the discourses and processes that shape the transnational education literacy-related curricula. The documentation of the multiliteracies theory offers a broader, yet nuanced, lens through which to view practices, events, and perceptions engrained in the transnational education literacy curricula.

#### 3.1 Theories on Curriculum

##### 3.1.1 Various Levels of Curriculum

Curriculum is a term that is far from neutral. Jackson’s (1992) statement well illustrates its contested nature:

Confusion is the dominant condition remarked on by observer after observer (e.g., Barrow 1976; Harap 1937; Joyce 1971; Macdonald 1975; Taba 1962; Walker 1980). Its companion is conflict (e.g., Egan 1978; Eisner and Vallance 1974; Harap 1937). Others speak of a field that is amorphous and elusive (Goodlad 1985), in disrepair (Joyce 1971), moribund (Heubner 1976; Schwab 1969), driven into disarray (Foshay 1975), and suffering from severe disorientation (Egan 1978). (p. 3)<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Details of all references in this quotation are cited in Jackson (1992). Please check the original text for references.

First of all, the “confusing” definition orientations (e.g., curriculum as content, experience, a regular course of study) per se reveal curriculum as a contested terrain that is “comprised of various and autonomous discourses<sup>8</sup>” (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2008, p. 26). The “confusion” of the notion “curriculum” also shows a plethora of intellectual efforts that wish to contribute to the understanding of curriculum. As Schwab (1969) eloquently puts it,

there is no foreseeable hope of a unified theory in the immediate or middle future, nor of a meta-theory which will tell us how to put those subsubjects together or order them in a fixed hierarchy of importance to the problems of curriculum. (p. 10)

Aware of this conceptual confusion, I use notions of various levels of curriculum, namely, intended, implemented, hidden, null, and lived curriculum (e.g., Aoki, 2005; Eisner, 2002; Hayden, 2006). This integrative fabric of definitions will capture and illuminate the multiple natures and functions of the transnational education curriculum. As Goodlad (1979) argues, “We need definitions, of course, to carry on productive discourse, but attempts to arrive at a single one have inhibited discourse” (p. 44).

### 3.1.1.1 Intended Curriculum & Implemented Curriculum

Schwab (1973) proposes four curriculum commonplaces: the subject matter, the learner, the teacher, and the milieu. Schwab challenges the generic views of students and milieu in the abstract theorization of curriculum. Seeing curriculum as lived experiences instead of an end product, Schwab posits how designed curriculum materials are played out in classroom practices and how they are dependent upon variations of interactions among the four commonplaces. In Schwab’s view, “arts of the practical” (i.e., arts that “supplement theory” and “do for practice”) (p. 495) should incorporate ways that take account of local particularities, dynamics, and irregularities in practices.

To identify variations that take place when curriculum policies are translated to particular contexts, Eisner (2002) differentiates five levels of curriculum, namely, intended

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<sup>8</sup> Pinar et al. (2008) construe “discourse” as “a particular discursive practice, or a form of articulation that follows certain rules and which constructs the very objects it studies” (p. 7).

curriculum, operational curriculum, explicit curriculum, implicit curriculum, and null curriculum. As does Eisner, but specifically addressing curriculum in international education contexts, Hayden (2006) specifies types of curriculum (e.g., intended curriculum, implemented curriculum, learned curriculum, and hidden curriculum) to highlight the ways the local particularities of the commonplaces impact the play-out of international curriculum materials.

According to Eisner (2002), the intended curriculum is “what is planned in the way of aims, content, activities, and sequence” (p. 32), whereas the operational curriculum refers to “the unique set of events that transpire within a classroom” (p. 33). The limitations of the notion of “intended curriculum” lie in (a) its impotency to distinguish whose intentions are inscribed in the curricular documents given the entangled traditional and current curricular discourses, and (b) its inability to differentiate whether it is the intentions or effects/reflections of certain curricular discourses that are prescribed in the policies. This is where Doyle’s (1992a; 1992b) notions of “institutional curriculum” and “programmatic curriculum” might be helpful. As does Doyle, Deng (2009) notes that the institutional curriculum operates at the intersection of schooling, culture, and society and responds to the ever-changing sociocultural conditions and political circumstances. Institutional curriculum is often tailored to reflect new typifications of desirable values and dispositions in the changed social, cultural, economic, and political order. According to Deng, programmatic curriculum transforms institutional curriculum into school subjects or courses of study and is embodied in curriculum documents and materials for use in schools and programs. At the level of programmatic curriculum, selections and constructions of school subjects are rationalized based on the school- or program-specific circumstances. This study investigates the practices of “creating” an integrated transnational education curriculum in a milieu replete with local and global educational discourses. Therefore, the notions of “institutional curriculum” and “programmatic curriculum” will shed light on whose intentions and what discourses might be shaping the curriculum making at SCS.

The physical existence of the intended curriculum allows for inspection and critique of its goals, materials, learning activities, and visual and auditory resources. However, as



Eisner (2002) contends, the only way to appraise the quality of the intended curriculum is to watch the implemented curriculum, namely, what occurs between teachers and students and between students and students when the intended curriculum is transported to different classrooms in different locations. Goodlad and Associates (as cited in Schubert, 2008) argue that it is debatable whether discrepancies between the intended and implemented curricula are caused by teaching professionals' misinterpretation of the curricular documents or by their "creative insubordination" (p. 408). Some curricular scholars therefore shift attention to critiquing the technical rationality entrenched in professionalizing and scientizing schooling. Their emphasis is placed on legitimating teachers' practical knowledge and their role as curriculum makers (e.g., Doyle, 1992a, 1992b). Accentuating a postmodern prism, Doll (1993) and Slattery (2006) challenge the scientific managerialism embedded in curriculum making at various levels. For them, the curriculum model of efficiency, standardization, rote memorization, conformity, and control is structured around competency-based performance and behavioural objectives. The model itself imposes upon teaching and learning uniform compliance with "predetermined principles, cultural forms, social structures, or curricular guides" (Slattery, p. 275). Luke, Weir, Woods, and Moroney (2008) also argue the accountability model has been realigning the relationship between the intended and implemented curricula. On one hand, the high-stakes assessments mediate the intended curriculum while teachers narrow the scope of the intended curriculum and prepare students for tests. On the other hand, an overdependence on high-stakes tests to impose the "hard prescription" (Luke et al., 2008, p. 34) of the intended curriculum in turn deters teachers' professional capacity, autonomy, imagination, and creativity.

Critiquing assessment as a closed system, Doll (1993) and Slattery (2006) bring to light the beauty of disequilibrium and uncertainty in creating dialogic conversations in a complex, multidimensional, yet open curricular system. Instead of mandating requirements, dialogic conversation allows for creative and interactive reflection of eclecticism, such as the synthesis of past/present/future, dominant/periphery, local/global, us/other, subject/object, mind/body, knowledge/practice, curriculum/person, and teacher/student. Doll and Slattery do not anticipate a harmonious mix or compromise of differences, pluralism, and particulars. For them, chaos, dynamics, and uncertainty, as

resulted from dialogic communications, actually provide spaces for “creative tension and self-reflection” at the level of the implemented curriculum (Slattery, 2006, p. 272).

Luke et al. (2008) address a debate among the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries about how standards can best be harnessed to ensure “baseline quality in educational outcomes” and raise students’ educational aspirations (p. 75). In debates as such, specific attention is given to: (a) raising aspirations for all students, (b) developing transparency over educational objectives and content, (c) offering teachers a reference framework to help understand and engage student learning, and (d) eschewing the risks of narrowing the curriculum and teaching to the test.

Adopting a more strident voice, González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) push the stance of opposing technocratic accountability further by accentuating teachers’ local knowledge and advocating an emancipating approach to education (i.e., a funds of knowledge approach). This approach invites teacher engagement, self-reflection, and critical examination of hegemonic social norms in schooling such as standardization and homogenization. They depict a differing image of educators who problematize structural constraints (e.g., high-stakes tests and accountability) and nurture students’ strengths and funds of knowledge (i.e., knowledge and resources that lie in periphery [González et al., 2005]). The emphasis has thus focused on individuals’ “power of Becoming (capitals in original)” rather than on their personal, sociocultural, or ethnic “deficits of Being (capitals in original)” (Doll, 1993, p. 49). In Doll’s postmodern view of curriculum, performance deficits are structured within a “frame of competence powers” (p. 49). That said, learners’ errors are not just wrongs to be corrected, but “insights into powers to be developed and transformed” (p. 50).

By challenging the institutionalized perception of curriculum as a tool to control teaching, Doyle (1992a, 1992b) highlights a scholarly interest in viewing curriculum as a situated social process where teachers and students are involved in social interactions to create and negotiate content and meanings. Prominence is thus given to what is experienced by students, as I address in the next section.

### 3.1.1.2 Lived Curriculum

Disturbing the privileged intended curriculum (*curriculum-as-plan*), Aoki (2005) introduces “lived curriculum” and emphasizes the importance of texturing the multiplicity of students’ lived experiences within the curricular landscapes. This orientation to understanding curriculum has the potential of freeing curriculum theorists of “the tunnel vision effect of monodimensionality” (Aoki, 1979, p. 4). In Aoki’s (2005) view, curriculum planners’ privileged interests, assumptions of ways of knowing, and their abstract language in curriculum-as-plan might actually remove the uniqueness of individual students. Challenging the singular form of curriculum-as-plan, Aoki contends that there are as many lived curricula as there are multiple student identities. Disturbing the privileging of identity as presence, he contends that identities of students, teachers, and curriculum planners are actually “ongoing effects of their becomings” in different discourses (Aoki, 2005, p. 205).

Addressing curriculum in international education contexts, Hayden (2006) also accentuates the enormous possibilities of students’ different experiences under the same implemented curriculum, even though we do not actually know what the experiences are. According to Hayden, discrepancies between the intended and implemented curricula are bound to happen, especially when the intended curriculum is transplanted to a culturally, linguistically, and ideologically different milieu. In the contexts of internationalized education, notions of students’ lived curriculum will illuminate the cultural responsiveness of the intended and implemented curricula.

Schubert (2008) approaches lived curriculum differently. He brings to light the notion of learners as partners in curriculum inquiry and development. Individual learners participate in the process of curriculum making and inquiries as creators of knowledge and celebrate their own “thoughts, meanings, and feelings” (Schubert, 2008, p. 409). Curriculum scholars following a postmodernist line argue that the understanding of the curricular “reality” should be partially constructed through self-reflexivity (e.g., Carlson, 1992; Doll, 1993; Pinar et al., 2008; Slattery, 2006). Accentuating students’ agency, scholars who understand curriculum as postmodern texts attend to students’ “deliberate, discursive reflection on experience and identity construction” within a particular

curricular landscape (Carlson, 1992, p. 241). González et al. (2005) value teachers' funds of knowledge. They also present a collaborative approach that endeavors to "unlock and capitalize on" students' (and their households') resources and knowledge that lie in periphery (p. x). Marsh (2009) also suggests teachers be creative and incorporate diverse postmodern discourses in their daily teaching. For instance, teachers engage students in discussions to deconstruct the modernist binary oppositions (e.g., "order" and "disorder" [Klages, 2003, n.p.], "rational" and "non-rational", "mainstream" and "non-mainstream") and problematize the established values and norms about races, gender, political repression, and cultural elitism.

### 3.1.1.3 Null Curriculum & Hidden Curriculum

Apart from the intended and operational curricula, Eisner (2002) also considers the null curriculum since what schools do not teach may be as important as what they do teach. As Eisner says, "The absence of a set of considerations or perspectives or the inability to use certain processes for appraising a context biases the evidence one is able to take into account" (p. 97). Examining the null curriculum means to locate the absent areas of thoughts and perspectives that could be used to reach a less biased appraisal of a situation. The purpose of identifying the null curriculum is to determine whether these omissions are a result of ignorance or a product of choice. Eisner contends that ignorance is never neutral. Schubert (2008) illustrates commodification of curriculum in standardized tests as a typical root cause that makes certain topics seem unimportant in schooling. Topics such as philosophy, imagination, and integrity are "touted as valuable" (Schubert, 2008, p. 410). However, they are deemed as less necessary by schooling contexts that espouse achievement tests simply because these tests measure none of those aspects. The null curriculum, therefore, reflects the testing industry's purposes to control, colonize, and reproduce "docile acceptance of the sorting machine" (Schubert, 2008, p. 410) in schools that train students for certain labor markets (Spring, 1989).

Similar to the null curriculum, the hidden curriculum is another key concept that draws scholars' attention. Eisner's (2002) explicit/overt curriculum refers to what is publicly advertised in curriculum in terms of the educational goals and what the schools will provide to achieve the goals. In contrast, the hidden or implicit curriculum refers to ideas,

values, and knowledge embedded within curriculum and imparted to students but not explicitly stated in the curriculum or teachers' statements of teaching objectives (e.g., Apple, 1971, 2004; Jackson, 1968). The hidden curriculum is the "ideological and subliminal message presented within the overt curriculum, as well as a by-product of the null curriculum" (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 27). According to Apple (2004), hidden curriculum also relates to students' "living in and coping with the institutional expectations and routines of schools day in and day out for a number of years" (p. 13). Examples of implicit culture of schooling may include: (a) compliant behaviour, (b) competitiveness, (c) political socialization, (d) the coded use and location of time that reflects the significance of various subject areas, (e) the achievement and marketplace ethic, and (f) the perpetuation of class structure (e.g., Apple, 1971; Eisner, 2002; Vallance, 1983). Functioning as codes of social control, these aspects of school culture can be pervasive, or even "profoundly more powerful and longer lasting than what is intentionally taught or what the explicit curriculum of the school publicly provides" (Eisner, 2002, p. 88).

Friedenberg (as cited in Kohlberg, 1983) observes hidden curriculum as a socialization vehicle into a mainstream middle-class society and "a jail" prioritizing conformity and obedience (p. 63). Echoing Counts's (as cited in Pinar et al., 2008) reproduction theory of curriculum, Apple also (1971) points out the tacit legitimation of the "existing social order" (p. 33). Acting as distributors of cultural capital, schools play a key role in "giving legitimacy to" certain forms of knowledge while marginalizing others (Apple & King, 1983, p. 83). In this sense, the hidden curriculum of maintaining the existing social structure defines the null curriculum. Anyon (1983) finds how knowledge and skills leading to "social power"<sup>9</sup> (e.g., medical, legal, and managerial) are only made available to students from socioeconomically advanced backgrounds. Their counterparts from the working-class families are only rewarded for docility (p. 143). Apple (1971) points to a tacit assumption of students as the passive recipients of existing values and social structures in teaching and curricular materials. He argues that this assumption acts as one

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<sup>9</sup> "Social power" is a term used by J. Anyon (1983) without specific definition about what kinds of social or cultural power she refers to.

of the fundamental guidelines that “order experiences” (Apple, 1971, p. 29). He thus accentuates students’ roles as “creator and recreator of values and institutions” (Apple, 1971, p. 29), that is, their agentive roles in critiquing and rejecting existing social, historical conditions and effecting basic structural changes through social commitments.

Apple and King’s (1983) and Anyon’s (1983) class analysis of the hidden curriculum might to certain extent be dated. Marxist or neo-Marxist “economically and class-oriented” analysis as such is also critiqued for its determinist interpretations that reduce all schooling struggles to capitalism and class stratification (e.g., Pinar et al., 2008, p. 309). However, it might still help to better understand the null and hidden curricula in globalized schooling contexts given the prevailing logic of global capital. In the study, discussion of the null and hidden curriculum might help to disclose the hidden agendas of formal schooling. Relevant interrogation will also attend to the “various discourses and practices” that interact to create a political location (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 249). It might reveal what is negotiable and where dialogic conversation and transformation are allowed.

Considering the conceptual fluidity of hidden curriculum due to the sociocultural dynamics (e.g., Vallance, 1983) and the increasing global mobility of capital, people, educational programs, and policies (e.g., Singh, Kenway, & Apple, 2005), new enrichment of curriculum conceptualization is needed to account for the hidden agendas of globalized education. In the following section, I chart different strands of curriculum ideologies that have been impacting schooling.

### 3.1.2 Curriculum Ideologies

In this section, I introduce Eisner’s notions about curriculum ideologies as a tool to explore the discursive ideologies that globalized schooling contexts foster and mirror. Eisner (2002) offers a brief review of major ideologies that have prominently influenced schooling in the United States. He defines *curriculum ideologies* as “beliefs about what schools should teach, for what ends, and for what reasons” (Eisner, 2002, p. 47). Eisner uses the plural form of *ideology* to indicate that no single belief or value directs curriculum design and implementation. Eisner identifies six prominent curriculum

ideologies in the United States (i.e., Religious Orthodoxy, Rational Humanism, Progressivism, Critical Theory, Reconceptualism, and Cognitive Pluralism). However, he admits that these ideological positions do not exhaust those that influence schools and curriculum. Considering space and the relevance to my study, I only briefly review Rational Humanism, Progressivism, Critical Theory, and Reconceptualism in this section.

Rational Humanism supports the idea that the universe is orderly and, therefore, understandable and controllable through rational methods (e.g., Eisner, 2002; Habermas, 1969). Thereby, the Rational Humanism ideology ideally espouses a pedagogy that focuses on reflection and insight through exposure to the best works of human beings. Its purpose is to develop learners' abilities to exercise reason. Debate around selection and exclusion of curriculum content as "best works" is fierce. The method to teach the "best works" is equally controversial. Most schools following this lineage place a heavy emphasis on transmission of information, rote memorization, reinforcement of information (through short answers and multiple choices), and testing methods to tap students' information recalling (e.g., Eisner, 2002). Major critiques of Rational Humanism refer to the Western-centrism in content, elitism, and the mechanical emphasis on memorization instead of critical understanding.

The Progressivism ideology has two key streams: human experience (the personal) and social reform (the political) (Dewey, 1963, 1975; Eisner, 2002). Rather than seeing these two streams as dualistic, Dewey (1975) adopts a more dialectic view and thinks the two dimensions of personal experience and political process are mutually dependent. He believes intelligence grows to adapt to the environment and at the same time constructively transforms the environment. Learners are not seen as passive recipients of information. Curriculum content is no longer regarded as "static, fixed" information to be transmitted (Eisner, 2002, p. 69). Thereby, curriculum becomes a process of creation involving teachers' input and their understanding of the "whole child" (Eisner, 2002, p. 71) (i.e., children as both social and emotional beings and academic and intellectual beings). Earlier scholars on progressivism believed that schools have positive commitments to bringing out social changes so as to counterbalance the socioeconomic inequities in the American society (e.g., Dewey, 1963; Rugg & Schumacher, as cited in

Eisner, 2002). Schools are seen as educational contexts where students experience virtues of democratic life (e.g., group processes in decision making, appreciation of collective intelligence, and students' freedom within classrooms to formulate their rules for social living). This political orientation to curriculum is later reflected in some critical theorists' and reconceptionists' works.

Curriculum scholars and educators who embrace the assumptions of the Critical Theory strand contend that it is necessary to "expose and overcome unjust social hierarchies derived from socioeconomic class, race, gender, sexuality, place, age, appearance, disability, and other hegemonic factors in society and school" (Schubert, 2008, p. 404). Theorists and educators in this critical camp condemn curriculum as "a perpetuator of domination of the many by the few" (Schubert, 2008, p. 404). They problematize the banking model of education (Freire, 1970), which refers to a traditional education model that sees students as empty containers to whom teachers need to transmit knowledge. They disturb the hidden agendas that underpin curriculum and schooling. They attempt to raise parents' and students' consciousness of the unjust social structure and seek emancipation through praxis (i.e., critical inquiry in action).

This critically oriented ideology does not go without critique. First, given the shifting nature of the dominant/subordinate and the complexity of power negotiations in their dynamic spatio-temporalities, scholars such as Gore (1992) and Lingard and Gale (2007) contend that a simplistic dichotomy of empowerment and oppression in critical pedagogy could not be sufficiently helpful. Another major criticism of the Critical Theory ideology points to its pessimistic language of critique. Giroux (2005) argues that critical pedagogy needs to regain a sense of alternatives by combining a language of critique and possibility. Lingard and Gale (2007) maintain that educational research needs an agenda of hope that is generative of alternatives to inform educational practices in the contemporary world.



Reconceptualism<sup>10</sup> mobilizes against the Tylerian paradigm of planning curriculum based on behaviourist development objectives (e.g., Pinar et al., 2008). Scholars in the lineage of Reconceptualization espouse a theoretical and practical interest in “*understanding curriculum*” as creative intellectual texts drawing on phenomenological, political, and theological discourses (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 187) (italics in original). Curriculum reconceptualists resist the core ideas of Tyler’s (1949) basic principles of curriculum and instruction, for example, the cult of efficiency, standardized goals, and measured procedures. The curricular interest has thus shifted from learners’ behaviour to a phenomenological focus on the nature of learners’ experiences. What is missing in the traditional paradigm of curriculum development is the historical examination of curriculum, an appreciation of the complexity of human subjects’ lived experience, and most importantly, a political interest in conceptualizing curriculum as praxis (i.e., curriculum as engaging reflection and action) and seeking a just public world (e.g., Eisner, 2002; Pinar et al., 2008).

Eisner (2002) provides a glimpse of curriculum as a contested area where ideological positions pertaining to curriculum often “exist in a state of tension or conflict” (p. 51). As Giroux (1990) states, curriculum has “always constituted a site of struggle, a site defined by the imperative to organize knowledge, values and social relations so as to legitimate and reproduce particular ways of life” (p. 3). Eisner (2002) argues that “the more heterogeneous the community, the less likely there will be ideological uniformity in schooling” (p. 52). By saying that, Eisner specially addresses compromises and resistance between political groups in societal communities that are characteristic of value plurality. In the next section, I introduce curriculum inquiries that intend to understand the plurality and complexity in globalized education communities.

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<sup>10</sup> Pinar et al. (2008) prefer “reconceptualization” over “reconceptualism” (p. 211) because they think that the latter inaccurately indicates a theoretical cohesion among scholars, which does not exist. Instead, they concur that “reconceptualization” better represents a “multifaceted and multidimensional” process of reconceptualizing curriculum inquiries (Reynolds, 2010, p. 266). I, therefore, use “reconceptualization” instead in the following.

### 3.1.3 Understanding Curriculum as an International Text

Global perspectives on curriculum offer valuable lenses to perceive what is happening in transnational education. These perspectives raise questions such as: (a) how worldwide movements and power struggles have been influencing what we teach? and (b) what are the contingencies and uncertainties of internationalizing curriculum? (e.g., Anderson-Levitt, 2008; Singh et al., 2005).

In a discussion of issues related to devising curriculum for international use, Thompson (1998) identifies four strategies (i.e., exportation, adaptation, integration, and creation). *Exportation* refers to the marketing abroad of existing national curricula with little adjustment to take account of the different contexts. Typical examples are the UK and the U.S. international schools with English as the medium of instruction (MOI). This strategy of “generalising” (Luke, 2011, p. 369) education to differing contexts is often critiqued for its explicit educational and cultural imperialism<sup>11</sup> when curriculum is transported from the developed countries to the less developed (Hayden, 2006).

When discussing the “transplanting” of developed countries’ curricula to less developed countries, the Global Alliance for Transnational Education (1997) specifies, “Materials and learning resources used should normally be adjusted to be culturally appropriate to the range of students to whom the courses are being offered” (Appendix E). Accordingly, UNESCO and the OECD (2005) recommend that transnational education providers should “take into account the cultural and linguistic sensitivities of the receiving country” and be responsible for “the social, cultural and linguistic relevance of education” (p. 14). Thompson (1998) maintains that where the strategy of *adaptation* is used, the existing national curricula and examinations are adapted for international use. This strategy still runs the risk of educational imperialism given the fact that the inherent value system may not change.

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<sup>11</sup> According to McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), “educational imperialism” and “cultural imperialism” refer to the critiques that the export of education from developed countries to the less developed takes forms of exploitation and oppression. The terms indicate that the unidirectional transmission of educational and cultural ideologies and materials not only privileges Western-centric language and knowledge systems but also undermines the local education providers and systems.

According to Thompson (1998), *integration* is where “best practices” from an array of “successful” curricula are brought together into one curriculum for operation across a number of systems or countries. Adopting this strategy will face the potential challenges arising from different values and ideological positions. Chaos is unavoidable in the process of orchestrating differing or even competing programming systems that are complex enough on their own. Given the “complex connectivity” of internationalizing education<sup>12</sup>, Singh et al. (2005) note that a more dialectical view is needed to take into account the contradictory trends of integration/fragmentation, globalization/localization, and detraditionalization/retraditionalization (the lost/new “inflections of traditional sociocultural forms and identifications”) (p. 4).

The *de novo* category refers to creating an international curriculum anew. However, Hayden (2006) questions the possibility of creating a curriculum from entirely *de novo* in that educators and policy makers are bound to be informed by their prior experiences in any other educational programming when involved in curriculum making at various levels.

It is worth noting that the rationales for choosing specific strategies for internationalizing curriculum and the socio-political factors that might have impacted the strategy choices are absent in the available literature. Little is known about what global/local relations are manipulating the selection of knowledge and its justification. Luke (2011) contends that since the curriculum of each nation is a product of its unique sociocultural and historical circumstances, its extrapolation requires caution. Luke thus recommends critical recalibrations that are based on empirical interrogation of local/global nexus and contestation to reassure that host country’s student learning experience is not sacrificed when curriculum is recontextualized.

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<sup>12</sup> McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) contend that globalization of education is generally accepted as a derogatory term describing “all that has gone wrong in the world” (p. 21), whereas internationalization of education represents “arrangements between nation-states primarily cultivating greater *tolerance* and exchange of ideas” (Curry *et al*, as cited in McBurnie & Ziguras, p. 21) (*italics in original*). Given the complex circumstances of curriculum against the backdrop of globalization, I use the two terms interchangeably in the study.

Devising curriculum for international use is complicated given the entangled sociocultural or economic intersections of global communities. Pinar et al. (2008) see an urgency to have an understanding of curriculum as international texts which consider the “ecological, economic, political, and social interdependence” of these global communities (p. 803). They propose that a first step to realizing internationalized curriculum is to transcend “traditional fears of foreign cultures and ideologies” so as to encourage global understanding (p. 803).

Using a critical prism, some scholars also highlight the role of global media forms (e.g., the Internet, television, and films) in shaping curriculum in globalized educational contexts (e.g., Singh, et al., 2005). They also bring to light the belief that curriculum making against a globalized background is shrouded in the cloaks of corporate culture and a knowledge-based economy (e.g., Kenway & Bullen, 2005; Luke, 2011; Singh, et al., 2005; Smith, 2003). For instance, democratic goals acclaimed by some public education systems have given in to the demands of the global market.

Scholars also interrogate the relationship between globalized curriculum configurations and nation-state’s identity (e.g., Yates & Grumet, 2011) and students’ identifications (e.g., Singh, et al., 2005). Singh et al. contend that neoliberal globalism (i.e., the market-oriented globalism) constructs “active, self-actualizing individuals who optimize a narrow sense of the good life... equate their interests with the creation of a globally oriented enterprise culture” (p. 16). Existing literature also shows an emergent interest in conceptualizing progressive, transformative social movements that mobilize against corporate globalization (e.g., Luke, 2011; Singh, et al., 2005).

### 3.1.4 Summary

My interrogation of various levels of curriculum intends to capture the multidimensional meanings and discourses that are embedded in the transnational education curricular landscape. My intention to introduce Eisner’s curriculum ideologies is not to limit the discussion of ideologies that might have been influencing the transnational education curricular landscape. Its aim is rather to expand the scope of discussion on the contested nature of curriculum ideologies when they meet and interact with one another.

In this section, I presented a proliferation of curricular constructs that have informed my study. The intention is by no means to harmonize differing theoretical thrusts in unity to inform this study. Nevertheless, I intend to be cautious about each theory's blind spots and learn from their "inherited" theoretical strengths and weaknesses when investigating curriculum making in the globalized education contexts. The discussion about curricular theories will thus provide entry points into a discussion of literacy theories as the former intends to tease out the legitimation and marginalization of voices engrained in transnational education curricula.

## **3.2 Multiliteracies**

In this section, I briefly lay out the history of research on language development and literacy development. The purpose of this historical sketch is to acknowledge that thinking about literacy has always been grounded in thinking about language, even though theories of language development and literacy development existed in parallel domains for much of the twentieth century. Another purpose is to accentuate the interdisciplinary "fraternizing" (Olson, 1994, p. xvi) of cognitive behaviourism, psycholinguistics, cultural psychology, and anthropology in the evolution of the multiliteracies framework. Then, I add the major tenets of multiliteracies. These tenets have shifted my attention from technical aspects of literacy to power, identity, and epistemology when I investigated the transnational education literacy curricula.

### **3.2.1 A Historical Trajectory: From Cognitive Behaviourism to Social Practice Theories**

Multiliteracies theory is a product of considerable theorizing and researching over decades in the related areas of cognitive behaviourism, psycholinguistics, cultural psychology, anthropology, and education. In this section, I sketch the historical trajectory of thinking that has led to the current iteration of multiliteracies.

#### **3.2.1.1 Cognitive Behaviourism and Psycholinguistics**

Two major cognitive and psychological strands have shaped language and literacy curriculum and pedagogy. As Brown (2001) succinctly summarizes, the 1940s and the

1950s saw the prevalence of behaviouristic programming of “a scientifically ordered set of linguistic structures into the minds of learners through conditioning” (p. 42). In the 1960s, Chomsky’s generative grammar started to boost interests in the innate cognitive code of languages. These two behaviouristic and psycholinguistic traditions represent an “inside/outside the head dichotomy” (Hruby, 2001) and were widely applied in the field of literacy studies.

Behaviourists view language learning as the acquisition of new habits and new behaviours, which are responses to outside stimuli (e.g., VanPatten & Williams, 2007). Behaviourists contend that language learning does not involve mental processes. The observable units in the environment, such as conditioning, reinforcement, and punishment, are “the most---indeed, perhaps the only---important factor in learning” (p. 19). The external environment and stimulus of language learning become Behaviourists’ focuses. However, learners’ mental processes are seen as “too subjective, too ‘hidden,’ for observation, measurement, and verification” (Johnson, 2004, p. 10), thus being disregarded by behaviourists. Seeing language as a set of observable and discrete behaviours, Behaviourism is readily aligned with structural linguistics which views language learning as an acquisition of a discrete set of predictable language patterns. Structural linguists describe that language learning starts from the lower levels (phones, phonemes, and morphemes) and then moves to the higher level systems (phrases, sentences, and clauses) (e.g., Chomsky, 1959; Johnson, 2004).

The application of behaviourism in the field of literacy changes the depiction of reading as perceptual activity centres on sound/symbol relationships. Behaviourists hold the view that reading development could be controlled through systematic reinforcement of isolated and narrow skills (Gillen & Hall, 2003; Tracey & Morrow, 2006). Today, behaviourism continues to impact literacy education due to its theoretical underpinning of direct instruction (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). Direct instruction focuses on discrete skills. Subskills are viewed as important for learners’ successful reading, such as phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. Teachers should deeply understand and directly teach the atomized skills and subskills as the subject matter. The classroom is to a great extent structured with scripted and highly sequenced classroom procedures.

Extending its application to second language acquisition (SLA), behaviourists argue that habits formed in first language (L1) are viewed as “problems” and obstacles in SLA and shall be overcome (e.g., Johnson, 2004). A deficit view of second language learners’ L1 habits is salient in behaviourists’ view of language transfer. Behaviourists view language transfer as “an important source of error and interference in SLL (second language learning), because first-language ‘habits’ were so tenacious and deeply rooted” (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 19).

Street (1984) depicts the cognitive paradigm of literacy education as the autonomous model of literacy that has dominated academic literature and is widely influential upon literacy teaching and curriculum. Adopting an asocial and ahistorical lens, the autonomous model conceptualizes literacy as decontextualized technical skills that reside in an individual. Street (2003) argues that this model disguises the cultural and ideological assumptions that underpin literacy education and the literacy-illiteracy binary. Literacy is presented as neutral and foreboding benign effects for “illiterate” people through “external source of pedagogy” (Lambirth, 2011, p. 5). This behavioural and cognitive paradigm of literacy sees imparting knowledge through “linear and staged curriculum” as crucial for all literacy learners (Lambirth, 2011, p. 6). Literacy learners’ own interests and creativity are to a great extent neglected in literacy curriculum and instruction.

In the 1960s and the 1970s, behaviourists’ perspectives of language learning were losing ground with the emergence of psycholinguistic views of learning which accentuate the inner forces of learning. In contrast to the behaviourist and structuralist focus of language learning on environment, Chomsky’s psycholinguistic model of L1 learning places more emphasis on a genetically predetermined language faculty (i.e., language acquisition device [LAD]). Chomsky’s Universal Grammar emphasizes that language is a natural human property that enables language acquisition. According to Chomsky (1965), it is this tacit knowledge that makes it possible for speakers to internalize the system of rules and to produce and understand an infinite number of sentences in their language. This psycholinguistic view describes humans as “symbolic species” who have innate knowledge of language principles to represent meanings through symbols and languages

(both oral and written) (Lambirth, 2011, p. 5). It also highlights creativity of language learners who have innate competences to create new utterances that they have never learned before.

Chomsky's (1959) views of language learning as neutral and universally successful also have consequences for literacy teaching and research. In contrast to behaviourists' emphasis on the quality of literacy instruction, psycholinguists emphasize the "natural, inevitable, and universal emergence of early literacy skills" (Hemphill & Snow, 1996, p. 174). For example, the whole language approach is in part grounded upon Chomsky's argument on the natural language capacity. One of the basic beliefs of this approach focuses on learners' naturalness and ease in acquiring literacy when they are immersed in a rich and well-supported environment for literacy development. In a similar vein, the emergent literacy concept also foregrounds the natural and universal emergence of early literacy skills in reading and writing. Isolated teaching of skills is to a great extent discouraged as it is "counterproductive to true development of individuals as language users" (Purcell-Gates, Jacobson, & Degener, 2004, p. 71). Learners are supposed to know intuitively about the skills, structures, and rules associated with reading and writing.

Chomsky's approach to language learning and its ensuing impacts upon literacy education has received critiques and concerns. Decontextualized linguistic rules are one of the primary concerns. Street (1984) challenges the universalism view of language and literacy and Universal Grammar's omission of the social aspects of language learning. In Chomsky's view, the learner's environment only serves as a triggering factor for children to start and then process their grammatical knowledge of the L1. Mitchell and Myles (2004) contend, "it [Universal Grammar] studies language somewhat clinically, in a vacuum, as a mental object" (p. 92). Language and literacy learning is thus seen as "an individual cognitive accomplishment" (Snow, 2006, p. 276). Valsiner and van der Veer (2000) describe two types of reductionism as related to the behaviouristic and psycholinguistic ideas of human mind---upward and downward reductionism. The upward reductionism holds that all human mental processes are derived from the environment. In contrast, the downward reductionism reduces complicated human behaviour to elementary principles, for example, the innate specification of all mental



functions in human genes. The autonomy of language faculty is salient in both models and actually excludes the possible discussions about the interaction among cognition, Universal Grammar, and social contexts (Johnson, 2004). Street maintains that differences among literacy practices, especially their different social and linguistic “grammars” shall be taken into account in literacy education.

### 3.2.1.2 Cultural Psychology and Social Practice Theories

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, scholars such as Scribner and Cole (1981) and Cole (1985) developed a strand of psychology building upon Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory which integrates the parallel domains of psychology and anthropology. Vygotskians propose that human cognition derives neither from upward nor from downward reductionism, but from the “organic (i.e., dialectic) unity of our biologically endowed brains and our culturally created symbolic artifacts and activities” (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008, p. 4).

Vygotsky (1981) contends that learning process is both individual and sociocultural. Every psychological function of learning appears twice. First, it appears on the social plane, namely, interaction with people. Then it appears within the child as an internalized form of this function. Scholars in the stream of cultural psychology focus on participation and the “dynamic interaction between the collective and the individual” (O’Connor, 1998, p. 38). Sociocultural scholars challenge the above-mentioned *acquisition* metaphor of language learning (e.g., Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Sfard, 1998). Critiquing the *acquisition* metaphor’s overemphasis on structures, rules, and facts, Sfard (1998) construes a *participation* metaphor. The *participation* metaphor challenges the traditional image of language learners as “isolated individuals who grapple for higher mental ground separated from the cultural institutions and historical conditions in which they learn” (Donato, 2000, p.46). The metaphor of participation shifts the focus to the nature of language and literacy learning as a socially situated activity (e.g., Ohta, 2000) and highlights the importance of learner’s shared practices of discourse with other expert or non-expert participants.

Attention to participation and socially situated literacy practices provides a basis for the “application of the ‘ideological’ model of literacy” (Street, 1984, p. 104). However, it does not necessarily eschew the autonomous perception of literacy as neutral and isolated. Through social psychological surveys and experimentations, Scribner and Cole (1981) found that literacy practices in three distinctive contexts help develop distinctive cognitive skills in the same ways as formal schooling does. However, according to Street, Scribner and Cole’s exploration of the nature of literacy in different sociocultural contexts does not entirely confront the implications of autonomous views of literacy since their focus is still on the “intellectual and developmental consequences” of literacy (Street, 1984, p. x).

Against the autonomous model of literacy, from the 1980s to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, New Literacy Studies (NLS) scholars conducted longitudinal studies which started to conceive of literacy as a socially situated practice (e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000; Heath, 1983; Street, 1984, 2003). Hruby (2001) contends that Vygotsky’s sociocultural theories<sup>13</sup> are situated in psychology. Scholars following this lineage accentuate the social scaffolding frameworks that “promote the fashioning of such internal structures in a manner reasonably cohesive with an individual’s social surroundings” (Hruby, 2001, p. 48). They recognize the central position of socioculturally constructed symbolic tools in a human being’s cognitive development and primarily deal with the influences of social processes upon an individual’s psychological construction of meaning. In contrast, social practice theories of literacy are grounded upon sociolinguistics and anthropology. Scholars in this stream are more concerned with the social and ideological aspects of human existence, namely, how various forms of literacy are socioculturally, politically, and ideologically situated phenomena.

The social turn of literacy theorizing from cognitive and psychological linguistics accentuates the literacy variations in different spatio-temporalities. In NLS scholars’ view, literacy is not only internal to the individual, but also embedded in social processes.

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<sup>13</sup> Hruby (2001) brackets Vygotsky’s sociohistoric developmental psychology theory and Soviet activity theory under the *social constructivism* umbrella in contrast with *social constructionism* which deals with “the way knowledge is constructed by, for, and between members of a discursively mediated community” (p. 51).

As Gee (2008) asserts, we need to focus on the Discourses with a capital “D” because meanings reside in social practices rather than merely in linguistic properties of language. Different from Vygotskian theories that attend to the influences of sociocultural processes upon an individual’s psychological construction of meaning, social practice theories of literacy foreground the embeddedness of literacy in history and sociocultural structures. Social practice theorists who adopt this model highlight how a wide spectrum of literacies are associated with and patterned by different communities, sociocultural origins, and social institutions (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Gee, 2008; Lewis, 2001; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004). The social practice theories of literacy no longer treat literacy as skill sets that “children come to school lacking” (Lambirth, 2011, p. 3). NLS scholars contend that observable events where literacy happens go beyond formal schooling contexts. Literacy events (i.e., “activities where literacy has a role”) actually exist in a variety of “domains of life” (Barton & Hamilton, 2000, p. 8), for example spaces like church, home, and bank. These observable episodes of literacy activities arise from and are shaped by “literacy practices” which are the “cultural ways of utilising literacy” (Barton & Hamilton, 2000, p. 8). Literacy practices are not observable units as they involve peoples’ attitudes toward literacy and discourses of literacy in different domains of life. New Literacy Studies’ notions of literacy practices and literacy events offer an vantage point for literacy educators and researchers to perceive literacy as a social practice rather than “formal linguistic properties of texts in isolation” (Barton & Hamilton, 2000, p. 9).

NLS scholars question the autonomous model of literacy which sees outside-of-school literacies as deficits. Instead, they value distinctive families’ and communities’ distinctive funds of knowledge (e.g., skills, knowledge, and cultural resources). Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) uses “funds of knowledge” to describe the cultural heritage and concepts parents and children bring to literacies. Adopting a “wealth model” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2005, p. 54) rather than deficit approaches, NLS scholars emphasize the importance of interaction and reciprocal exchanges among various actors in families, communities, and schools for children’s literacy, biliteracy, or multiliteracies development (e.g., González et al., 2005; Gregory, 2008; Kenner, 2005; Rowsell, 2006).

Kenner (2005) shows how networked domains of life (e.g., home, school, and community) provide widened and diverse literacy learning opportunities for biliterate children. Kenner also finds that children's understanding of different writing systems used in different contexts (e.g., Chinese as picto-phonetic while English as alphabetic, different letter-sound relationship between Spanish and English) actually increases their multisemiotic resources and gives them alternatives to "construct their knowledge and identities" (p. xi). Gregory (2008) and Rowsell (2006) exemplify how to access diverse families' funds of knowledge to build home-school links, such as having students bring in family artifacts, incorporating vocations of parents into teaching units, and arranging field trips to the workplaces. The use of funds of knowledge provides more culturally responsive and meaningful lessons that tap students' prior knowledge. Such a wealth model also has the potential to generate "positive self-esteem and meaningful literacy learning" (Tracey & Morrow, 2006, p. 107). In Gregory's (2008) research, the range of mediators in literacy education expands from teachers to non-mainstream parents and children. Parents who were not confident with their abilities to provide literacy support began to appreciate how much they knew and how much they could make the stories more meaningful and comprehensible for their children after activities such as story sharing and performance. Children might act as mediators as well for their parents and younger siblings. The mediating function of utilizing children's complete repertoire of cultural knowledge has consequences for children's development of proficient biliterate practices (Razfar & Gutierrez, 2003). Acting as "child cultural brokers" also has important implications for children's socio-emotional development and for their enhanced self-efficacy for managing social interactions (Parke et al., 2003, p. 261).

Besides the social practice theorists' emphasis on literacy variations across diverse domains of life, they also stress the ideological aspects of literacy instead of its individual aspects. Street (2003) claims, "multiple literacies [vary] according to time and space, but [are] also contested in relations of power" (p. 77). That said, social practice theories of literacy also accentuate a critical stance that recognizes the inherently political and ideological nature of literacy practices. NLS scholars ask questions such as whose literacies are dominant and whose are marginalized or resistant. Heath's (1983) ethnographic study depicts how two communities' (i.e., Roadville & Trackton) different

language socializations impacted children's learning in formal schooling which was dominated by the mainstream townspeople teachers. Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) interrogate the value hierarchies in cultural practices. They question the potentials of dominant school experiences to limit the use of minority students' "linguistic and culture-historical repertoires" and thus restrict students' engagement (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 22). Heath's (1983) portrait of three different communities well exemplifies how literacies are linked to different cultural and power structures in different societies for specific social purposes. It shows that "the politics by which reading and writing preferences of elite groups get installed as the measure against which other versions are deemed inadequate or undesirable" (Brandt, 2001, p. 3).

Social practice theorists highlight the myriad linguistic forms of literacy practices. Another strand of this plurality takes a "semiotic turn" (Sheridan & Rowsell, 2010, p. 8) and acknowledges the meaningfulness of "extra-linguistic" phenomena (Kress & Jewitt, 2003, p. 2). NLS scholars following this lineage argue that ideas can be represented in more traditional symbols (e.g., speech and writing); they can also be communicated in symbols of image, music, and video (Kress, 2009; Stein, 2008). The social practice view in this stream sees literacy as "the development of shared meanings through diverse symbol systems" in daily literacy events (Flewitt, Nind, & Payler, 2009, p. 213). Responding to the new communicative conditions of the contemporary world, meaning makers tend to orchestrate a combination of words, images, maps, gazes, gestures, and videos to make meanings. Kress (2000) refers to this emerging literacy phenomenon as *multimodality*. The notion of "text" has thus extended to multimodal texts (Flewitt et al., 2009). NLS scholars thus call for literacy education to be inclusive of multiple modes of communication as responses to the contemporary world.

The social practice theories accommodate the current situations of cultural and linguistic diversity and ubiquity of new modes of communications. However, one major critique of the social practice theories points to the view that the cognitive and the social practice camps are incommensurable. As Brandt (2001) notes, "this perspective tends to eschew references to skills or abilities at all, focusing instead on the concept of literate practices,

emphasizing the grounded, routinized, multiple, and socially sanctioned ways in which reading and writing occur” (p. 3).

One specific feature of the later development of NLS theories lies in their assertion of the interaction between the sociocultural contexts, the formal linguistic properties of texts, and the cognitive properties in individuals. This view is different from the cognitive tradition of literacy which sees literacy as either linguistic properties of texts in isolation, individual’s cognitive properties in isolation (as in Chomsky’s Universal Grammar), or the environment in isolation (as in behaviourism). As Barton and Hamilton (1998) contend, literacy practices include people’s awareness of literacy, their constructions of literacy, discourses of literacy, and how people talk about and make sense of literacy. These processes are internal to the individual; at the same time, they represent sociocultural interactions within individuals and between the individual and the collective. Building on Scribner and Cole’s (1981) seminal research, Purcell-Gates et al. (2004) conceive of cognitive and social practice theories as forming a nested relationship. They state that becoming a successful reader or writer involves development of key reading and writing skills and involvement in meaningful social practices.

In a nutshell, social practice theories of literacy have illuminated the reconceptualization of literacy in the contemporary world with a multiplicity of languages, cultures, and communication modes. They have broadened the notion of “literacy” and “texts” from linguistic symbols to texts that are “parts of *lived, talked, enacted, value-and-belief-laden* practices carried out in specific places and at specific times” (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996, p. 3) (italics in original). Their core notion that meanings and literacy practices are historically and socioculturally located has formed a solid theoretical basis for the burgeoning multiliteracies framework.

### 3.2.2 Multiliteracies: A Lens to Viewing Literacy Practices in Cross-Border Contexts

The New London Group (1996) created a *multiliteracies* framework to respond to the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity and pluralistic modes of communication in the globalized world. They differentiate “multiliteracies” from “mere literacy”, which is

more focused on page-bound, official, and standard forms of language. The concept of “multiliteracies” highlights: (a) modes of representation instead of language alone, implying the multiplicity of the communication channels as related to the linguistic, the visual, the audio, the spatial, and the gestural; (b) linguistic and cultural differences so as to increase local diversity and global connectedness; and (c) ideologies and power relations as embedded literacy practices. As is contrasted with “mere literacy”, multiliteracies theories do not view previously non-official and non-standard modes of representations or literacies in periphery communities as deficits, but as legitimated forms of literacy that facilitate communication across borders.

“Multiliteracies” accommodates different strands of literacy studies and has several connotations: (a) literacy practices involving different symbolic systems (i.e., multimodal literacies) (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Kress, 2000); (b) communication practices in different cultures and languages (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; The New London Group, 1996) or in different Secondary Discourses (Gee, 2008); (c) new forms of literacy that are responses to rapid technological changes and the new global order (Cole & Pullen, 2010; Kalantzis & Cope, 2008; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Selber, 2004); and (d) literacies as related to forms of knowledge in particular academic literacies (e.g., science literacy and business literacy) (Canagarajah, 2002; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003).

The multiliteracies perspective is by no means “a grand new literacy schema” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2000, p. 240). Building upon previous theoretical traditions, the multiliteracies perspective attempts to extend the existing traditions and epistemologies of language and literacy. Situated in the sociolinguistics stream, the multiliteracies perspective considers the historical contexts and the ideologically situated nature of language and literacy. It offers a broader, yet more situated, lens to see how literacy practices embedded in different cultures collide and engage with one another and what different repertoires are thus constructed in cross-cultural classrooms. It is worth noting that current ethnographic studies on multiliteracies are more geared to documentation of periphery multiliteracies (i.e., non-official literacies). They primarily focus on bringing legitimate status to previously illegitimate literacies (e.g., Cummins, 2000b, 2001a; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000; Pahl & Rowsell, 2005). Little is known about the contested realities of

multiliteracies within an elite education discourse like transnational education programs. Nevertheless, literature on periphery multiliteracies and the multiliteracies pedagogy (Cummins, 2006, 2009; The New London Group, 1996) lends a valuable prism to this study to examine literacy issues with elite transnational education in terms of power, identity, and epistemology.

### 3.2.2.1 Multiliteracies: Issues of Power

Olson (1994) argues that the mythology of literacy not only “justifies the advantages of the literate”, but also “assigns the failings of the society ...to the illiterate” (p. 2). Olson notes that we must go back to the beginning to demystify writing and literacy. Writing began as a mnemonic device to record oral communications. Writing later played multiple functions rather than just being “memory-supportive” (Heath, 1983, p. 200). Literacy skills and abilities to use written texts later became highly valued in particular sociocultural contexts. Writing and literacy are therefore historically privileged over oral language and culture. Street (1984) argues that the technology of literacy has never been extricated from ideological innocence and power relations. In a similar vein, Zubair (2001) asserts that literacy is the major locus of ideology and plays a crucial role in the “exercise, maintenance, and change of power” (p. 191).

First and foremost, power is encoded in historically and politically privileged regional and international languages. For instance, Olson (1994) points out the untenable yet widely shared belief in the West that the alphabetic writing system is superior over non-alphabetic cultures like the Chinese. This superiority was historically tied to the technological aspects of scripts. However, in the contemporary world, the superiority of international languages like English is more linked to the political and economic capital that accompanies these languages. For example, in less developed regions, English is “often equated with the achievement of economic prosperity on both personal and national levels” (Lee, 2009, p. 2). Higher English proficiency and knowledge of mainstream Anglophones are closely associated with a “promise” of wealth and higher social status (See also Kell, 2004). The export of English and English-related literacy to less developed regions has thereby been critiqued as stifling indigenous or local literacies (Barton, 1994; Street, 1994). Voices in opposition to linguistic imperialism on a global



basis have thus challenged the dominant spread of English and acclaimed linguistic diversity and linguistic rights of subordinate groups (e.g., Canagarajah, 2002; Phillipson, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2006).

Power is also embedded in modes of representation. Heath and Street (2008) see modes as socially learned and constructed. Differing sociocultural discourses “impose” differing privileges to certain modes while weighing them against the other. The New London Group’s (1996) notion of “mere literacy” conveys formalized, monolingual, monocultural, and rule-governed language forms that are privileged in the mainstream education system. The dominant discourses of print literacy<sup>14</sup> as an official and standard mode of representation are inscribed upon people “both interpersonally and institutionally” (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998, p. 26). In contrast with *mere literacy*, NLS scholars hail *multimodal literacies* which refers to events and practices in which diverse modes are orchestrated to make meaning with the written still as a salient mode (e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Heath & Street, 2008; Kress, 2000).

The New London Group (1996) propose a multiliteracies pedagogy that accentuates the central role of negotiating the linguistic and cultural differences to “the pragmatics of the working, civic, and private lives of students” (p. 60). The New London Group’s pedagogy of multiliteracies contains a four-component schema, that is, *Situated Practice*, *Overt Instruction*, *Critical Framing*, and *Transformed Practice*. *Situated Practice* refers to immersion in experience and the utilization of available designs, including those from the students’ life worlds and simulations of the relationships to be found in workplaces and public spaces. *Situated Practice* acknowledges the heterogeneous nature of literacy practices and is situated in the tradition of various progressivisms, from Dewey to the whole language approach and process writing. Its purpose is to provide learners with abundant contextual clues and to enhance their abilities to actively search for clues in unfamiliar contexts so as to make intuitive sense or common sense of meaning. *Overt Instruction* is concerned with systematic, analytic, and conscious understanding. It

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<sup>14</sup> Purcell-Gates et al. (2004) define print literacy as “the reading and writing of some form of print for communicative purposes inherent in people’s lives” (p. 26).

intends to make implicit patterns of meaning explicit and nurture students' abilities to consciously describe the process of patterns of a specific form of literacy. *Critical Framing* interrogates contexts and purposes and is associated with the more recent tradition of critical literacy<sup>15</sup>. *Critical Framing* encourages students to interrogate the social and cultural contexts of particular designs of meaning. It invites students to view what they are studying critically in relation to its context. *Transformed Practice* takes meanings and subjectivity into new domains and is grounded upon the strategies for transfer of learning from one context to another and turning theories into practice. *Transformed Practice* involves intertextuality (i.e., the connections, influences, recreation of other texts and cross-references of history, culture and experience) and hybridity (Kalantzis & Cope, 2008).

The four aspects of the New London Group's (1996) multiliteracies do not form a linear or rigid learning sequence, nor do they represent a clear-cut demarcation of different paradigms. Rather, when put together, they overlap and become contagious to each other. The New London Group argue that this "transformed pedagogy of access" (p. 72) will enable literacy learners to accomplish the twin goals for literacy learning: (a) to create access to the "symbolic capital" (i.e., "symbolic meanings that have currency in access to employment, political power, and cultural recognition" [pp. 71-72]); and (b) to cultivate the critical engagement for the literacy learners to become transformed "Designers of social futures" (p. 65).

To further illuminate the transformative feature of the multiliteracies pedagogy, Cummins (2009) distinguishes coercive and collaborative power relations embedded in the micro-interactions between educators, learners, and communities. The former denotes exertion of power upon learners by means of control, isolation, suppression of free will, and punishment or reward. Contrastively, collaborative societal power relations are where the optimal academic development occurs when there is both maximum cognitive engagement and maximum identity investment on the part of learners. Cummins's (2006,

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<sup>15</sup> According to Bean and Harper (2006), critical literacy interrogates the historical, social, and political dimensions of texts and seeks answers to questions about power, ideology, identity, and agency which pertain to meaning construction.

2009) multiliteracies pedagogy highlights power relationships embedded in literacy as social practices. It explores ways to challenge and engage power relations through identity negotiation so as to transform literacy learners into designers of their social future and achieve social justice. Cummins's (2001b) notion of "identity options" (p.17) highlights the ways that can strategically open up possibilities for students' identity formation and their interpersonal spaces within the classroom as a language learning environment. Cummins (2001b) notes that students' "identity options" are closely related with the interpersonal space/power relations played out in the teacher-student "micro-interactions" (p. 15). According to Cummins, Baker, and Hornberger (2001), it is these micro-interactions that "constitute the most immediate determinant of student academic success or failure" (p. 321). Within coercive learning contexts, learners will have limited growth if they have limited access to the community where students' cultural and linguistic capital is not valued and/or dialogue, apprenticeship, and mentoring are not encouraged. Conversely, collaborative learning contexts reflect the sense of "power" that enables or empowers learners to interrogate the operation of coercive power relations, engage learners' identity investment, and thereby help them achieve more.

The differentiation of the two "power relations" is related with differing conceptions of power, that is, power as constraining and repressive or as enabling and productive. The former perspective sees power as "a fixed quantity" (Cummins, 2009, p. 45) and places more focus on oppressive ideology and structures and the latter on agency (Gore, 1992). It is the second perception of power that offers hopes for education to be a project of cultural politics and to create a "socially just global society informed by a postmodernist planetary humanism" (Lingard & Gale, 2007, p. 5).

Canagarajah (2002) notes, "the hybridity in texts is often perceived as inspiring egalitarian textual conventions that break down the cultural capital required for literacy in the past" (p. 218). Nevertheless, he contends that multiliteracies has been assumed by scholars to be liberating and providing legitimacy to many previously nonstandard codes, channels, symbols, genres, and discourses. He cautions about the propensity to exaggerate the implications of multiliteracies and to see them as a force to deconstruct all hierarchies, restrictions, and institutional conventions.

### 3.2.2.2 Multiliteracies: Issues of Identity<sup>16</sup>

Literacy practices can never be devoid of identity negotiations. New Literacy Studies scholars contend that people read and write differently out of different social practices, which reflect their different ways of being persons and living life (Gee, 2008; Gee et al., 1996; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). An emerging body of literature illustrates the inextricable link between literacy practices and identity by showing how identity breathes life into literacy and how language learners' identities are enacted through multimodal and multilingual texts (e.g., Cummins, 2006; Gee, 2008; Pahl & Rowsell, 2005; Stornaiuolo, Hull, & Nelson, 2009; Toohey & Norton, 2010).

The autonomous and ideological views of literacy position literacy learners differently (e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1984). The autonomous model of literacy tends to idealize literacy learners as ideally and individually internalizing stable and idealized language patterns and structures. In contrast, ideological views of literacy turn to view learners as “differentially positioned members of social and historical collectives using (and thus learning) language as a dynamic tool” (Toohey & Norton, 2010, p. 180). Instead of seeing literacy learners as illegitimate users of linguistic symbols, who have deficits in mastering the discrete skills prioritized by the “standardized, print-biased” assessments (Stornaiuolo et al., 2009, p. 382), the ideological model of literacy accentuates how the sociocultural and historic aspects of literacy practices reproduce or position certain types of literacy learners (e.g., Street).

Sachs (2003) summarizes Wenger's (as cited in Sachs, p. 125) five dimensions of identity as follows: (a) identity as negotiated experiences (i.e., we define who we are by the ways we experience ourselves through participation as well as the way we and others reify ourselves); (b) identity as community membership (i.e., we define who we are by the familiar and unfamiliar); (c) identity as a learning trajectory (i.e., we define who we are by where we have been and where we are going); (d) identity as a nexus of multiple memberships (i.e., we define who we are by the ways we reconcile our multidimensional

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<sup>16</sup> Discussion of “identity” in this study is not restricted to “ethnic identity” (Moje et al. 2004, p. 47). It includes different ways that identity is used in literacy studies, for example, race, gender, class, and nationality.

identities into one); and (e) identity as a relation between the local and the global (i.e., we define who we are by negotiating local ways of belonging to broader constellations and manifesting broader styles and discourses).

Wenger's (as cited in Sachs, 2003) five dimensions of identity stress the discursive practices through which learners' identities are generated. Highlighting the constitutive forces of discourses, Davies and Harré (1990) also identify "discourse" as a multilayered public process through which identities and meanings are dynamically constructed. They shed light on the on-going transformation of identity in various spatio-temporalities. Holland et al.'s (1998) poststructural notion of "sites of the self" illuminates the ways that individuals are exposed to plural, competing, and differentially dominant and authoritative discourses and practices that shape the self. Drawing on postmodern and poststructural concerns, Toohey and Norton (2010) point to the contingency, hybridity, and dynamics of language learners' identities. To quote them, "identities are complex, multilayered, often hybrid, sometimes imagined, and developed through activity by and for individuals in many social fields" (p. 178). Toohey and Norton foreground the multiple identities of language learners as positioned differently by discourses and practices (See also Luke, 2009).

Scholars also explicate how discursive identities are constructed within discourse (language-in-use) and Discourse (language-in-use plus other stuff or ways of being in the world) (Gee, 2008). According to Gee (2008), there are two broad types of Discourses in any society: "Primary Discourses" and "Secondary Discourses". These two types of Discourses are closely pertinent to identity issues related with multiple forms of literacies. Primary Discourses are concerned with early home and peer-group socialization. Gee notes that the Primary Discourses constitute people's first social identity and form the base within which people acquire or resist later Discourses. Primary Discourses differ by constructs such as social class and ethnicity (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). Secondary Discourses are those "to which people are apprenticed as part of their socializations within various local, provincial, and national groups and institutions outside early home and peer-group socialization---for example, churches, gangs, schools, offices" (Gee, 2008, p. 168). The more or less distinctive uses of language in different

Secondary Discourses shape people's identities in particular ways. For example, individuals' expert use of certain modes supports their identity and membership for a community (e.g., computer geek, graffiti artist, dancer, and football players) (Heath & Street, 2008). Because of the myriad Secondary Discourses, there are multiple ways of being literate and multiple forms of literacy uses, thus multiple layers to everyone's identity.

Equally important, Wenger's (as cited in Sachs, 2003) perception of multidimensional identities illuminates learners' agentive roles in transforming and becoming through participation. Challenging an overemphasis on the ultimate dominance of broader discourses, Holland et al. (1998) argue that besides positioning people, sociocultural discourses and practices actually offer them resources to react to the problematic situations and avoid "utter domination and compliance" (p. 33). Contrary to the behaviourist conception of human beings as passive respondents to the stimulus from the outside, the notion of "agency" accentuates humans' active engagement with the environment with their varying reactions to the conditions of the environment. According to Davies and Harré (1990), learners are not always constituted by discursive practices. Instead, they emerge in social interactions with their own learners' agency, that is, their capabilities of exercising and negotiating new choices in relation to self-positioning and literacy practices (e.g., Stornaiuolo et al., 2009). Stornaiuolo et al. (2009) argue that re-analyzing and re-defining learners' competences and intelligences are also needed given the impacts of globalization, digital technology, the new knowledge economy, and the diverse and mobile population. For them, the literacy educators' goal should be focused on fostering literacy learners' "adaptive, generative, and critical capacities so that they can build coherent meanings" from the diverse and dynamic discursive practices in relation to literacy (i.e., ideas, emotions, artifacts, symbol systems, and interactions that comprise our everyday lives) (Stornaiuolo et al., 2009, p. 384).

Toohy and Norton (2010) reiterate the notion of "investment" as is related to language learning---a sociological construct that takes into account learners' dynamic and complex identities and their varied desires to exercise agency and participate in social practices. This concept captures the inextricable relationship between investment and identity:

if learners “invest” in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. As the value of their cultural capital increases, so learners’ sense of themselves and their desires for the future are reassessed. (p. 182)

Different from the psychological framework of “motivation” that focuses on individual learners’ willingness to learn, Toohey and Norton’s notion of “investment” emphasizes the features of language communities that enable or constrain language learners’ engagement in local literacy practices (See also Cummins, 2001b). As Toohey and Norton argue, highly motivated learners might well be marginalized by given communities (whether racist, sexist, elitist or homophobic) and thus have little investment in local literacy practices. As other scholars point out (e.g., Stornaiuolo et al., 2009; The New London Group, 1996), for language learning to be successful, the tools the learning communities use to position and evaluate language learners should be sensitive to learners’ agentic investment into literacy learning as creative and critical designers of meanings.

Another crucial construct in the exploration of literacy-identity relationship is *imagined communities* (e.g., Norton, 2001; Toohey & Norton, 2010). “Imagined communities” conveys learners’ desire for membership in communities other than their current ones. Using a similar conception, Holland et al. (1998) argue there are “figured worlds” where students may never enter because of their limitations in social status; some they may miss by contingency; and some they may enter fully. On the one hand, imagined communities are historically and socioculturally constructed. On the other, imagined communities also inspire “a sense of future possibilities and sense of what might be”, which stimulate new actions and inspire transformation (Slattery, 1995, p. 221). Educators’ awareness of and incorporation of learners’ imagined membership into teaching and curriculum can help construct learning activities and enrich “their desired trajectories toward participation in their imagined communities” (Toohey & Norton, 2010, p. 184).

Ideological struggle and agency have been highlighted as the central constructs in the multiliteracies perspective because “non-elite groups in context were seen to alter and resist forms associated with dominant institutions and social groups” (Brandt & Clinton,

2002, p. 341). The pedagogical emphasis of multiliteracies is more about how to re-evaluate and incorporate a heterogeneous student population's periphery multiliteracies (e.g., vernacular varieties) in the mainstream/school literacy education so that "student voice and agency can find expression and make a difference in schools and the wider society" (Cummins, 2000b, p. 273). The New London Group scholars (1996) conceive of literacy learners as active participants in social changes and active designers of meaning and social futures. Instead of producing docile and compliant workers, the New London Group envision the critical goals of multiliteracies pedagogy as: (a) to recruit, rather than ignore and erase the different identities with their attendant languages, discourses, and registers; and (b) to develop students' capacity to speak up, to negotiate, and to reflect and engage critically with the new conditions of the world. As Kalantzis and Cope (2008) eloquently argue, there are contrasted images of the kinds of persons created by traditional approaches of literacy education and the approaches advocated by the multiliteracies perspective, namely, people learning and obeying official and standard linguistic rules versus people learning, critiquing, and transforming various forms of literacy.

### 3.2.2.3 Multiliteracies: Issues of Epistemology

Issues of power and identity are always intertwined with issues of epistemology. An interrogation of issues of epistemology will help illuminate what forms of literacy curriculum and schooling might intend to reproduce, privilege, or marginalize. Canagarajah (2002) posits, "To be literate today involves multifaceted skills and competencies" (p. 211). The concept of literacy connotes the ability to read and write meaningfully the language of specific fields of knowledge (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). "Multiliteracies" in forms of content area literacies are related to Hirst's (1975) notion of "distinct disciplines or forms of knowledge" (p. 46). Being literate in a form of knowledge means "being able to 'speak' its language and 'read and write its literature'" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003, p. 15). Addressing academic reading and writing in culturally diverse backgrounds, Lea and Street (1998) propose an "academic literacies" perspective. This stance construes students' reading and writing as a practice that is socially situated and "ideologically inscribed" (Lillis, 2003, p. 192). Jones, Turner, and



Street (1999) maintain that academic literacies should be concerned with epistemology, namely, be concerned with what counts as knowledge and who has authority over it. Lea and Street (1998) also suggest that the “appropriateness” of students’ writing in a specific community has more to do with issues of epistemology. Students’ epistemological challenges in literacy acquisition might well relate to the institutional conventions of literacy practices.

Formal education conceives of the human mind as an epistemological organ and sees a literate mind as mastering a number of “the most important knowledge” (Egan & Gajdamaschko, 2003, p. 84). Egan and Gajdamaschko (2003) contend that formal schooling in almost all cultural contexts focuses on coding and decoding multiple literacy forms related to content-area knowledge. Issues, like who defines what forms of knowledge to be included in the school literacies and why, are quite ideologically embedded. Egan and Gajdamaschko illuminate the relationship between literacy and privileged forms of knowledge in formal schooling. With the development of literacy, privileged forms of knowledge, such as mathematics, history, science, and literature, are stored in coded forms. The only access to the store of these forms of knowledge is through becoming skilled in school literacy. Global workplaces have also played a key role in deciding privileged knowledge in school literacy. As Gee et al. (1996) note, the changed landscape of global technology and global economic order has altered the global workplace literacy requirements in school.

Egan and Gajdamaschko (2003) also point out that the difficulties in becoming literate might not only lie in individuals’ different abilities to decipher the complex “codes” of literate cultures. Difficulties also result from the selective and exclusive nature of school literacy with respect to access to privileged knowledge. The epistemological conception of literacy education, that is, teaching coding and decoding systems of various forms of knowledge, cannot open up the stored knowledge to all the members of a specific sociocultural context.

Lankshear and Knobel (2003) argue that a multiliteracies pedagogy is concerned with the forms of knowledge that are involved in acquiring and appropriating diverse forms of

literacy. Following the line of Green's (1988) 3D model, they argue that being literate in multifaceted forms of literacies involves integrated facets of knowledge in the operational, cultural, and critical dimensions. For example, in different Secondary Discourses (e.g., schools, clubs, and churches) (Gee, 2008), specific forms of operational and cultural knowledge are needed to appropriate the use of literacies.

Both the New London Group (1996) and Cummins (2006) expound on the necessity for teachers and students to interact with different forms of knowledge in multiliteracies educational backgrounds. For instance, Cummins's transformative pedagogy of multiliteracies entails comparing students' prior and current language systems so as to enhance their language awareness. Students' active investment of their cultural and linguistic knowledge in identity texts will facilitate their academic development. Furthermore, a critical analysis of literacy use as situated in specific contexts will also result in transformed and reconstructed knowledge systems across languages. The purpose of the multiliteracies pedagogy is transformed meaning through critical understanding of multifarious forms of knowledge. Mastering school-based, specialist, academic, and public-sphere forms of knowledge and literacy practices is not sufficient (e.g., Gee, 2000). The ultimate goal is for learners to transform these forms of knowledge, break them, and innovate new ones.

### 3.3 Summary

Adopting a multiliteracies framework, I acknowledge the complexity and fluid nature of literacy, which could be practiced through multiple discourses, multiple modes, multiple time frameworks, and multiple languages. The multiliteracies framework is important to the study, because it highlights the pivot of valuing the diversity and situatedness of local literacies in their specific sociocultural contexts. Given the complexity and situatedness of literacy practices that are entrenched in specific transnational education curricula, the above-mentioned theoretical tools could not be exhaustive, but will surely be "subject to the situational demands" (as cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 179) of the given study.

In this chapter, I unpack the major constructs of these theoretical tools. The complexity of the "tool" set has helped me to discipline the data collection and interpretation processes

(Yin, 1993). In the service of answering the research questions, these theoretical tools have also enabled a “situated perspective” (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 275) for me to challenge the prevailing dualism/dichotomies (e.g., centre-periphery, dominance-resistance), disrupt “the efficacy of the center” (e.g., Western countries, global elite), and problematize the pathologization of the periphery and the romanticization of its “heroic agency” (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 291) in the transnational education programs.

## Chapter 4

### 4 Methodology

Existing, yet limited, literature finds that in cross-border transnational educational contexts, multiple forms of literacy and meaning-making practices juxtapose and operate “under one roof” (Schuetze, 2008, p. 5). A universal meta-narrative cannot account for the intersecting local and global relationships that are explicitly and implicitly shaping transnational education curriculum design and implementation. Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) argue, “This is an age of emancipation, freedom from the confines of a single regime of truth, emancipation from seeing the world in one color” (p. 189). Being aware of the dynamics of literacy curricula in a cross-border educational terrain, my doctoral research adopted an array of research methods for data collection and a spectrum of conceptual tools to guide data analysis. This chapter delineates the methodological considerations of my doctoral study. Special attention is given to the complexity of data collection, analysis, and representation in this cross-cultural and cross-lingual research and what I did to address the challenges.

#### 4.1 Methodology: A Case Study with Ethnographic Tools and Sensibilities

To explore literacy curricula and literacy practices in a contact zone, I employed a case study methodology (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2008). This case study is set in “temporal, geographical, organization, and institutional contexts that enable boundaries to be drawn around the case” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 253), though I am aware of the arbitrariness in defining a “bounded” system. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for the transnational education program were: (a) a transnational education program specifically using integrated Ontario and Chinese secondary school curricula; (b) a transnational education program primarily targeting the local population, no matter whether the local population appears to be diverse or not; and (c) a transnational education program initiated as an institution providing education as a commodity.

Case study is an appropriate match with the research problem for the following reasons. First, case study approaches are a good fit for literacy inquiries that focus on local

particulars of sociocultural dynamics (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). A major strength of a case study approach lies in its attention to “subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 256). Second, case studies are good fits for innovative projects and policy directions (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003) like transnational education curricula. As Cohen et al. (2007) note, this is because case study materials “provide powerful human-scale data on macro-political decision-making, fusing theory and practice” (p. 255). At the same time, it can also “contribute towards the ‘democratization’ of decision-making” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 256). In addition, insights drawn from case studies may be directly interpreted and put to use in educational policies pertaining to literacy curriculum in transnational education programs.

With a keen interest to probe cross-border spaces by seeing and dialoguing with people, I defined my study as a case study that used ethnographic tools, that is, observations, interviews, and document analysis (Green & Bloome, 1997; Schensul, Schensul, & LeCompte, 1999). Ethnographic sensibilities helped to define my *ways of seeing* (Wolcott, 2008) while I was on the case (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Ethnographic lenses of language and learning do not merely focus on what happens at the local level of a culture, but also on how institutional forces select their preferred cultural patterns and imbue them with particular values (Heath & Street, 2008; Leung, 2005). Heath and Street (2008) see “culture” as distinct from “nation” and “ethnicity”. The former is more associated with subgroupings and their “special ways of doing and believing” (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 9). That said, an institution of formal education may build and enforce its own core cultural patterns. Defining “culture” as a verb given its dynamic and shifting nature, Heath and Street contend that the cultural identity of an institution may also change due to pressure and forces from social, political, and economic sectors as well as powerful individuals.

With respect to cross-cultural inquiries, Heath and Street (2008) highlight that ethnographers unaccustomed to such inquiries often fall into “the ethnocentric trap of claiming: ‘They do x and we do y, or we do x and they do not’” (p. 36). Being bilingual and bicultural, I have had the privilege of being closer to the “other” and being more familiar with the local (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 34). Nevertheless, in the study I had to

be constantly mindful of the intellectual traditions that I had been equipped with while studying in Canadian academia. I brought, for example, North-American academic discourses with me to the research site and put on lenses generated in North-America to observe what happened in classrooms instructed by Canadian and Chinese educators. During the course of data collection, I had to be alert to the limitations of having frames of reference informed by North-American academia. I have been vigilant of my tendency “to note what is not occurring” and “to discount information that does not fit a current frame of reference” (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 37). I have been also mindful of “co-occurrence” by constantly comparing theories from the literature, hunches, and data collected via various methods (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 38).

## 4.2 Data Collection: Methods and Procedures

Creswell (2007) notes that case study methodology offers the opportunity for in-depth analysis of multiple sources aiming to better understand the bounded system of the case. Yin (2003) also highlights that a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to employ various sources of evidence (p. 97). Multiple sources of data are not only a prerequisite for triangulation, but also a must to conduct an in-depth investigation of the complex problematic of this study.

When I started the data collection at SCS, I employed an “audit trail” (See Table 1) which refers to “the trail of materials assembled for the use of the auditor, metaphorically analogous to fiscal accounts” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319). Its purpose was to offer a reliable database for potential researchers who might seek the transferability of the findings of this study to their own situations. Admittedly, it is often future appliers, rather than the original investigators, who seek the transferability of research (Creswell, 2007). However, it is the original researcher who provides the potential appliers with a strong chain of evidence to follow, thus making transferability possible. Out of practical considerations, the audit trail in this study consists of raw data, chronological entries of research processes, questions and research goals framing particular research stages and particular research activities, sources of data and data collection methods (e.g., entry into the field and interview), timeline, and the evolution of codes and categories (e.g., initial

coding efforts and analytic activities [Creswell, 2007, p. 291]) (See Table 1 and Table 5 for examples of audit trails of data collection and data analysis).

**Table 1: An Example of Audit Trail of Data Collection.**

Component	Timeline	Aims of Data Collection	Methods	Research Subjects
<b>Component I</b>	June, 2010 – Sept., 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Intended, hidden, and null curriculum in general</li> <li>❖ Intended curriculum at SCS in particular</li> </ul>	Document analysis	Documents
<b>Component II</b>	Sept. 26, 2010 – Feb. 16, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Intended, hidden, and null curriculum at SCS in particular</li> </ul>	Interviews	Canadian and Chinese policy makers and school administrators
<b>Component III</b>	Oct. 8, 2010 – Dec. 20, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Implemented, hidden, null curriculum at SCS</li> <li>❖ Students' lived curriculum at SCS</li> <li>❖ Literacy and identity options in the literacy-related classrooms</li> </ul>	Classroom observation; Collecting assignments	Canadian and Chinese teachers; Students
<b>Component IV</b>	Oct. 29, 2010 – Dec. 20, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Implemented, hidden, null curriculum at SCS</li> <li>❖ Literacy and identity options in the literacy-related classrooms</li> </ul>	Teacher interviews	Canadian and Chinese teachers
<b>Component V</b>	From Dec. 1, 2010 to Dec. 20, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Hidden, null, and students' lived curriculum at SCS</li> <li>❖ Literacy options in students' local experiences</li> <li>❖ Ensuing implications for students' identity options</li> </ul>	Student interviews; Multimodal method	Students

In the following, I unpack the data collection procedure and rationales for using each method.

### 4.2.1 Document Analysis

I started “casing the joint” by “amassing basic information about space, time, and people” (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 21) at the transnational education site and examining multiple sources of documents that underpin the intended curriculum. These documents include: (a) existing literature on transnational education, (b) Canadian provincial and Chinese policy documents on transnational education programs, (c) Canadian provincial and Chinese secondary school literacy curriculum guides (e.g., curriculum for Mandarin, English language arts, or ESL) and teaching/learning materials used in both Ontario and Chinese secondary schools, and (d) integrated transnational education literacy curricula and teaching materials for use in the program (i.e., intended literacy curricula articulated by both Chinese and English teachers). When examining intended literacy curricula, I looked for receptive and expressive communicative components in multiple forms: reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing. During the course of analyzing existing literature on literacy and curriculum in transnational education, special attention was given to particularities of literacy practices as they were situated in larger structural and societal dynamics at the local and global levels.

### 4.2.2 Interview

Limited qualitative literature on literacy curriculum in secondary school transnational education programs points to the necessity to conduct “qualitative interviews” (Warren, 2002, p. 84), which would offer insights into how both Ontario and Chinese literacy-related curricula are designed by policy makers and relevant parties, implemented by classroom teachers, and experienced and perceived by students.

I used purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2007) to select interview participants. Purposive sampling is a vital choice when “most of the random sample may be largely ignorant of particular issues and unable to comment on matters of interest to the researcher” (p. 115). The interview participants included Ontario and Chinese policy makers (i.e., Ontario and Chinese educational personnel relevant to the transnational education curriculum development), local school administrators, Chinese and Canadian teachers, and Chinese transnational education students.



I used semi-structured interviews to elicit seven policy makers' and school administrators' perceptions of the intended literacy curriculum in Ontario secondary transnational education programs like SCS (See Table 2 for the policy makers' and school administrators' profile). Participants' years of serving in education and transnational education are reported approximately to ensure that participants are not traceable. Some participants preferred to use their real names given the fact that they were communicating public information. Nevertheless, to ensure relevant information will not be used to identify the school and the region, I use pseudonyms for all the participants.

Perceptions elicited from both Ontario and Chinese policy makers and school administrators offered a more complete picture of how local, Canadian (provincial), and global factors might interplay to affect decision-making.

**Table 2: Profile of Canadian and Chinese Policy Makers and School Administrators.**

<b>Name/Pseudonym</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Time Serving in Transnational Education</b>
<b>Mr. Allington</b>	Canadian	Ontario Ministry of Education	Coordinator in Transnational Education	3 years
<b>Mr. Sedley</b>	Canadian	Ontario Ministry of Education	Coordinator in Transnational Education	3 years
<b>Mr. Collins</b>	Canadian	SCS	Canadian Principal	2.5 years
<b>Mr. Guo</b>	Chinese	SCS	Chinese Principal	8 years
<b>Ms. Lin</b>	Chinese	SCS	Coordinator of Curriculum Design and Implementation	6 years
<b>Ms. Tang</b>	Chinese	SCS	Coordinator of Curriculum Design and Implementation	7 years
<b>Mr. Zhou</b>	Chinese	SCS	Previously Involved in Curriculum Design	8 years

I interviewed five Canadian teachers and seven Chinese teachers who were instructing literacy-related courses and observed their classes (See Table 3 for the teacher profile).

Teacher interviews focused on teachers instructing the selected Grade 11 class (Class C) where both Canadian provincial and Chinese national secondary school curricula were integrated. I was invited to observe Ms. Ma's, Ms. Feng's, and Ms. Wang's open lessons (one period for each teacher) which were mandated to be open to all teachers at SCS for "evaluation" and "mutual-learning". Given their consent to participate in the study, I interviewed them after the one-period classroom observation.

**Table 3: Profile of Canadian and Chinese Teachers.**

Pseudonym	Nationality	Subject Taught	Time Serving in Transnational Education	Students in the Observed Class
Mr. Wilson	Canadian	ENG2D Academic English	3 months	A mix of Grade 11 Students
Mr. Abrams	American	English Writing (Oriented to IELTS/OSSLT <sup>17</sup> writing)	5 months	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Mr. Gosnell	Canadian	Career Education	1 year	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Allen	Canadian	MCR3U (A math language class per se)	3 months	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Wyatt	Canadian	ESL-CO	1 year	A mix of Grade 11 Students
Mr. Ma	Chinese	Mandarin Language Arts (Elective)	7	Students from all grades
Ms. Ge	Chinese	Mandarin Language Arts (Mandatory)	2	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Feng	Chinese	Mandarin Language Arts (Mandatory)	3 months	Students from Another Grade
Ms. Wang	Chinese	English	3 months	Students from Another Grade
Ms. Jiang	Chinese	English Vocabulary and Grammar (Oriented to IELTS vocabulary/grammar)	10 years	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Gu	Chinese	Politics	3 years	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Mr. Chen	Chinese	Chinese History	7 years	Students from Class C, Grade 11

Playing various societal roles, the participants in this study were viewed as not only informants of certain aspects of literacy curriculum at SCS, but also active agents co-constructing the "reality" of SCS as a transnational education institution. Gubrium and

<sup>17</sup> IELTS: International English Language Testing System. OSSLT: the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

Holstein (2003b) argue that researchers' epistemological assumptions of the subjects behind interview participants influence their technical procedure of interviewing and their understanding of the validity of the data collected. Traditionally, interviewing has been seen as a "vessel-of-answer" model in which interviewer and interviewee have an "asymmetrical encounter" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b, p. 30). Interviewers are supposed to ask the right questions, while interviewees, seen as repositories, are expected to respond to questions passively to reveal what is contained in themselves, such as their feelings, thoughts, and "reality" of social contexts. Contrary to this traditional discourse of interviewing, a trend of reconceptualising interviews has emerged based on changed epistemological and ontological assumptions. Rather than as informants of a single reality of the investigated site, respondents are seen as co-constructing multiple versions of reality interactively with interviewers (Creswell, 2007; Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b; Mishler, 1986). Qualitative interviews elicit information from respondents about the nature of the social life and serve as "democratizing agents" that give voice to individuals and construct individual and public opinions (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b, p. 26). Interviewers and interviewees collaboratively make visible the depth of individual subjects and the social conditions in which they are situated (Fontana, 2003; Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b). Not simply as a research method to obtain information, interviewing also mediates social life (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b). Many interviewers use open-ended and in-depth interviewing as conduit to what is thought to be respondents' "genuine" voices. However, Gubrium and Holstein (2003b) also alert that a single interview with a particular respondent could actually be an interview with several subjects behind the respondent whose multiple identities may be only partially visible. Trying to get a more complete picture of how various subjectivities might shape my respondents' depicted "reality" of the transnational education program, I took every possible chance to get more familiar with them. I conducted interviews with teachers and school administrators after certain periods of classroom observations and informal talks. New issues emerged in the process of interview transcribing and initial data analyzing. Wherever applicable, I started the second-round interviews or communication with certain participants using telephone, Skype, or emails to further clarify emergent issues.

Teacher participants, Chinese teachers in particular, tended to view me as an expert in literacy education and literacy curriculum. Their views might have further complicated the processes of interviewing and classroom observation because the teacher participants might have seen me as a potential critic of their teaching practices and their views of literacy education. Sharing my own life stories as a “rebellious” student and university teacher, I portrayed myself as a bottom-up advocate who has been a “rebel” against various types of top-down institutional or discursive control. When I talked to the Chinese and Canadian teachers before and during the interviews, I reiterated my own positionality as a researcher who was widely aware that teachers who were working in the frontlines were real educational experts and should have the discretion to voice what should be taught and how. What I did as a researcher was to co-construct with the teachers “realities” of literacy curriculum design and implementation at SCS. In the informal and formal encounters between the teacher participants and me, I ensured them that what they did and what we explored together about why they did it were more important than what the curriculum or prescriptive policies required them to do. I hoped for a better understanding of my subjectivities and the nature of interviewing as “a social encounter” (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003, p. 67) in which both my participants and I were actively producing knowledge. It was my hope that this understanding would have helped to give voice to the teachers. I also hoped that this understanding would have helped to reassure them to do whatever they have felt right to do in their classrooms.

I conducted interviews with students in the last three weeks of field research after I had a good idea of what was going on at SCS after classroom observations and teacher and administrator interviews (See Table 4 for the student profiles). Before conducting semi-structured interviews with transnational education students, I used a multimodal method (Stein, 2008; Stein & Newfield, 2006) to encourage students’ use of their preferred communication modes to depict their literacy-learning experience (See Section 4.3.4 “Multimodal Method” for details). Semi-structured interviews with students started with a discussion on these multimodal artifacts.

### 4.2.3 Classroom Observation

Apart from interviews, I used classroom observations to co-create “a situationally cohesive sense of reality” (Fonata, 2003, p. 36) of how transnational education literacy curricula were implemented by teachers and experienced by students. Heath and Street (2008) identify three types of face-to-face observables in institutions of formal education: (a) the range of symbol systems that support and define specific spatial-temporal zones; (b) instructor-sanctioned events of students and moments of students’ voluntary behaviours; and (c) the way that non-members get introduced, take part, and present themselves (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, as cited in Heath & Street, 2008). Apart from these immediate observables, researchers with ethnographic sensitivities should particularly attend to “external impositions” (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 17), that is, ways that historical/political forces and institutional powers determine language in use, modal options, and norms of language and modality use in institutions of formal schooling.

For research on language and learning, besides the interrogation of dominant language and literacy forms in formal schooling, special attention should turn to modes of literacy artifacts within schools and ways to define and identify these modalities (Heath & Street, 2008). Concurring with Heath and Street’s emphasis on the social semiotic tradition of multimodal literacies, I also looked beyond the immediate production of literacy of particular form(s) or mode(s) to broad forces that enable or limit the productions.

Following Dyson and Genishi’s (2005) suggestion, I conducted a broad and global observation of the classroom settings (as related to literacy practices). The three major facets that I observed were: individuals as learners, how learners located themselves within groups of identity-makers, varied literacy events, and the broader social dimensions and dynamics of forces of formal schooling contexts. I also collected students’ assignment samples from the classes that I observed. Students’ assignments with teachers’ comments for different literacy-related classes enabled me to interrogate how peoples’ ideas and everyday practices shaped the socioculturally situated use of literacy in their local communities. I observed 84 periods of English and Mandarin literacy-related classes (See Table 10 in Chapter 6 for a list of observed classes).

Classroom observation focused on one Grade 11 class (Class C) where both Canadian provincial and Chinese national curricula were integrated. I regularly observed three Mandarin literacy-related classes: Ms. Ge's "Mandarin Language Arts (Mandatory)", Ms. Gu's "Politics", and Mr. Chen's "Chinese History".

One of the regularly observed English-related classes was taught by a Chinese teacher--- Ms. Jiang. Since students of Class C were assigned to different ESL and academic English classes based on their English proficiency levels, I observed two English-related classes (i.e., Mr. Wilson's and Ms. Wyatt's). Mr. Wilson's class was attended by Class C students and students from other classes. Students in Ms. Wyatt's class were from Class A and other classes. Mr. Abrams' English writing class and Ms. Gosnell's "Career Education" generally consisted of students from Class C. Since I observed Mr. Wilson's and Ms. Wyatt's ESL classes, one student from Class B and two students from Class A who were interested in the study also participated in the interview and created multimodal representations of their identity and learning experience at SCS. The length of observation of each class depended on intensity of the class and a cycle of literacy-related activities as defined by the instructors until saturation has been reached. Formal observational protocols were used to record descriptive and reflective field notes about the teachers' instructional/organizational practices and teacher-student and student-student interactions.

#### 4.2.4 Multimodal Method

I interviewed nine students from the classes that I observed. Before conducting semi-structured interviews with these transnational education students, I used a multimodal method (e.g., Stein, 2008) to encourage students' use of their preferred communication modes (e.g., artifacts, pictures, or audio-/video-recordings) to depict their learning experience and identity formation in the globalized schooling context. Our semi-structured interviews started with a discussion on their multimodal artifacts. The purpose of using multimodal artifacts was to make the succeeding interviews more relevant to students' local practices in the contact zone of Chinese and Canadian education. As Luke and Carpenter (2003) argue, literacy education for global communities requires educators and researchers to view literacy in various semiotic forms, as "part of students' tool kits

for understanding, critiquing, and engaging with the global flows of images and texts that they confront daily” (p. 20). Students’ assignments that were produced as requirements of the observed classes also constitute multimodal data, which help further disclose the student participants’ variable “selves” that they lived by and the “discursive environments” that shaped the options for the selves (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b, p. 44).

Based on the results of their provincial high school entrance examinations (Zhongkao) and those of their school’s own math and English entrance examinations, students at SCS were streamed to different classes. The streaming system at SCS was complicated. For instance, students from Class C were seen as high-achievers across curriculum, while students from Class A were seen as lower achievers in English though most of them were reported to be strong in science.

Students’ Chinese and English names were frequently used at SCS because of the co-presence of Chinese and Canadian teachers. Therefore, both English and Chinese pseudonyms were assigned with a hyphen in between, indicating that these students were “living in the hyphen” and living in a space in between (Nakagawa, 2005). Each Chinese name is a Chinese character summarizing my own perception of the student’s key disposition. Languages that students use are presented in order of first language (L1), second language (L2), and third (L3)/fourth language (L4). In this dissertation, except for interview excerpts marked as “original”, others are translated from Mandarin.

**Table 4: Profile of Student Participants.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Meaning of Chinese Pseudonym</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Length of Time at SCS</b>	<b>Languages</b>	<b>Interview Language</b>
<b>Rich-Zhi</b>	Insightful	Male	Class A	1.5 years	Cantonese, Mandarin, English	Mandarin
<b>Mark-Ji</b>	Hi-tech	Male	Class A	1.5 years	Teochew (Chaoshan) Dialect, Mandarin, English	Mandarin
<b>Dave-Yue</b>	Musical	Male	Class B	1.5 years	Cantonese, Mandarin, English	Mandarin
<b>Tina-Qin</b>	Diligent	Female	Class C	1.5 year	Cantonese, Mandarin, English	English
<b>Steve-Jian</b>	Sporty	Male	Class C	0.5 year	Hunan Dialect, Cantonese, Mandarin, English	Mandarin
<b>Alice-Mei</b>	Beautiful	Female	Class C	1.5 years	Cantonese, Mandarin, English	English & Mandarin
<b>Coco-Ling</b>	Smart	Female	Class C	1.5 year	Mandarin, English	Mandarin
<b>Joe-Hui</b>	Wise	Male	Class C	3 months	Teochew (Chaoshan) Dialect, Mandarin, Cantonese, English	Mandarin
<b>Jean-Qin</b>	Intimate	Female	Class C	1.5 years	Mandarin, English	Mandarin

Based on its perception that censorship and control of speech freedom was intense in China, the research ethics board at my university specifically required me to keep confidential individual students' participation in the study. That said, nobody except me, the student him/herself, and his/her parents should know the student's participation in the study. Grade 10 and Grade 11 semester one students in this international boarding school were in class from 7:45 AM to 9:15 PM except for a two-hour lunch break and two-hour dinner break. Unable to offer an open workshop and introduce options of modes that students could choose to create their artifacts, I tried to find private time to talk to the



student participants individually. Opportunities for “critical choice of mode” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 105) were thus limited, but most of the students and I were able to examine discourses that have been expanding or constraining their modal choices and literacy and identity options. We started with my own multimodal artifact and talked about my own “choices of modes and how these choices affected meanings” (p. 95).

The use of the multimodal method focused on transnational education students’ “lived curriculum” (Aoki, 1993) and I hoped that it would provide information about the dynamic complexity of the students’ educational experience in the globalized schooling context. Challenging the reliance on interviewees’ “best attempt to describe” (Davies & Gannon, 2006, p. 1) their identities and lived experience in qualitative inquiries, this part of the study invited students to use multimodal artifacts and interrogate local and global discourses that limit and/or expand their literacy and identity options. I used the method to tap into the multiple layers of students’ “subjectivity” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b, p. 34). Inviting the student participants to convey stories in their preferred modes, I intended for the method to extend the picture of transnational education students’ literacy learning experience in the globalized education context.

Drawing on the multimodality theory (e.g., Kress, 2009; Stein, 2008), this part of the study disturbed the “dominant and central” power of speech (e.g., interviews) and writing (e.g., written narratives and assignments) in qualitative inquiries as “fully capable of expressing all meanings” (Kress, 2009, p. 55). Foregrounding other modes that are peripheral in educational studies (e.g., image, layout, music, speech, and video), the use of multimodal method intended to support the position that these modes could be used as legitimate methodic forms to elicit students’ stories about their identity options and literacy experience in cross-cultural and cross-lingual educational milieux.

This part of the research also attempted to unpack the ontological and methodological possibilities of the multimodal method that might enhance student participants’ agency in educational research and legitimate their agentic roles in the social construction of knowledge. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) signal, “The perspective from which a community is viewed affects the sense of its space” (p. 61). By using a multimodal method, my study

incorporated emic perspectives from various respondents and etic perspectives of myself as an observer (Creswell, 2007). Ontologically, the use of a multimodal method underscores the “subjective and multiple” (Creswell, 2007, p. 17) educational “realities” at SCS as constructed by the student participants’ emic perspectives. I used the multimodal method with the belief that realities could be constructed via a wider array of modes than speech (e.g., interviews) and writing (e.g., narratives and students’ assignments).

Methodologically, the multimodal method enabled the “emerging design” (Creswell, 2007, p. 17) of ensuing interviews. Students’ multimodal artifacts created new topics in the interviews (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). Similar to Pahl and Rowsell’s (2010) experience of using artifacts to elicit stories, I also found that starting student interviews by talking about their artifacts unraveled temporal and spatial webs in students’ local experiences at home, peer social network, and school, which would otherwise be inaccessible or invisible to the researcher if merely relying on interviews and classroom observations.

The multimodal method offered “semiotic interventions” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 40) in the discursive practice of researching and being researched. It enabled a collaborative disruption of discourses that might have expanded or constrained students’ literacy and identity options. Most students at SCS came from high socio-economic status families, but most of them were denied access to elite public education in China, namely, the key high schools with better educational resources to “guarantee” students’ future admission to tertiary education. Marginalized by the mainstream education system, these students were more than willing to interrogate the constraining educational discourses and showcase their talents and preferred periphery literacy practices. Giving student participants agentive roles in constructing realities changed the relationship between the researcher and the researched and further narrowed our “objective separateness” (Guba & Lincoln, 1988, p. 94).

### 4.3 Data Analysis

Given the complexity of the research problem and the extensive scope of data, I employed a spectrum of theoretical and analytical tools to account for the “push-pull

dynamics” of local, national/provincial, and global “circuits” (Luke & Luke, 2000, p. 291) that were shaping literacy practices at various levels of the transnational education curriculum (See Figure 2).

Levels of Curriculum	Theoretical Tools	Analytic Tools
Intended Chinese National/Canadian Provincial Curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Schwab’s Curriculum Commonplaces</li> <li>➤ Intended/Hidden/Null Curriculum</li> <li>➤ Curriculum Ideologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Content Analysis</li> <li>➤ Critical Discourse Analysis</li> <li>➤ Constant Comparison Method</li> </ul>
Integrated Programmatic & Institutional Curricula at SCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Schwab’s Curriculum Commonplaces</li> <li>➤ Intended/Hidden/Null Curriculum</li> <li>➤ Theories on Internationalizing Curricula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Critical Discourse Analysis</li> <li>➤ Constant Comparison Method</li> </ul>
Implemented/Lived Curricula at SCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Schwab’s Curriculum Commonplaces</li> <li>➤ Implemented/Null/Hidden/Lived Curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Critical Discourse Analysis</li> <li>➤ Constant Comparison Method</li> <li>➤ Multimodal Analysis</li> </ul>

**Figure 2: Levels of Transnational Education Curriculum & Corresponding Theoretical & Analytic Tools.**

I transcribed the interviews and organized the notes of document analysis and classroom observation protocols. I used NVivo 9 in the course of data analysis and organization. Concurring with Heath and Street’s (2008) alert to using data analysis software programs, I restricted my use of NVivo 9 to data retrieval and data/memo organization after constantly re-visiting data and identifying recurrent themes. Given the complexity of data sources (i.e., content analysis, field notes from both Canadian and Chinese teachers’ classrooms, transcripts from interviews with both Canadians and Chinese, assignments, and multimodal artifacts), NVivo 9 was also used to produce visual maps and models of

themes and subthemes and their interlocking relationships to facilitate the cross-component and cross-culture representations.

After the data preparation, I used content analysis (Cohen et al., 2007), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Luke, 1995-1996), and constant comparison method (Cohen et al., 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as the central elements of data analysis.

I used CDA to analyze curricular documents (e.g., Chinese policy documents on transnational education, transnational education curricula, and teaching materials for use in the program) and field notes collected via classroom observation. Phillips and Hardy (2002) contend that the objective of CDA is to examine the “dialogical struggle[s] as reflected in the privileging of a particular discourse and the marginalization of others” (p. 25). Concurring with Luke (1995-1996), based on the preliminary findings of the study, I would argue texts and images incorporated in transnational education programs are actually “new battlegrounds for a politics of representations” (Luke, 1995-1996, p. 6). Considering the complexity of potentially polemical social relations and discourses as embedded in transnational education curricula, CDA is an appropriate method for a rigorous inquiry into texts and discursive processes involved in the dynamic construction of power, knowledge, identity, and ideology. As Luke (2011) contends, CDA shares with sociolinguistics a commitment to studying language use in sociocultural contexts and, as do sociolinguists, assumes that “human subjects engage in the negotiation of knowledge, identity, and social relations in the everyday patterns of institutional life” (p. 12).

I also analyzed the raw data (interview data, document analysis data, and classroom observation data) by using constant comparison method (CCM) (Cohen et al., 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Heath & Street, 2008). Using CCM, I compared the new data with existing data and categories/theories in order to achieve a fit between data and categories/theories. Codes and themes were developed inductively in accordance with the sub-questions for each research component (See Table 5). Considering the poststructuralist’s critique of CCM as reducing complicated meanings and events into simplified aggregates (Handsfield, 2006), Handsfield (2006) proposes a modified CCM model. Using this model, I assigned a “third space” for data that fell into more than one

code and those did not fall into any code at all but would illuminate the contingencies in literacy education. Highlighting the dynamic, temporary, and interconnected nature of the codes, I also used axial coding as a broader frame of reference (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Data were put back together in different ways by making connections between initial themes and emergent themes.

**Table 5: An Example of Audit Trail of Data Analysis.**

Components	Sub-Questions	Exemplary Curriculum-Related Codes/Themes	Exemplary Language-Related Codes/Themes
<b>Component I: Document Analysis</b>	1. What were the intended, hidden, and null curricula in transnational education programs (SCS in particular)? 2. What were the historical, political, and institutional forces that might have been shaping the literacy curriculum at various levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Transnational education-related policies and policy history</li> <li>➤ Transnational education-related sociopolitical frameworks</li> <li>➤ Transnational education actors that influenced transnational education curriculum in general</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Conceptualization of literacy</li> <li>❖ Language(s) as medium(s) of instruction (MOI)</li> <li>❖ Norms of language use</li> <li>❖ Norms of modality use</li> </ul>
<b>Component II: Interviews with Canadian and Chinese Policy Makers and School Administrators</b>	1. What were the intended, hidden, and null curricula in Ontario secondary school transnational education programs (SCS in particular)? 2. What were the historical, political, and institutional forces that might have been shaping the literacy curriculum at various levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aims of intended transnational education curriculum</li> <li>➤ Processes of transnational education curriculum development</li> <li>➤ Mechanisms that ensured curriculum implementation</li> <li>➤ Major transnational education actors that influenced Ontario secondary transnational education curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Conceptualization of literacy</li> <li>❖ Language(s) as MOI</li> <li>❖ Norms of language use</li> <li>❖ Norms of modality use</li> </ul>
<b>Component III: Classroom</b>	1. What were the implemented, hidden, null curricula, and students’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Canadian and Chinese teachers’ implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Norms of language use</li> <li>❖ Norms of modality</li> </ul>

<b>Observations</b>	lived curriculum at SCS? 2. What were the literacy options in the literacy-related classrooms?	model of transnational education curriculum ➤ Canadian and Chinese teachers' adaptation of transnational education curriculum ➤ Teachers' and students' negotiation of space	use ❖ Students' local realities of language use ❖ Students' local realities of modality use
<b>Component IV: Interviews with Canadian and Chinese Teachers</b>	1. What were the implemented, hidden, and null curricula at SCS? 2. What were the literacy options in the literacy-related classrooms?	➤ Teachers' interpretation of curriculum ➤ Mechanisms that enabled or restricted teachers' autonomy in adapting transnational education curriculum	❖ Norms of language use ❖ Norms of modality use ❖ Teachers' language use ❖ Teachers' modality use
<b>Component V: Student Interviews and Multimodal Artifacts</b>	1. What were the hidden, null, and students' lived curricula at SCS? 2. What were the literacy options in students' local experiences? 3. What were the ensuing implications for students' identity options?	➤ Students' perspectives of literacy learning experience ➤ Students' perceived identity options ➤ Students' negotiation of spaces	❖ Students' local realities of language use ❖ Students' local realities of modality use

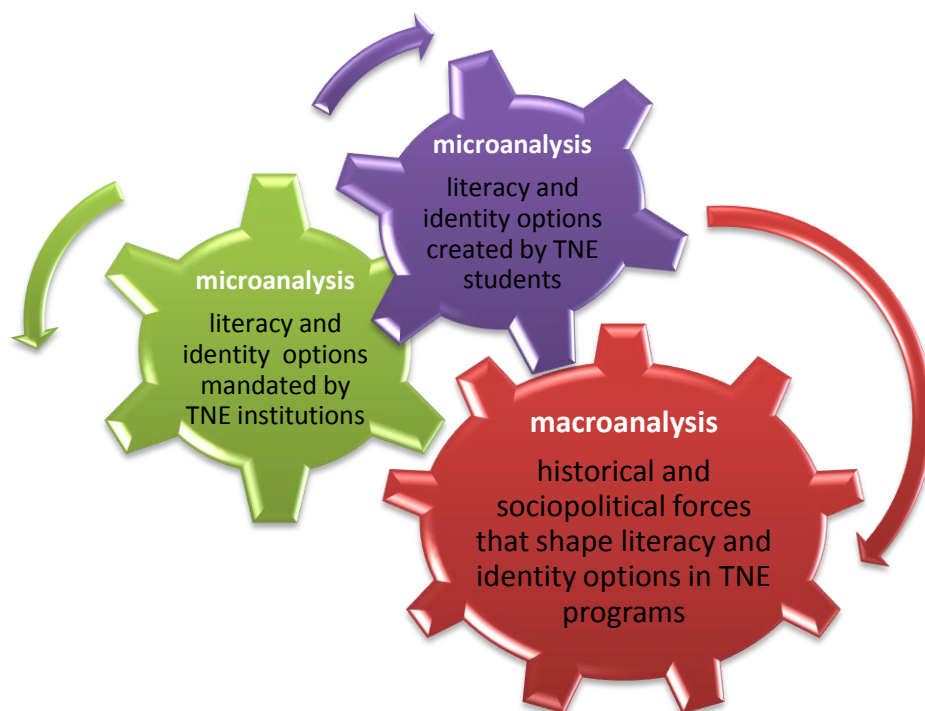
Dyson and Genishi (2005) highlight the importance of understanding the phenomenon from both participants' perspectives and researchers' reflexivity. That said, data analysis should not be guided by the researchers' imposed category systems. Being aware of the limitations of case studies with respect to researcher's interpretive bias (Cohen et al. 2007), I mediated my reflexive interpretation by constantly checking my theoretical inclinations and examining biases associated with my own locality, that is, my life, work, and research experiences. I was prepared to expect new spaces and new holes to occur in the process of data analysis.

Following Dyson and Genishi's (2005) strategies for case-study research on language and literacy, I problematized my tendency to see data on Chinese transnational education students' literacy practices in Chinese literacy-related classes as somehow oppositional to

data from classes with English as the medium of instruction. I highlighted transnational education students' cultural selves and the social borderlands of race, ethnicity, nationality, ideologies, and politics. I also looked for data that would support or deny the assertion that students in the cross-border contexts may develop flexible repertoires of linguistic and sociocultural resources as they negotiate their needs, desires, and identities in their daily rounds in transnational education programs.

I unpacked different layers of modalities and meaning-makings in students' artifacts based on Kress's (2009) micro-analysis approaches. The data embedded in students' multimodal artifacts were analyzed by virtue of: (a) their materiality (e.g., mode and texture); (b) connectivity to learning opportunities and identity at SCS; (c) how each mode offers "socially shaped and culturally given" semiotic resources for representation (Kress, 2009, p. 54); (d) affordances of each mode (i.e., what it is possible to "express and represent readily, easily, with a mode, given its materiality and given the cultural and social history of that mode" [Kress & Jewitt, 2003, p. 14]); (e) frame devices that render each artifact unity to represent an idea; and (f) the ideological situatedness of modal choices and discourses that "materialize" in the artifacts (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 129).

I integrated the descriptive, analytic, and critical accounts of collected data (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003) to capture the complexity of various levels of curriculum as they pertain to literacy. Constantly visiting and triangulating data from multiple sources, I moved back and forth from microanalysis of the particularities of transnational education curriculum to a macro-analysis of larger contextual conditions that influence the literacy curriculum so as to investigate how multiple forms of literacy were planned for and practiced in the transnational education program (See Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Macro- and Micro-Analyses of Interlocking Forces that Shape Literacy and Identity Options.**

Gubrium and Holstein (2003b) contend that the multiple facets of research participants' subjectivity add to the complication of data analysis. For them, what data should be coded during the data analysis process is critically related to which aspects of participant's subjectivity researchers intend to highlight. During the data analysis process, rather than seeing them as "interview debris", I coded words and comments that signaled the multiple and shifting subjectivities of participants (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b) and the ways these variable subject positions combined to construct the "realities" of transnational education. Phrases such as "I mean from a person who spent all of their life in public education" and "Like I was involved with the union in the school system" indicate shifts in respondents' subject positions and disclose how putting on different hats might affect respondents' perspectives of what was going on in the private Ontario offshore school.

Being aware of my own privileged positions as a researcher, a data analyst, and an author, together with all the intellectual discourses and preconceptions I had brought with



me to the research site, I was constantly reflective of my “authorial voice” when coding, selecting, and representing participants’ interview accounts (Fontana, 2003, p. 54). As Heath and Street (2008) note, “Reflexivity, rather than innocence, characterizes contemporary ethnography” (p. 34). I have constantly reminded myself of the situated nature of knowledge production, that is, to give analytic attention to the conditions under which interview and observation data were collected and discourses within which I worked to represent the data. As Holstein and Gubrium (2003) argue, writing up findings from interview data is “an analytically active enterprise” (p. 79). Apart from organizing and reporting the “whats”, I, as the active analyst, have intended to explain “hows” (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003, p. 79), that is, how meanings are interactively constructed in the research environment and how the linkages and horizons in the fragmented school life work together to constitute the reality of SCS as a transnational education program.

#### 4.4 Ethical Considerations: The Inside Outsider

As Schwartz and Ogilvy (as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985) state, “And as we think, so do we act” (p. 14). I bore in mind the ethical codes about risks, benefits, confidentiality, and protection of participants’ rights. One crucial caveat I attended to throughout the data collection process was to act ethically when I was in the research field. I started contacting the prospective participants and the transnational education program after obtaining the approval from the research ethics board. I began involving participants and accessing the transnational education program after I secured their consent and the official permissions from relevant institutions. Before classroom observations, I ensured I got consents from students and their parents. For students who had not consented, I did not ask teachers to discuss the students in interviews. In view of issues about comfort, safety, and confidentiality, the sites for the interviews were mutually agreed upon between the researcher and the participants, for example, the participants’ own offices or classrooms.

As a cultural insider of the study, I might have had the advantages of conducting the research in a more sensitive and responsive manner than outsiders (Bishop, 2005), asking more meaningful questions, being able to read non-verbal cues, and projecting a more authentic understanding of the culture of the study. However, claiming myself as coming

from particular locations (e.g., being educated and having taught in China while bringing with me North American theories on literacy and curriculum), my understanding of literacy-related curriculum in transnational education programs might have been subjectively biased (Bishop, 2005; Narayan, 1993).

As an outsider to the school where the transnational education program was located, when conducting classroom observations, I was cautious of my identity as an “intruder” into the participants’ world (Cohen et al., 2007).

Claiming my identity as a researcher from an insider-outsider dichotomy might not necessarily capture my multiple identities that might have influenced the research. Narayan (1993) uses “culturally tangled identity” (p. 673) to illuminate many strands of identities available within one person. Having been studying in Canada for five years, I am aware of the dynamics of my own identity formation, which have exerted unexpected impacts upon my understanding of transnational education literacy-related curriculum.

Admittedly, my own positions as an experienced English literacy teacher in China and a fledgling researcher and transnational education practitioner in Canada have enabled the exploration of the contested realities of curriculum development and implementation in the transnational education terrain. However, my understanding and interpretation were as well affected by the interactions embedded in the power relations of the research fields. Intricacies of insider-outsider status and dynamics of power relations in research cannot be exhaustive. However, I hope a critical self-consciousness of these contingencies and dynamics has added to the accountability or trustworthiness of the knowledge construction and representation in the future research. Heath and Street (2008) contend, “As you collect data, know the company you keep as ethnographer and get to know yourself as constant learner---ever curious and open to what’s happening” (p. 31). Seeing researching transnational education as a process of knowledge co-construction with my research participants, I constantly reminded myself of the situated nature of knowledge production when writing up the dissertation. I have been constantly reflective of the discourses and overlapping subjectivities that might have influenced my engagement in representing and interpreting the collected data.

To end with Lather's (1991) quote on researcher's reflexivity, "we [researchers] must abandon attempts to represent the object of our investigation as it 'really' is, independent of our representational apparatus, for a reflexive focus on how we construct that which we are investigating" (p. 11).

## 4.5 Limitations

Being bilingual and bicultural has been my asset to conduct a cross-cultural and cross-lingual case study. However, translation still posed a huge methodological and ethical challenge to the credibility of translated qualitative data. Therefore, another bilingual (Chinese-English) researcher who was familiar with cross-cultural studies was invited to crosscheck my English translation of the collected data in Chinese.

Respondents actively engage in the co-construction of knowledge in interviews, but they also choose what to say and how to respond to the interview questions given their potential attentiveness to the surrounding social milieu (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b). Neutrality and a one hundred percent presentation of the social contexts are not achievable (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003b, p. 33).

Despite the attention to participants' shifting subjectivities, Gubrium and Holstein (2003b) alert that shifts in subject positions might not always be evident in scattered words and comments in interviews. It is up to the researcher to consider the interview data consistently and cohesively to perceive in which subject the participants respond to a certain interview question. My own subjectivity as a researcher unavoidably joins in the co-construction process.

Students' multimodal artifacts offer nuanced local particulars of the global schooling context. Nevertheless, students' emic perspectives were sometimes framed and fragmented by my "etic perspective" (Creswell, 2007, p. 72) as a researcher, an observer, and a data interpreter. The approaches (e.g., micro-analysis of the multimodal artifacts and Critical Discourse Analysis [e.g., Luke, 1995-1996]) that I employed to analyze data always flowed from my own "personal, cultural, and historical experiences" (Creswell, 2007, p. 21). Multimodality allowed for a wider spectrum of communication channels.

However, histories, interests, and subjectivities related to identity formation and literacy practices can only fully emerge through ethnography (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). An approximately three-month case study using ethnographic tools, with the researcher literally being with the students and teachers from day to night (from 7:45 AM to 9:15 PM), enabled a deeper interrogation of students' experiences and identity options. The multimodal artifacts and student interviews took place in the last month after I had had a good idea of what was going on in the program. The ethnographic observation data added "ethical and interpretive dimensions to the micro-analysis" of the multimodal artifacts and enabled me as the researcher to "situate the communicative practice within larger frames of meaning" (Stein, 2008, p. 11).

Because of the research ethics board's particular ethical concerns of doing research in China, my involvement, as the researcher, in the "critical choice of mode" (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 105) was only evident to a certain extent. As was mentioned earlier, the research ethics board at my university required that individual students' participation should be kept confidential. This mandate intended to protect participants but ended up limiting opportunities for a collective disruption of the local and global discourses that might have shaped SCS's curriculum. With the presence of critical co-construction, more choices of modes would have surfaced from students' local literacy practices. The ideological situatedness of each mode in the global schooling context might be more evident.

A general bias against case studies points to their generalizability (Cohen et al., 2007). Yin (2003) enunciates that a fatal flaw in doing case studies is the confusion between "statistical generalization" and "analytic generalization" (p. 33). Since qualitative case studies are not "sampling units", statistical generalization is not an appropriate choice to evaluate the quality of the research designs. As Yin argues, "case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (p. 10). Moreover, Flyvbjerg (2006) views knowledge as socially constructed realities. He reasons that knowledge, which cannot be formally generalized, does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field or in a society. Flyvbjerg suggests keeping a case study open rather than summing it up and

“closing” it so as to invite readers to join the social construction process of knowledge. Adopting a postmodern stance, Gubrium and Holstein (2003a) contend that in qualitative inquiries, “truth gives way to tentativeness” (p. 4). The postmodern conditions of qualitative research no longer consider research methods in the light of the scientific relationship between data and experience. Qualitative methods are more about a “ubiquitous way of constructing experience” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003a, p. 6).

Questioning the crisis of representation in ethnographic inquiries, Gubrium and Holstein (2003a) point to the hurdle of transforming the ethnographer’s presence in the field into authorial description. According to them, radical postmodernists argue that there is an attention shift from “the substance, process, and indigenous constitution of experience” to “the representational devices used by the society and researchers to convey the image of the objective or subjective reality” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003a, p. 5). I am not going for the radical postmodernist route, but I do concur it is necessary to be empirically reflexive of the representational devices that I employ to depict the “reality” of the transnational education curricula and the image of the students.

Regarding the misunderstanding of case-study research as containing a subjective bias, Flyvbjerg (2006) views this bias toward verification not simply as a phenomenon related to the case study but also as a fundamental human characteristic. Creswell (2007) and Kilbourn (2006) agree that the phenomena (data) in any academic research are assumed to be filtered through a certain point of view. There is no such thing as a value-free or unbiased or correct interpretation of an event. Researchers cannot be expected to come into study as if they are blank slates free of prior interests and biases (Howe & Eisenhardt, 1990). Flyvbjerg recommends ensuring an openness of a case study to public scrutiny by inviting readers to decide the meaning of the case and to interrogate narrators’ interpretations. I hereby explicitly invite my readers to critically deconstruct my narration and interpretation about various levels of transnational education curriculum in the ensuing chapters. I invite my readers to locate “many meanings and problematic moments” (Usher & Edwards, 1994, p. 3) that have escaped my interpretation and analysis because of my own situatedness as a researcher and an educator who, with an Asian background has been recently educated in North-America.

## Chapter 5

### 5 Intended Curriculum

In this chapter, I present findings at the level of intended curriculum (i.e., “what is planned in the way of aims, content, activities, and sequence” [Eisner, 2002, p. 32]). I document the scope and tensions of recontextualizing the Ontario provincial and Chinese national secondary school curricula at SCS. I examined multiple sources of documents that underpin the intended programmatic curriculum and institutional curriculum (Deng, 2009; Doyle, 1992a, 1992b). These documents include the Chinese government’s transnational education regulations, Ontario secondary school literacy-related curricula, and the national high school Mandarin literacy-related curricula on the Chinese side. I triangulated this content analysis with interview data from both Chinese and Ontario policy makers who had been involved in transnational education curriculum development. Perceptions elicited from both sides provide a picture of how local/global actors and processes have interacted to affect curriculum making in this context.

#### 5.1 Influx of Transnational Education into China and China’s Transnational Education Regulations

##### 5.1.1 Influx of Transnational Education Programs into China

In China, the Chinese government specifically terms strategic alliance of transnational education as Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools. On February 19, 2003, the 68<sup>th</sup> Executive Meeting of the Chinese State Council promulgated the “Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools” (Chinese State Council, 2003). In contrast, there is an absence of Ontario transnational education policies, even though Ontario has been involved in secondary school transnational education activities in China since the 1990s.

The following statistics show a considerable influx of transnational education programs into China largely from developed countries. This influx might offer insights into why Chinese authorities felt it necessary to lay down specific regulations to monitor transnational education activities and behaviours of foreign providers.

Up to 2011, 22 foreign countries and regions have cooperated with Chinese higher education institutions and have set up 507 tertiary transnational education programs in China (See Table 6<sup>18</sup>).

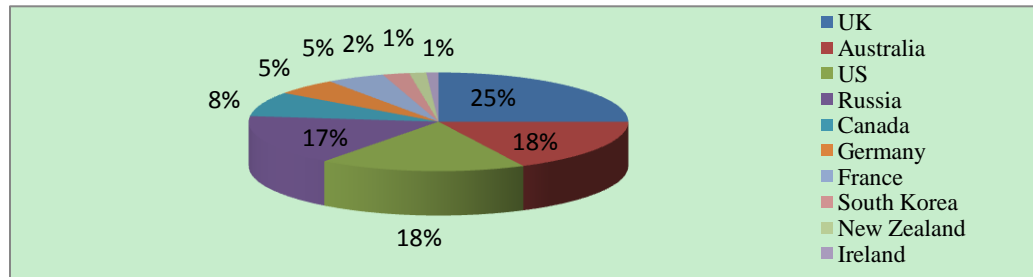
**Table 6: Post-Secondary Transnational Education Programs in China.**

	Country	UPWFD <sup>19</sup>	UPWNFD	MPWFD	MPWNFD	DPWFD	Total
1	The United Kingdom	20	92	9			121
2	Australia	25	32	28			85
3	The United States	25	28	30		2	85
4	Russia	1	78	1			80
5	Canada	5	25	9			39
6	Germany	9	15	2			26
7	France	4	10	9	1		24
8	South Korea	1	8	2			11
9	New Zealand	4	3				7
10	Ireland	3	2				5
11	Japan	1	4				5
12	Netherlands		1	3			4
13	Belgium			2	1		3
14	Holland	1		1			2
15	Singapore			2			2
16	Sweden			2			2
17	Denmark	1					1
18	EU			1			1
19	North Korea		1				1
20	Norway			1			1
21	Portugal					1	1
22	South Africa		1				1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>507</b>

<sup>18</sup> Transnational education programs cooperating with special administrative regions of China (i.e., Hong Kong and Macau) are not included in the statistics.

<sup>19</sup> UPWFD: undergraduate programs with foreign degrees; UPWNFD: undergraduate programs with no foreign degrees; MPWFD: Master's programs with foreign degrees; MPWNFD: Master's programs with no foreign degrees; DPWFD: doctoral programs with foreign degrees.

Figure 4<sup>20</sup> shows the market share of top ten transnational higher education providers in China. The United Kingdom stands out as the lead (25%), with Australia, the United States, and Russia taking the next largest shares (18%, 18%, and 17% respectively). It is worth noting that seventy nine Russian transnational education programs are located in Jilin and Helongjiang provinces which share a border with Russia. This reflects the unique regional ties between Russia and the Northeastern provinces of China.



**Figure 4: Market Share of Top Ten Transnational Higher Education Providers in China.**

Sixty percent (302 out of 507) of the undergraduate and graduate transnational education programs in China do not confer foreign degrees (See Table 6). Ninety eight percent (78 out of 80) of Russian transnational education programs do not grant students Russian degrees upon graduation. Seventy six percent (92 out of 121) of the UK transnational education programs confer no degrees from the UK cooperative universities. Cooperative foreign universities' capacity of granting higher level foreign degrees poses potential challenges to the Chinese government to monitor the quality of transnational education programs.

Regional differences in number and capacity of tertiary transnational education programs in China reveal regional differences in the abundance and quality of local educational supply (See Table 7).

<sup>20</sup> Statistics in Table 6, Figure 4, and Table 7 are based on data provided by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (<http://www.crs.jsj.edu.cn/index.php/default/index>).



**Table 7: Regional Differences in Post-Secondary Transnational Education Programs in China.**

	Chinese Key Cities/Provinces	Number of Host Countries	UPWFD	UPWNFD	MPWFD	MPWNFD	DWFD	Total
1	Heilongjiang	8	1	155	4	0	0	160
2	Shanghai	15	14	38	21	1	1	75
3	Beijing	8	16	0	24	0	0	40
4	Henan	7	3	33	0	0	0	36
5	Liaoning	9	8	14	5	0	0	27
6	Jiangsu	7	12	12	5	0	0	29
7	Zhejiang	8	7	10	6	0	1	24
8	Shandong	6	1	19	2	0	0	22
9	Tianjin	6	4	6	10	0	0	20
10	Jilin	5	11	1	0	0	0	12
11	Jiangxi	6	2	0	9	0	0	11
12	Hubei	5	4	2	3	0	0	9
13	Guangdong	4	2	2	4	1	0	9
14	Fujian	3	4	2	1	0	0	7
15	Sichuan	4	1	1	2	0	1	5
16	Yunan	3	2	0	2	0	0	4
17	Neimenggu	2	2	2	0	0	0	4
18	Hebei	3	2	1	0	0	0	3
19	Shanxi	2	2	1	0	0	0	3
20	Hunan	2	1	0	1	0	0	2
21	Chongqing	2	0	1	1	0	0	2
22	Shannxi	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
23	Guizhou	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
24	Anhui	1	1	0	0	0	0	1

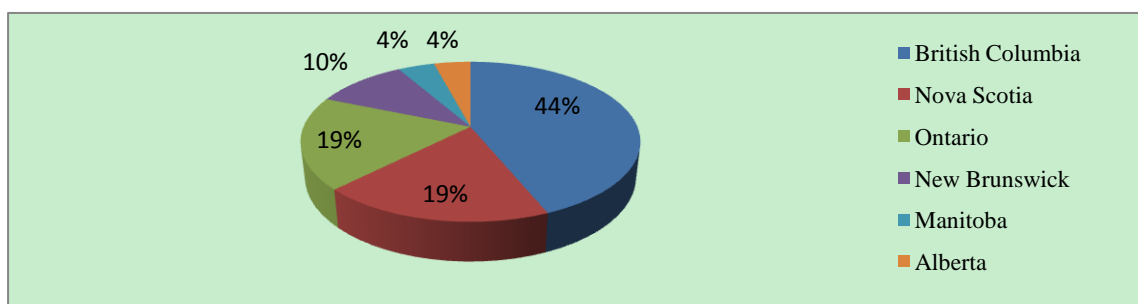
Heilongjiang province tops the list, but 50% of its transnational education programs are cooperative with Russian higher education institutions. As China's two political and economic centres, Beijing and Shanghai have received a favourable share of educational resources from the central government. Transnational education programs in these two cities display features of mature transnational education markets like Hong Kong and Singapore, where there are abundant local resources to meet the demands of transnational education. Most of their cooperative partners are prestigious foreign universities with

higher capacities of granting foreign degrees. It is worth noting that all the transnational education programs in Beijing have the capacity to grant foreign degrees.

With regard to secondary school education, China has seen a growing number of transnational education programs that either follow Canadian provincial curricula or integrate both Canadian provincial and Chinese national curricula. In 2011, Canadian elementary and secondary transnational education programs extended to 11 provinces in China, four cities that are administratively equal to provinces, and two special administrative regions (i.e., Hong Kong and Macau). In 2011, the total number of “Canadian Curriculum Schools in China” was 48 (See Table 8<sup>21</sup>).

**Table 8: Elementary and Secondary Transnational Education Programs Accredited by Canadian Provinces in China.**

Province of Accreditation	Number of Programs in China	Programs in Private Sector	Programs in Public Sector
British Columbia	21	13	8
Nova Scotia	9	5	4
Ontario	9	7	2
New Brunswick	5	5	0
Manitoba	2	1	1
Alberta	2	2	0
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>15</b>



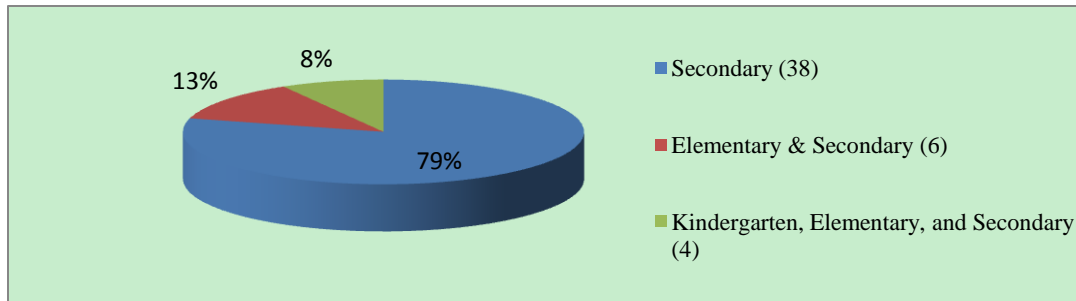
**Figure 5: Percentage of Elementary and Secondary Transnational Education Programs in China Accredited by Canadian Provinces.**

<sup>21</sup> Statistics in Table 8, Table 9, Figure 5, Figure 6 are based on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (2011).

Six Canadian provinces have set up their elementary and secondary education programs in China. Transnational education programs situated in the private education sector in China double those cooperating with Chinese public schools. Transnational education programs accredited by British Columbia (BC) account for 44% of the total Canadian programs in China, with Nova Scotia, Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Alberta sharing half of the market (See Figure 5). Nova Scotia is now the second largest provider of Canadian education in Mainland China after Ontario imposed its accreditation moratorium in 2005. Moreover, secondary transnational education programs enjoy a more popular presence than elementary programs. Among the Canadian curriculum schools in China, all of them are using Canadian provincial secondary school curriculum. Seventy nine percent of the schools are exclusively using the Canadian secondary school curricula (See Table 9 and Figure 6).

**Table 9: Grades Accredited by Canadian Provinces.**

<b>Province of Accreditation</b>	<b>Grade Accredited</b>	<b>Number of Programs</b>	<b>Level(s) of Education</b>
<b>British Columbia</b>	10-12	16	Secondary
	7-12	1	Elementary & Secondary
	7-10	1	Elementary & Secondary
	1-9	1	Elementary & Secondary
	K-9	1	Kindergarten, Elementary, & Secondary
	K-12	1	Kindergarten, Elementary, & Secondary
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	10-12	9	Secondary
<b>Ontario</b>	10-12	7	Secondary
	7-12	2	Elementary & Secondary
<b>New Brunswick</b>	10-12	2	Secondary
	1-12	1	Elementary & Secondary
	K-12	2	Kindergarten, Elementary, & Secondary
<b>Manitoba</b>	10-12	2	Secondary
<b>Alberta</b>	10-12	2	Secondary



**Figure 6: Percentage of Elementary and Secondary Transnational Education Programs.**

Education is a provincial government responsibility in Canada. There is a scarcity of overseas branding of Canadian education at the federal level (Cosco, 2011; Zha, 2011) and unified initiatives of the quality assurance of transnational education. Most elementary and secondary transnational education programs have been created as provincial initiatives. When the involvement of some provincial governments started to dwindle (e.g., Ontario’s accreditation moratorium in 2005), cooperation between individual or even corporate institutions began to wax, which, according to my interview with the Ontario policy maker Mr. Sedley, constrained efforts to monitor the quality of transnational education.

The General Agreement on Trade in Services has liberalized trade in education and granted developed countries free market access to less developed countries. While most developed countries are speeding up to compete for transnational education spaces in China, the Chinese authorities have spared little effort to formulate and update regulations for transnational education.

### 5.1.2 China’s Transnational Education Regulations and the Impacts Upon SCS’s Curriculum

Chinese authorities’ transnational education policies encourage Sino-foreign cooperative education initiatives that can introduce internationally advanced knowledge to China. In the meantime, the 2003 “Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools” (Chinese State Council, 2003) and its ensuing

policies (e.g., Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2006) affirm the public good nature of education and explicitly regulate against the tendency of education commodification.

Confronted with a rapid and large influx of transnational education programs, Chinese authorities’ transnational education regulations also exhibit “nationalist and patriotic discourses” (Harper, Bean, & Dunkerly, 2010, p. 3) to protect its current political system. For example, the regulations ensure that Sino-foreign education cooperation should abide by the laws and education regulations of China and should not “jeopardize China’s sovereignty, security and public interest” (Chinese State Council, 2003, n.p.). Education consortiums should serve the purpose of training talents for China’s socialist construction. Also, no cooperative education institutions should be established to provide services of political, military, and religious education.

When asked about the impact of the Chinese government’s transnational education regulations upon SCS’s intended and implemented curricula, two Chinese policy makers<sup>22</sup> referred to student reports about a previous Canadian teacher who had very strong opinions about China and used “derogative language” to discuss China’s “problems”. SCS felt the need to alert Canadian teachers that the school respected teachers’ diverse political opinions and religious beliefs, but to nurture adolescents’ healthy worldviews, they advised Canadian teachers not to bring their personal value judgements into the classrooms. To quote Ms. Lin, “They are adolescents. At this age, if teachers impart extreme opinions, it will certainly affect these adolescents’ future worldviews and life attitudes”.

The Chinese principal, Mr. Guo, said that one big challenge in connecting the East and the West in the program was to nurture people’s tolerance of and respect for divergent political values and educational philosophies that were encoded in different education systems. To address the tensions, the Canadian principal, Mr. Collins, encouraged

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<sup>22</sup> For sensitive topics, I am not quoting teachers’ names directly to ensure that participants are not traceable.

Canadian teachers to carefully yet respectfully open students' minds about what was out there in other countries and cultures. He said,

I think we have to be careful. It is not so much you cannot teach anything. It's more you cannot be advocating anything... I taught the Canadian World Politics last year. So we talked about different democratic systems and we talked about dictatorships and oligarchies and things like that. So we would use examples and we would say, "Well, this is where China is...". And certainly I did not take it upon myself to criticize. So it was just information, and providing students, and you know ask them to do value judgments and things, but, you know, certainly not trying to persuade them that one system is better than another system.

When asked about the incorporation of critical thinking to the program, Mr. Collins and Mr. Sedley said that they expected Canadian educators not to impose their Canadians' views of democracy and political systems. Mr. Collins reiterated, "You are careful not to really criticize." He noted that although the Canadian textbooks apparently categorized China as a dictatorship, teachers should respect students' individual opinions about democracy. This echoes Mr. Sedley's comments, "You've got a responsibility as a teacher to make sure kids respect all of this [parliamentary democracy, socialism, republican democracy]. You cannot, you CANNOT undermine that respect". In Mr. Collins' view, it was preferable if Canadian teachers teaching subjects such as Canadian and World Studies could be constructively critical of all the political systems. In his class, he and the students talked about the merits and demerits of both Canadian and Chinese political systems. Students were comfortable with that. Mr. Collins admitted that his balanced view came from continuous self-reflection after years of experience of the Other in China. Before his arrival, he had had preconceptions about China. Now he found his views constantly evolving.

With regard to China's protective transnational education regulations, Mr. Collins and Mr. Sedley both agreed there was ideological control in China in, for example, with respect to media censorship. But Mr. Sedley said such control happened elsewhere around the world. For example, he did not see any difference between China closing down Facebook and the U.S. government's branding of Julian Assange of WikiLeaks as a terrorist. After living in China for years, Mr. Collins also felt that people did not think their lives were regimented. He said that the Chinese were aware of some of the control,

but they seemed to enjoy the ample opportunities in the free market and the freedom to move up the economic ladder.

In this section, I briefly introduced China's transnational education regulations, their ensuing impacts, and the tensions that the Chinese and Ontario policy makers had thus encountered at SCS. In the next section, I depict in detail the hybrid education system at SCS.

## 5.2 SCS Curriculum: Hybridity

According to McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), in most tertiary transnational education programs, curriculum development, assessment oversight, and quality assurance often take place in the centre (home campus in the West). The periphery delivering service often has little autonomy and is closely scrutinized by the centre. However, the situation at SCS diverges from this picture. When I contacted the director of the foreign affairs department of the provincial educational ministry in China<sup>23</sup>, he told me that he would have little to say about transnational education curriculum. The Chinese provincial educational ministry only conducted annual inspections into the educational quality of private schools like SCS. Similarly, the most recent Ontario coordinator of transnational education Mr. Allington<sup>24</sup> responded: the Ontario Ministry of Education only conducted annual inspections to make sure that the offshore programs “meet the requirements of our curriculum documents and our expectations”. They did not specifically look at the curriculum development process in any individual school. The structural features in private education sectors in China and Canada have incorporated considerable autonomy to private transnational education institutions to decide what to teach and how to teach.

### 5.2.1 Bilingualism and Biculturalism: The “Best” from Both

Doyle (1992b) construes institutional curriculum as abstract typifications of what should be taught at schools with respect to the desirable values in ever-changing sociocultural

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<sup>23</sup> I did not capitalize this ministry of education because I am not providing the exact name of the provincial educational ministry to make sure related participants are not traceable.

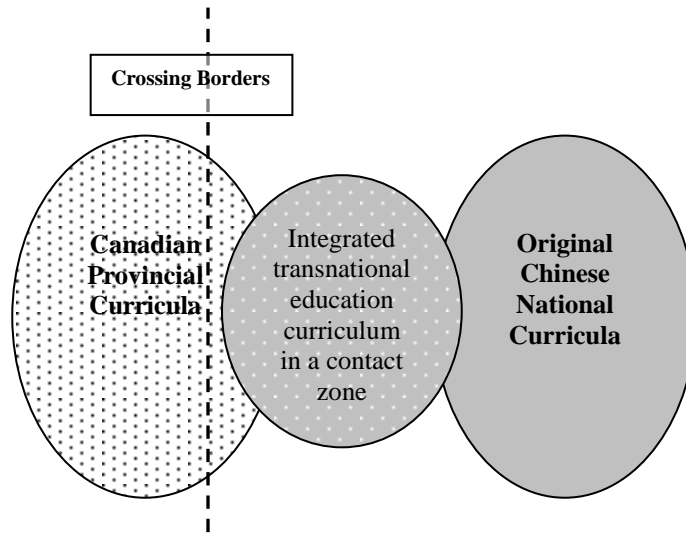
<sup>24</sup> I am not providing the exact titles of the Ontario coordinators to make sure participants are not traceable.

conditions. For Doyle (1992b), institutional curriculum can either be “instantiated” curricular policies or “tacitly shared” perceptions of participants in schools or communities (p. 487). According to Deng (2009), programmatic curriculum transforms the abstract model of institutional curriculum into school subjects or courses of study. Programmatic curriculum is embodied in curriculum documents and materials for use in schools and programs.

Based on the interview data with respect to SCS’s institutional curriculum, there was a shared understanding among Chinese policy makers that SCS held a specific education philosophy to connect the East and the West and bring together “best” practices from both. However, SCS did little to develop their own curriculum documents and materials to instantiate their institutional curriculum. The Chinese policy makers tried to “create” their own programmatic curriculum by juxtaposing the programmatic curricula that both Chinese and Ontario public school systems were using, for example, the Chinese national high school curriculum, the Ontario provincial secondary school curriculum, and the recommended textbooks. As I will show in the rest of this chapter, these two public school programmatic curricula embodied their respective institutional curricula. These institutional curricula reflected desirable values and curriculum discourses that were at odds with SCS’s own institutional curriculum.

Similar to Schuetze’s (2008) findings, at SCS, the hybridity of Canadian provincial curricula and Chinese national curricula operated “under one roof” (p. 5) with different languages, cultures, educational objectives, and pedagogies (See Figure 7).





**Figure 7: Integrated Transnational Education Curriculum in a Contact Zone.**

To accomplish academic requirements for both systems, students at SCS were registered as Chinese high school students from Grade 10 to Grade 11 semester two<sup>25</sup>. Starting Grade 11 semester two, they were registered as Ontario Secondary School students. SCS's policy makers selected and incorporated courses from both systems to help students gain enough credits to get their dual diplomas (See Section 5.2.2 for details).

SCS rationalized their selections and constructions of school subjects based on their education philosophy of connecting the East and the West and bringing together “best” practices from both. In the interviews, the Chinese policy makers explicated the following detailed considerations: (a) identity: integrated bilingual and bicultural curriculum can affirm students' identity as Chinese and nurture modern elites who are adjustable to different linguistic and cultural contexts in the globalized world; (b) academic preparation in the first language (L1): Chinese content area subjects can help build solid academic background for students' future study at overseas universities; (c) inter-cultural dialogue: integrated curriculum can create platforms for Chinese and Canadians to communicate, interact, and forge a mutual understanding and respect; and

<sup>25</sup> At SCS, there are two semesters in a school year.

(d) education product: a dual-diploma was a more attractive product than the Ontario diploma alone.

SCS's hybrid curriculum and dual diploma program targeted a specific student population: (a) At least 95% of the students were ethnic Chinese from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau. There were around 4% who came from other Asian countries, such as Vietnam, Korea, or Japan; (b) Academically, there was a whole spectrum of students. Students in elite classes came to SCS with SCS's scholarships and could have been admitted to key public high schools. Students in regular classes surpassed the cut-off marks of Zhongkao (the provincial high school entrance examination) and could have been admitted to regular high schools; and (c) Socioeconomically, most students came from well-off families where parents were businesspersons; a small fraction of the parents were senior civil servants or senior management of transnational companies; and 4) Students intended to study at overseas universities and to be better prepared linguistically and culturally before they went abroad.

SCS, therefore, boasted of bridging the East and the West and developing these emerging global citizens' abilities to read, write, and function in two different languages and cultures. Students at SCS were inevitably engaged in a wide array of hybrid literacy practices in different languages and different content areas that embody divergent ideologies and sociocultural conditions. A cursory glance at SCS's three year curricula also shows preferences for new forms of literacy such as business literacy and information & technological literacy. Interviews with the Chinese policy makers confirmed this initial finding. Mr. Guo said Information & Technological Studies was a compulsory course in the Chinese curriculum which gives heed to skills associated with new technologies. The Chinese policy makers shared that because most parents were business owners, they expected their children to help with their business management after they graduated from overseas business management programs. Ms. Lin said that because of students' family backgrounds, most students also found business programs more relevant to their life experience.

The Chinese policy makers noted that China's public education was similar to meritocratic education. Relying on multilayered screening for best talents, such an education system stressed students' self-accountability and self-control. Ms. Lin's analogy for this was as follows:

It is like Tang Sanzang and Monkey King (the Buddha in *The Journey to the West*). Only after students survive eighty-one "troubles" would they achieve success at the end....University professors will eventually get to see the most outstanding students who have endured "hardships" of every kind. However, they would not have the chance to see the brilliant others who were sacrifices of the [standardized] screening tools.

All the Chinese policy makers concurred that shaking off the shackles of Gaokao (the national university entrance examinations) at SCS created new spaces for students to unveil their individual interests and knowledge and to thrive as learners. They also acknowledged that Canadian education gave more priority to students' realization of their potential, strengths, and interests. Almost all the Chinese policy makers admitted that there were pros and cons of both systems. They expressed how these two systems might cater to students' different needs and generate different "products".

SCS encouraged students to invest their non-academic talents, multiple intelligences and creativity in social clubs and annual Canadian-inspired events such as the Terry Fox Run, Remembrance Day, Christmas party, and Halloween party. The Canadian principal Mr. Collins said that these activities were crucial to supporting students' Canadian identity and reinforcing their understanding of Canadian cultures. When asked about whether SCS students would see themselves as global citizens, Mr. Collins said,

I think they see themselves as Chinese citizens. I do not think that's changed. They're proud to be Chinese citizens. But I think they recognise they are on a different path than maybe their friends from wherever they came from before. And they are aiming to go to a Canadian university or a Canadian college. So I think they recognize that they are taking a different path.

SCS students' sense of their national identities, in this sense, was constructed through their actual experience of the Other and also their imagined memberships in the future. Apart from fostering new identities and cross-cultural knowledge, the Chinese policy makers (Mr. Guo, Mr. Zhou, and Ms. Lin) stated that these extracurricular activities also

boosted students' multiple intelligences and creativity by giving students autonomy to make connections with their out-of-school interests and hobbies. Ms. Lin believed "low achievers" who were marginalized academically often regained confidence at school through their participation in social clubs and other extracurricular activities. Giving autonomy to students in designing and hosting these events also reinforced their leadership and cooperative skills, and most importantly, increased their social responsibilities. However, these Chinese policy makers also shared that there were perceived downsides of being "too" inclusive of students' various skills and abilities. Parents sometimes expressed their discontent because they believed academic achievements and eventual admission by prestigious overseas universities were more important than extracurricular programs. SCS thus created Sino-Canada education forums and engaged parent-student dialogues about such topics as "At the East-West crossroad: Which direction shall we go?" and "College or university: What to choose?" They hoped that parents would be more involved in the inter-cultural dialogues for a better understanding of SCS's educational philosophy.

The Chinese principal, Mr. Guo, had a very specific conception of literacy. He perceived that students' writing abilities were declining compared to the older generations. He believed that students' declining abilities to write were a result of their disinterest in reading books. He said that the current "fast-food" culture valued entertainment over traditional literacy and efficiency in communication over quality of meaning making. In his view, instead of reading books, students would normally prefer to read comic books, graphic novels, or watch TV. In my view, Mr. Guo's vision of literacy still fell in the "mere literacy" category that focused more on print literacy despite his vision of advocating biliteracy (the New London Group, 1996, p. 64). With regard to incorporating two language systems in one program, Mr. Guo posited that students would benefit from the interconnectedness of training in two different languages. In his view, reading and writing skills that are learned in one language are transferrable when students learn another language. He also held the view that Mandarin literacy-related and content-area courses offered in Grade 10 and Grade 11 semester one could provide students with academic, social, and mental preparation for their future study in English. Specifically, he expressed the belief that the moral education components embedded in the Humanities

subjects such as Mandarin Language Arts and Politics could “prepare students culturally and mentally for their future life and study”.

SCS’s programmatic curriculum development was to a certain extent market-oriented. The earlier Ontario coordinator of transnational education Mr. Sedley said dual diploma programs were initiated and affirmed by the Ontario partner. Mr. Sedley agreed that “dual diploma” did sound like a terrific product to sell. However, he admitted that the idea was initiated based on a limited understanding of the Chinese education system and the negative impacts of privatized education. For him, if education was in entrepreneurs’ hands who knew little about education, it would result in a blind catering to the market demands. Most Chinese policy makers shared that parental choices and requests had played an explicit role in shaping SCS’s programmatic curriculum, particularly its selection of courses. The Chinese principal Mr. Guo was a knowledgeable education researcher who cherished lofty educational ideals. However, from our talks, I understood that he was sometimes caught in dilemmas when the market logic took over and became “the new rule of governance” (Smith, 2006, p. 21). Mr. Guo and Ms. Lin said that initially SCS developed a four-year program for students to accomplish academic requirements of dual diplomas and to finish required 4U courses to apply to overseas universities. This proposal did not survive because the majority of Chinese parents assumed secondary school should not take more than 3 years. In the interim, almost all the interviewed Chinese policy makers said that most Chinese parents had a conventional assumption that universities had prestige over colleges. Hence, most parents insisted that their children were not going to colleges and they needed the 4U courses to apply to overseas universities. There were educators’ ideals of promoting bilingualism and biculturalism on the one hand. There was the market logic that had forced SCS to succumb to customers’ demands on the other. Therefore, the Chinese policy makers had to tailor SCS’s programmatic curriculum. Obtaining credits recognizable for both education systems within 3 years placed pressure on the policy makers, teachers, and students. To spare more time for Canadian English literacy-related courses and 4U courses, SCS had to compress Mandarin literacy-related courses. As teachers themselves, Mr. Zhou, Ms Tang, and Ms Lin admitted that they felt pressure to cover curricular expectations and required content within compressed session hours. There were also big

demands placed upon students. Grade 10 and Grade 11 semester one students in this international boarding school were physically in class from 7:45 AM to 9:15 PM except for a two-hour lunch break and two-hour dinner break. But most Chinese policy makers said that such pressure was not even comparable with that of Gaokao. They believed that students could handle it with little difficulty.

### 5.2.2 The Credit Recognition Systems

The new Chinese high school curriculum requires 144 credits for students to earn their Chinese High School Diploma (116 credits from compulsory courses; 28 credits from elective courses). Normally, in public high schools, students finish credit-based course work at the end of Grade 11; in Grade 12, students are streamed to social studies and natural science cohorts and spend a whole year reviewing subjects and preparing for Gaokao. Replacing the year-based system with the credit-based system, the new Chinese high school curriculum paved the way for SCS's dual diploma program. Students at SCS were registered on the Chinese side from Grade 10 to Grade 11 semester one and took courses required by the Chinese curricula.

SCS also integrated ESL classes and other Canadian classes (e.g., Career Education, Canadian and World Studies, Math Language, and Learning Strategies) in Grade 10 and Grade 11 semester one. The purposes were to enhance students' English proficiency levels and to broaden their visions so that they knew what their Canadian peers would be learning. Before students were officially registered as Ontario secondary school students in Grade 11 semester two, these Canadian courses were taken as non-credit courses on the Ontario side, yet as credited elective courses on the Chinese side.

Students were streamed to different classes based on their English proficiency levels and academic levels indicated by the results of SCS's own placement tests and Zhongkao. Due to their divergent English levels, students in elite classes and regular classes took different Canadian classes in Grade 10 and Grade 11 semester one. Specifically for the elite Grade 11 Class C (where I conducted most classroom observations), each week in Grade 11 semester one, they took 2 sessions of career education, 5 sessions of ENG2D, and 5 sessions of math language class. Plus, each week, students took 3 different types of

test-oriented English classes<sup>26</sup> (2 sessions each) that prepared them for the IELTS<sup>27</sup> test and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

Starting in Grade 11 semester two, SCS students were officially registered as students of the Ontario Ministry of Education. Students needed 30 credits to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (18 are compulsory; 12 are optional). Chinese international students were given 20 Ontario equivalent credits by the Ontario Ministry of Education for all the Chinese credits they got from Grade 9, Grade 10 and Grade 11. Starting Grade 11 semester two, in order to obtain their Ontario Secondary School Diplomas, SCS students needed to (a) get 10 more Ontario credits and (b) either pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test in Grade 11 or pass the Ontario literacy course in Grade 12 if they failed the literacy test. If they were going to apply to the Ontario universities, 6 of those 10 courses had to be 4U courses. Mr. Collins said, there were big demands for students considering their English vocabulary and proficiency levels. There were cases where students ended up nowhere due to the language challenges.

The Chinese policy makers said, to accommodate most students' future choices in business, a fair number of courses offered from Grade 11 semester two to Grade 12 were business- and math-oriented. The Ontario courses that were offered at SCS also tended to be less language-intensive, for example, math and physics. Chemistry and biology were considered to be more language-oriented, hence, not offered at the program. Language-intensive courses like Canadian and World Studies were supposed to broaden students' vision and enhance students' inter-cultural competences. A prior Ontario coordinator of transnational education Mr. Sedley commended SCS's model of accommodating the Ontario math classes. He said, most of these Grade 11 Chinese students did not need Grade 10 Ontario math, but they did need to understand how to articulate and work in their minds in English and math.

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<sup>26</sup> These courses are: English Vocabulary and Grammar, English Writing, and English reading classes.

<sup>27</sup> IELTS: International English Language Testing System.

The Canadian principal Mr. Collins shared that for students who had the language abilities, they enjoyed the language-intensive courses. For others, it was a different story. A more recent Ontario coordinator of transnational education Mr. Allington said that based on the Ontario inspectors' feedback, the major concern with Ontario offshore programs was the level of English that was used to deliver the program; hence, he doubted whether these students were as well prepared for Canadian universities as local Ontario students. Talking about equal preparation, Mr. Allington expected that no curricular modifications should be made for offshore Ontario programs where Ontario curriculum was internationalized. For him, Ontario inspectors' foci should always be placed on whether offshore programs met the Ontario curricular expectations. He said, if exceptional students, like ESL students, needed extra support, accommodations could be made, but that meant students and teachers might need to spend more time on improving English. Based on my examination of the timetables and my observation at SCS, because most of the ESL classes were offered in Grade 10 and Grade 11, these courses were not actually tailored to support students' needs in English content-area subjects. Hence, I barely saw individualized scaffolding and accommodations at SCS to support students' learning in both English language classes and content areas classes in English. To enhance students' English proficiency levels, SCS also launched intensive English summer programs. These English summer programs were both held locally or in Canada depending on students' English proficiency levels. Most Ontario offshore programs might be able to meet the Ontario Ministry of Education's requirement of having 80% Ontario certified teachers; however, according to Mr. Allington, the Ontario Ministry of Education's concern was whether those programs have qualified ESL teachers to provide extra scaffolding for ESL students. Mr. Allington's worry was largely that the lack of ESL teacher resources might have left overseas Ontario students "deficient in their preparation".

Mr. Collins said that Canadian teachers who were teaching content-area subjects were aware that all of their students were ESL, so they were making accommodations anyway to instruct these students in their classes. However, Mr. Collins admitted that the disadvantage was that there was little ESL-specific in-service training for Canadian teachers at SCS. SCS did provide funds for Canadian teachers who were interested in



Additional Qualifications courses on guidance and ESL through the Ontario Ministry of Education. Mr. Allington also shared that Ontario inspectors brought to the offshore programs a professional development component. They did presentations and provided information about new resources, new strategies, new procedures, and new curriculum that have been released to in-service staff, even though they were not ESL specific.

As was Mr. Allington, Mr. Collins was concerned about the students' facility with English. He said that when students moved to Grade 11 semester two as registered Ontario Secondary School students, the Ontario track basically tried to do as much immersion as possible. For offshore Ontario programs that were situated in contexts where students had limited exposure to English, Mr. Collins said that to help students make successful transition to overseas undergraduate programs, these offshore programs should preferably target students with higher English levels or enrol students earlier into the English immersion programs.

### 5.2.3 The Evaluation System

All the Chinese policy makers concurred that breaking the tether of Gaokao created new spaces for students to appreciate the joy of learning different cultures and knowledge systems incorporated at SCS. To quote Ms. Lin,

Without Gaokao as the big Baton, students have bigger stages [to showcase their individual strengths]. They have more freedom.... At the same time, the Canadian teachers at SCS are different from randomly hired ESL teachers. They are very active in disseminating different cultural components.

However, despite the absence of Gaokao, different curricular players intentionally or unintentionally interacted to put in place a complicated evaluation system at SCS.

As was mentioned earlier, the Chinese director of the foreign affairs department of the provincial educational ministry confirmed that there was little structural control from different levels of ministries of education in China to monitor SCS's programmatic curriculum development. However, the Chinese policy makers at SCS said that the Grade 10 district-level standardized tests on the Chinese side were actually a measurement that the Chinese district school board used to gauge both private and public schools' quality of education. The Chinese district school board did not publicize the ranking of schools

based on the test results. But they did publicize the average marks of each school. People normally ranked schools from there.

Ms. Lin and Ms. Tang said that when SCS started running, parents were afraid that SCS's education quality was not comparable to regular public schools. Therefore, SCS voluntarily agreed to partake in the Chinese-side Grade 10 district-level standardized tests. Designed to gauge public school students' performance, these standardized tests closely followed the requirements of Gaokao. As a science teacher herself, Ms. Lin said advocating progressive<sup>28</sup> teaching ideas on one hand, but incorporating standardized tests on the other resulted in substantial challenges for teachers at SCS. Ms. Tang felt that the new curricula actually gave teachers autonomy to engage their practical knowledge in their implemented curriculum. But the standardized tests still stood in the way.

In Mr. Zhou's view, SCS's voluntary participation in the district-level standardized tests created an accountability system for its teachers. When asked about why SCS did not create an evaluation system of its own given its unique education goals and mission, Mr. Zhou and Ms. Tang said, first of all, if there were no results from other schools serving as frames of reference, parents would not find the test results convincing. Second, the school was to a certain extent reluctant to have teachers creating assessments on their own. Ms. Lin talked about the prevailing public distrust in teachers' professionalism in China. She said,

I read Ontario's ethical standards of teaching profession before. It says teachers are in their position of trust and they can be responsible for their classes and all the things in relation to their teaching profession. However, in China, such trust is missing... It is either top-down evaluation or standardized tests; there is no such trust that teachers have the ability to implement curriculum properly based on their professional ethics.

Mr. Zhou said that standardized tests have been the most pervasive and powerful method to evaluate learning and teaching in China. Mr. Guo commented that standardized testing was spreading globally; therefore, he did not see anything wrong to use it for evaluation

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<sup>28</sup> Chinese policy makers and Chinese teachers in this study used "progressive" and "Western" to describe such teaching approaches as inquiry learning, collaborative learning, and approaches that incorporate various modes and new technologies.

at SCS. In our interviews, we further discussed the contradictions of promoting students' individual strengths on one hand, but using standardized exams to gauge their abilities on the other. Mr. Guo, Mr. Zhou, and Ms. Lin agreed that SCS had been exploring evaluations that might better fit SCS's unique education mission. But before they found more "objective" and more "scientific" approaches of evaluation, standardized tests would continue to be an expedient alternative at SCS.

SCS generally adopted the Ontario's evaluation criteria for all Chinese and Canadian courses. They specified that 70% of students' course grade was based on evaluations conducted throughout the course; 30% of the grade was based on the final assessment in various forms, for example, district-level standardized tests, final exams, essays, or portfolios. On the Ontario side, Mr. Collins said that except for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test, there were no other standardized tests for Grade 11 and Grade 12 students. The Ontario teachers made their own decisions as to how to evaluate their students. However, for SCS students to get their Ontario Secondary School Diplomas, they had to pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test in Grade 11, like all the local Ontario students. The pass rate had been low at SCS, but it did not pose too many problems since students who failed the literacy test would still be given the chance to pass the Ontario literacy course in Grade 12. Also, the Ontario Secondary School Diploma did not guarantee students at offshore programs that they could apply directly to overseas universities like local Ontario students. SCS students still needed to take IELTS or TOEFL<sup>29</sup> to prove their English proficiency levels.

The Chinese principal Mr. Guo said that the graduation rates and the results of student/parent satisfaction surveys were important indexes of the quality of the program. Other key indexes were: the Ontario Ministry of Education's and the Chinese provincial ministry of education's annual inspections at SCS. The Chinese provincial inspection happened once a year. The Ontario inspection happened annually on an alternate basis: one year was a physical inspection and the alternate year was a paper inspection. As the Chinese inspectors conducted annual inspections on the Chinese curriculum and

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<sup>29</sup> TOEFL: The Test of English as a Foreign Language.

instruction, the Ontario inspectors looked at similar things on the Ontario side. They examined course outlines, observed classes, and looked at timetables to make sure that SCS was meeting the hours, the days, and the content requirements. They also checked teachers' qualifications. At the end of the inspections, they specified things where SCS needed to improve.

Following both Chinese and Ontario curricular expectations, SCS incorporated diverse forms of assessment. Given the global trend of standardized testing, SCS were also involuntarily involved in a complex web of local and international testing systems that gauged both students' and teachers' educational accomplishments.

#### 5.2.4 Hybrid Curriculum: Interactions & Tensions

The Chinese and Ontario policy makers said that teachers were constantly involved in the process of curriculum development. Mr. Guo said Chinese teachers at SCS had autonomy to deliver the programmatic curricula in their preferred approaches; however, in regular teaching study sessions, he often placed particular emphasis on progressive approaches that were encoded in the Chinese national high school curricula. Mr. Collins and Mr. Sedley said, the Ontario side also gave Canadian teachers quite a bit of flexibility around how they would deliver the curricula on the premise that teachers covered the expectations that were prescribed in the Ontario curricula. Canadian teachers had been adapting Ontario curricula in their classes to accommodate SCS students' English proficiency levels.

Mr. Zhou, who was previously involved in SCS's programmatic curriculum development, said teachers were part of the curriculum decision-making process at SCS. Decisions about what courses to incorporate to the program were made collectively based on class teachers' feedback about students' current and future needs, their interests, and their learning experiences. For example, since most students would choose business programs for their undergraduate study, SCS incorporated more Chinese science courses in Grade 10 and Grade 11 semester one to better prepare students for their study in Grade 12, which was intensively business-oriented and math-focused.

All the interviewed Chinese policy makers shared that from their perspectives, Chinese teachers at SCS had been tweaking the Chinese curricula to make better connections with what students would learn in Grade 12. Chinese teachers were also trying to change their teaching approaches because of the Western influences at SCS and students' preferences of Western teaching styles. The Chinese policy maker Ms. Tang also noted changes in Chinese teachers' language to describe their students. Previously, she often heard teachers labelling students as "low achievers" and "high achievers". Their gaze was more focused on students as academic beings. Now Chinese teachers gave more respect to the whole student and paid heed to their social and emotional wellbeing.

Mr. Guo said that SCS tried to respect the cultural differences in teachers' involvement in administrative work. By that, he meant that generally Chinese teachers were more involved in administrative and consultative work than teachers in Canada. Therefore, the Ontario teachers were mostly responsible for their own courses and preparing required paperwork for Ontario's annual inspection. They were active participants in supporting students' extracurricular activities, such as community services, social clubs, and Christmas parties. Chinese policy makers said that they were aware that Chinese teachers were unhappy with their workload. Ms. Lin shared that besides teaching responsibilities and paperwork for the annual inspection, Chinese teachers were also part of the school's student-administrative and -consultative body, even though Mr. Guo explained, Chinese teachers' weekly teaching hours were shorter than Canadian teachers. Every Grade 10 and Grade 11 class had Chinese teachers serving as their class advisor (Ban Zhu Ren "班主任") and deputy class advisor.

The policy makers such as Ms. Lin, Ms. Tang, Mr. Zhou, and Mr. Collins shared that the Chinese and Ontario sides ran like parallel lines. SCS's programmatic curriculum was not integrated per se. The Chinese and Canadian teachers followed their respective Chinese and Ontario curricula and did not interact with each other in most of the cases. The Chinese policy makers said they had been making every effort possible to engage the Chinese and Canadian teachers and staff in dialogue, for example, the monthly Sino-Canadian English teaching exchange meetings and Wednesday lunch meetings. They even tried to mix the Chinese and Canadian teachers in the same offices, but to no avail.

Mr. Guo said some Chinese and Canadian teachers started to nitpick each other's shortcomings by using their own strong points as the frame of references.

Mr. Collins shared that generally the Canadian teachers were privileged at the overseas Ontario program, as they were well respected and well paid. Mr. Zhou, Ms. Lin, and Ms. Tang thought that in the educational hybridity at SCS, Canadian courses were deemed as more important by policy makers, parents, and students as well, because of the linguistic preparation for students' future education. To quote Ms. Lin, "In SCS's [integrated] curriculum, English and math courses are given a salient priority. Of course, this is because students intend to study abroad". Ms. Tang shared that she often heard Chinese teachers complaining about Chinese courses serving the interests of Ontario courses. From Mr. Zhou's perspective, the Chinese high school curriculum, the school administrators, and students at SCS also tilted their preferences toward Western ways of teaching. As a science teacher himself, Mr. Zhou felt that at SCS the Chinese education's traditional emphasis on analytical thinking and abstract thinking in science was not as celebrated as the application abilities in the West. Pedagogically, students at SCS tended to prefer the Canadian teachers' classes where there was more student autonomy, less pressure, and more chances of interactive and cooperative learning. Chinese administrators also strongly advocated progressive teaching approaches that were encoded in the Chinese high school curricula. The Chinese teachers at SCS attempted to learn more about how the Canadian teachers enacted such progressive ideas into their classrooms. Mr. Tang said that, after observing the Canadian teachers' classes, she often heard Chinese teachers commenting, "I would love to teach like that, but I cannot [given the testing regimes and things as such]". Ms. Tang said that many Chinese teachers, including herself as a science teacher, sometimes still thought that the Canadian teachers' classes were a waste of time. She said, the Chinese teachers thought that they could teach more content knowledge than their Canadian counterparts during a 45-minute session. The Chinese policy makers concurred that the Chinese teachers knew more about what the Canadian teachers did in their classes, while few Canadian teachers initiated attempts to learn about how the Chinese teachers were teaching.

SCS had a unique governance<sup>30</sup> model that enabled its educational hybridity. The Chinese Principal Mr. Guo supervised the whole program design. The Canadian principal, Mr. Collins, only took charge of curriculum and instruction on the Ontario side. As the coordinator of curriculum design and implementation at SCS, Ms. Lin liaised with both sides to distribute resources and engage Chinese and Canadian teachers in interactive events. The “micropolitics” (Eilertsen, Gustafson, & Salo, 2008, p. 295) in SCS’s hybrid governance model also added fuel to the tensions at SCS. According to Eilertsen et al. (2008), “micropolitics” refers to the interaction of diverse ideologies and interests within school settings which could result in either uncertainty/disunity or collaboration/collegiality. Probably because of Mr. Collins’s and Mr. Guo’s different roles at SCS, their visions of SCS’s institutional and programmatic curricula were fairly different. Mr. Guo accentuated the interconnectivity of the Chinese and Canadian courses that they incorporated in the programmatic curriculum. Trying to engage both sides, Mr. Guo, like other Chinese policy makers, emphasized their vision of bilingualism and biculturalism and students’ transferrable skills in different cultural and linguistic contexts. Mr. Collins was more focused on meeting Ontario curriculum and instruction requirements. For him, students’ increased exposure to English and their increased proficiency were the core. It is worth noting, like most Canadian teachers, Mr. Collins envisioned the Chinese teachers’ classes to be more teacher-centred and transmission-oriented, which was in contrast with the more interactive, cooperative, and multimodal Canadian classes. Mr. Sedley said, based on his observation, Canadian teachers might be well treated at transnational education programs; however, the micropolitics often favoured Chinese principals. After Canadian principals went to China, instead of a whole school, they only got a small portion of a school. In Mr. Sedley’s view, removing the rough spots in transnational education programs relied on how Canadian principals understood the politics at play in Chinese education institutions. It also depended on Canadian principals’ abilities to work with the personal power that was invested in different positions.

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<sup>30</sup> Neuman (2005) defines “governance” as the allocation of “responsibility for decision-making and delivery within and across administrative departments, levels of government, and public and private actors” (p. 130).

### 5.2.5 Ontario's Stories: International Visions

The two Ontario coordinators of offshore programs provided somewhat discordant perspectives on Ontario's intentions to create hybrid programs. The earlier coordinator Mr. Sedley said that the integration idea was initiated and affirmed by individual bureaucrats from the Ontario Ministry of Education back in the 1990s. Later, these individuals realized the challenges of embedding two systems in one program after they understood better the pressure of Chinese high school education. Mr. Sedley thus commended some of SCS's innovations in curriculum development which resulted in benefits for students' learning experiences. In contrast, the more recent Ontario coordinator Mr. Allington offered a fairly different vision of offshore Ontario programs:

Well, our inspectors are mandated to only look at the Ontario curriculum. And, therefore, if there is something that is integrated, A, they wouldn't be observing it because it's not part of our program. And so, consequently, if it is something that is highly incorporated, it would be problematic for our inspectors. It would probably come up as an issue in their inspection process to say, "You are not really complying with our requirements because your focus is on the integrated aspect and not on the Ontario curriculum".

Being more focused on the credibility of the existing offshore programs, Mr. Allington did not expect to see integrated Sino-Canada programs that have the potential to facilitate Sino-Canada educational interactions. For me, such a view bears traces of cultural/linguistic imperialism that insists on a unidirectional educational mobility of Western-centric language and knowledge systems from Canada to China and is largely ignorant of the potential of integrating the local and the global.

According to Mr. Sedley, the Ontario's overseas education activities can be traced back to the 1950s when Ontario ran Finishing Schools in Switzerland. Ontario's modern day secondary school transnational education activities could only be loosely defined as a government initiative. It was not the strategic planning of the Ontario government or the Ontario Ministry of Education to connect Asian students who were interested in studying overseas to Ontario. The Ontario's secondary school transnational education programs only started as the strategic positioning of a few Ontario bureaucrats in education who assumed that it would be in the public interest for Ontario to have more presence in Asia. The advent and growth of Ontario offshore programs was largely driven by members of



the private sector in Canada, Asia, and other places across the world, most of whom saw profits as a motive. It was usually individuals and organizations approaching government instead of government inviting individuals and organizations to create Ontario offshore programs. China witnessed a rapidly growing presence of Ontario schools before Ontario's accreditation moratorium in 2005. However, this growth was not a result of the Ontario government's efforts, but largely a result of the rapid growth of the Chinese market.

Mr. Allington said that the Ontario government in the early 1970s started to establish overseas private schools through contractual agreements between the individual schools and the government of Ontario. Initially, those offshore schools were seen as places to brand Ontario's quality education. The intention was not to bring in immediate economic impacts. It was rather to generate ensuing economic effects as a result of positive education effects on students who would ultimately graduate from those schools with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma and who would possibly come to Ontario, continue their tertiary education, and hopefully become productive contributors within the Ontario economy. Mr. Allington's comments on Ontario's transnational education initiatives coincide with Mr. Sedley's metaphor of strategically planting Ontario's flags overseas. When asked about the impacts of neoliberalism to free up Ontario's public education for international competition, both Mr. Allington and Mr. Sedley affirmed that the impacts were more salient on the side of less developed countries like China given the number of individuals and institutions who were interested in mobilizing overseas Canada's high-quality public education.

When talking about the Ontario Ministry of Education's rationale for the accreditation moratorium in 2005, Mr. Allington and Mr. Sedley did not concur with each other. Mr. Sedley contended that international education was "not in our DNA in the Ministry of Education and in the government too". In contrast, Mr. Allington thought the situation had been changing. The Ontario government has been more proactive in international education at the postsecondary levels. Given the declining student enrollment in Ontario's publicly funded schools, the government and also elementary and secondary schools might be reconsidering the international branding of Ontario's educational

products. Mr. Allington shared that there was a key reason why Ontario's transnational education activities were not as proactive as British Columbia's. The Ontario government put in place a significant accountability framework to ensure that publicly funded schools did not use public funds to establish schools overseas, from which they collected revenue to put into foundations which were not going back to the Ontario taxpayers. Mr. Sedley did not agree. He witnessed the history of the Ontario offshore programs' natural progression and later the "political chill" that froze the Ontario government's moves toward internationalization. He added that bureaucratic fights within the government and the swinging international education policy orientations of changing political parties had also hindered the progression of Ontario's international and transnational education. In the case of differing partisan visions, Mr. Allington shared a similar concern about the future strategic changes in Ontario's transnational education policies.

With respect to quality of education, Mr. Sedley said that if people started to add an entrepreneurial spirit to education, profit motives would potentially override academic motives. When promoting education as products, offshore programs would make all sorts of promises and take all comers who had the checks. Serving public education for most of his career, Mr. Allington also contended,

It's Ontario's struggle in privatizing and internationalizing education while facing ethical and moral struggles, issues of educational equity in access to education, and providing sufficient resources, training, and funding to help each individual grow success and benefit from that form of education.

Partially because of this private-public debate, Ontario overseas programs had received limited support from the Ontario government. As Mr. Sedley said, "Who in the Ministry of Education pays attention to those schools? Who cares about them?...The answer is 'Nobody'. They are orphans in the Ministry of Education". Mr. Sedley thus commended BC's and Alberta's proactive moves. Their ministers and premiers stood up and affirmed that these offshore programs were important because they had BC and Alberta people physically interacting with the local contexts, which would further enhance people's awareness of BC and Alberta. Mr. Sedley quoted the Ontario Ministry of Education's Throne Speech which hailed the importance of making connections between Ontario classrooms and the world in order to nurture citizens for the world. The speech itself

conveyed a very internationalist view. However, Mr. Sedley said that its real purpose was more about bringing in more international students to local secondary schools because of the declining local student population. For Mr. Sedley, internationalizing education was more than increasing the number of international students in Canadian classrooms. It was more about a global perspective of what teachers and students could do within the classrooms to help students understand that their boundaries and their human relations were expanding beyond Ontario and Canada. Mr. Sedley said, scattered individual schools and school boards might be doing things like that, but a systematic international infrastructure was missing at the Ontario government to support such a global perspective of education.

In this section, I depicted SCS's own institutional and programmatic curricula in terms of its hybrid curriculum, the Chinese and Ontario credit recognition systems, and SCS's complex evaluation system. In the next sections, I provide an overview of the two sets of public school programmatic curricula (Chinese national high school curricula and Ontario secondary school curricula) that SCS tried to integrate in its programmatic curriculum.

### 5.3 The New Chinese Curricula: Mediation of the Local and Global

My classroom observation of the Chinese side of the program focused on three Mandarin literacy-related subjects: Mr. Chen's Chinese History, Ms. Gu's Politics, and Ms. Ge's Mandarin Language Arts. These courses followed the new Chinese national high school curricula (the new curricula): *Mandarin Language Arts* (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003b), *Politics* (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2004), and *History* (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003c). The new national curricula have been under development and revision since China's education reform launched in 1985 by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (Zhang & Zhong, 2003). All the textbooks that I examined passed review by the National Textbook Review Committee under the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (People's Education Press, Teaching Materials Research Institute, & History Curriculum Resources Research and Development Centre, 2007; Teaching Materials Writing Group for the Ministry of

Education's General Secondary School Ideologies and Politics Curriculum, 2008a; Teaching Materials Writing Group of Guangdong Basic Education Curriculum Resources Research and Development Centre, 2004).

All the new curricula are apparently mediated by curriculum theories from Western countries and the former Soviet Union (e.g., Zhang & Zhong, 2003). For example, the new curricula accentuate new patterns of social interaction within classrooms. The curricula put an emphasis on student-centredness instead of teacher-centred transmission approaches. Ideas of educational democracy that value individual students' strength (Xu & Han, n.d.) become a leitmotif of these new curricula. The new curricula expect schools and teachers to provide equal educational opportunities to support individual students' strengths and personality differences. For example, the Politics curriculum states, "This curriculum should value high school students' developmental potential in mentality, intelligence, and physical conditions...and respect students' personality differences ('本课程要重视高中学生在心理、智力、体能等方面的发展潜力 ..... 尊重学生个性差异')" (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2004, n.p.). The new curricula also give priority to democratic learning processes that value students' voices and input. As responses to educational democracy, all three curricula espouse the use of qualitative and quantitative evaluations. These Mandarin literacy-related curricula encourage teachers to employ multiple tools and strategies to equitably identify and assess students' needs and strengths. These curricula also advise teachers to triangulate multiple sources of information collected from formal and informal assessment procedures such as oral presentations, written compositions, curriculum-based assessments administered by teachers, portfolio assessment, and observations. The Mandarin Language Arts, Politics, and History curricula place emphasis on students' self-assessment and parental involvement in evaluation.

The image of students is not restricted to academic and intellectual beings, but expanded to social and emotional beings, which reflects Dewey's progressive belief of educating the "whole child" (Eisner, 2002, p. 71). Instead of a mere focus on academic achievement, the three curricula intend to nurture a plethora of students' abilities: creativity ("创造性思维"), analytical abilities ("分析问题的能力"), and scientific

inquiry (“探究的能力”)<sup>31</sup>. The Mandarin Language Arts curriculum explicitly encourages teachers to “change the approaches that give too much emphasis on reception learning, rote memorization, and mechanical exercises (‘改变过于强调接受学习、死记硬背、机械训练的状况’)” (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2003b, n.p.). It expects students to value “cooperative learning (‘合作学习’)”, “exchange ideas (‘相互切磋’)”, and “share and mutually evaluate their compositions (‘相互展示和评价写作成果’)” (n.p.). The Politics and History curricula also emphasize the crucial role of collective inquiry in enhancing students’ learning experience. The new curricula buttress different learning styles and habits of expressing ideas. Instead of emphasizing written representations in class activities and assessments, the three curricula give priority to oral representations in forms of debate (“辩论”), group discussion (“讨论”), and presentation (“演讲”). The Mandarin Language Arts curriculum specifically defines teachers as “organizers and guides of learning activities (‘学习活动的组织者和引导者’)” (n.p.). Instead of authoritarian lecturers, in the three examined Chinese curricula, teachers are generally envisioned as facilitators who engage students in discussions, debates, seminars, and cooperative study groups.

The Mandarin Language Arts curriculum explicitly upholds the goal to nurture students’ innovative thinking and creativity in interpreting texts and expressing ideas. Students are encouraged to employ “creative ways of representing and expressing” (“创造性表述”) based on their personal strengths and interests (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2003b, n.p.).

Considering the diverse regional differences of different areas in China, the standardized national curricula also accent schools’ and teachers’ “autonomy (‘自主开发’)” (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2004, n.p.) in adapting the “centrally determined curricular framework[s]” (Halpin, 2010, p. 258) to the local contexts based on schools’ and teachers’ understanding of the local needs. Schools and teachers are,

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<sup>31</sup> I retrieved corresponding terms from the Politics curriculum (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2004, n.p.).

therefore, charged with choosing textbooks or even developing teaching materials. The History curriculum even seconds students' roles in collectively selecting and creating teaching materials. It states, "History textbooks should be embodied in diverse forms in order to leave sufficient spaces for teachers' and students' creativity in teaching and learning, which will be beneficial for students' inquiry learning ('历史教科书呈现方式应多样化, 为师生创造性的教与学, 留有充分的空间, 有利于学生的探究学习')"

(Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003c, n.p.).

The new curricula display an appreciation of reading, viewing, and expressing in diverse modes and new technologies (especially the Internet) to respond to students' shifting practices in using different modes and modern technologies. The new curricula also bring to the forefront the relevance of teaching and learning to "the real world ('现实生活')"

(Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003c, n.p.) or "social life ('社会生活')"

(Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003b, n.p.). The required content and approved textbooks support this salient curricular emphasis. The Mandarin Language Arts curriculum specifies that students hone their oral skills "to communicate in different communicative occasions and for different purposes ('能根据不同的交际场合和交际目的, 恰当地进行表达')"

(Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003b, n.p.). The Politics curriculum expects teachers to "situate their elaboration on theories and arguments in real-life themes ('把理论观点的阐述寓于生活主题之中')"

(Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2004, n.p.). The new curricula bolster students' active participation in social practices to make connections between school literacy and outside-of-school practices. All the curricula urge teachers to create spaces for students to choose topics from their own life experiences. The History curriculum suggests students "interview local National People's Congress delegates or CPPCC members<sup>32</sup> to explore how they perform their duties ('访问当地人大代表或政协委员, 了解他们是怎样履行职责的')"

(Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003c, n.p.). The curriculum also celebrates histories that

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<sup>32</sup> CPPCC stands for the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

reflect embedded family life. It expects students to take advantage of parents' and relatives' photos and material objects to “explore [the relationship between] family histories and social changes” (‘了解家庭的历史和社会的变迁’), which echoes Pahl and Rowsell's (2010) artifactual literacy. The Politics curriculum advises students to “participate in the democratic supervision process like writing complaint letters to the National People's Congress delegates or the government's Complaint Letter and Request Handling Office (‘参与民主监督的活动, 如向政府的信访机构、人民代表反映情况’)” so that students can better understand the processes of socialist democracy (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2004, n.p.). Students are therefore re-envisioned as active constructors of knowledge and meaning through extensive every day practices.

All three curricula mentioned “人文 (Ren Wen)” (“humanistic”). But there is a lack of details about the definitions of the term and the ways of realizing these “humanistic” proposals in teaching and learning. The History curriculum accents students' “humanistic quality” (“人文素养”) and states that one curricular objective is to “deepen students' understanding of humanistic spirits embodied in historical events that emphasized care for people, care for life, and concerns with the destiny of humankind (‘加深对历史上以人为本、善待生命、关注人类命运的人文主义精神的理解’)” (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003c, n.p.). I infer that the term “humanistic” in the three curricula might also stand for knowledge, skills, and sensibilities that are nurtured and reinforced by subjects of social sciences instead of natural sciences. For instance, both History and Politics curricula mention “人文社会科学” which refers to “humanistic social sciences” in English (n.p.). “Humanistic” in the Politics and Mandarin Language Arts curricula is associated with culture and history as is shown in “人文景观 (‘places of historic figures and cultural heritage’)” (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003b, n.p.).

The curriculum ideology of Rational Humanism is evident in the three curricula. The Mandarin Language Arts curriculum specifically displays a tendency to expose students to the “best works” of the classic and contemporary Chinese and foreign literature. For

example, the Mandarin Language Arts curriculum specifically expects students to “selectively read classic works and other outstanding reading materials and to dialogue with texts (‘选读经典名著和其他优秀读物，与文本展开对话’)” (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2003b, n.p.). The curriculum also identifies the purposes of having students read classic works, just to name a few: to exercise students’ reason of “appreciating the richness of these works (‘领悟其丰富内涵’)”, “to nurture students’ positive aspirations (‘树立积极向上的人生理想’)”, and “to enhance students’ sense of mission and sense of social responsibility to work hard to revitalize the Chinese nation (‘增强为民族振兴而努力的使命感和社会责任感’)” (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2003b, n.p.). A common critique of Rational Humanism touches upon its rationales for including some but excluding certain other texts as the “best works”. Critique also refers to the role of “best” literary works in maintaining literacy elites’ power to “structure the ideological zones” and “replicate and disseminate meanings” (Kaplan, 1995, n.p.). The History curriculum espouses “historical materialism (‘历史唯物主义’)” as the crucial scientific tool for students to understand and discover the regular patterns of human development history (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2003c, n.p.). The privileging of this Marxism-oriented approach is culturally embedded and ideologically situated in the specific context of China as a socialist country with the Chinese Communist Party as the ruling authority.

All three curricula see variants of Marxism as fundamental theories that direct curriculum development, textbook compilation, and instruction. Ideological control and Party control are to some extent manifest in the three curricula of Politics, History, and Mandarin Language Arts. These new curricula specify that the teaching of these subjects should be guided by Marxist-Leninist Theory, Mao Zedong’s Thought, Deng Xiaoping’s Theory and the Three Representatives. All the Politics, History, and Mandarin Language Arts textbooks contain chapters and articles about these ideologies.

All of the three curricula select texts about the market primacy in China’s socialist regime. Both the Politics and History curricula incorporate content regarding the basic knowledge of China’ socialist market economic system. The Mandarin Language Arts



textbook (Book 5) (Teaching Materials Writing Group of Guangdong Basic Education Curriculum Resources Research and Development Centre, 2004) selects texts about the socialist market economy for students to read and reflect upon the importance of moral and legal regulations in the market economy. The Politics curriculum encourages students to talk to parents, friends, or relatives and find out real-life cases of the Chinese people's entrepreneurial success and their positive comments on market regulations. The Politics curriculum is inclined to reinforce an entrepreneurial culture that gives credit to the existing socialist economic system. It also expects students and teachers to examine the ethical challenges of the market economy. I understand the focuses on the market primacy in these new curricula as attempts to legitimate the existing economic and political system. Cai (1982) finds that three decades ago Chinese educational philosophy wavered between moral/political socialization and labor power training for modernization. In contrast, in my view, after the new curriculum reforms, the Mandarin literacy-related curricula unfold a "marriage" of these two paradigms in the entity of "socialist economic system" ("社会主义市场经济") (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2004, n.p.).

The "nationalist and patriotic discourses" (Harper et al., 2010, p. 3) also predominate in the three Mandarin literacy-related curricula and suggested textbooks. The curricula select specific texts to arouse students' patriotism and nationalism. The History curriculum aims at stimulating students' sense of pride in Chinese history and culture. The Politics curriculum intends to develop students' national spirit, while at the same time, expanding their international vision. As is mentioned above, the Mandarin Language Arts curriculum attempts to use the "best" literary works in the Chinese history of civilization to nurture students' national spirit and ardent love for their homeland and Chinese cultures.

All three curricula accentuate the importance of valuing and maintaining the cultural and linguistic heritages of China. The History and Politics curricula quote texts in Classical Chinese. The Classical Chinese texts take up one fourth of the Mandarin Language Arts textbook (Book 5) (Teaching Materials Writing Group of Guangdong Basic Education Curriculum Resources Research and Development Centre, 2004). The Mandarin

Language Arts curriculum also stresses the role of reading-aloud and reciting in appreciating the Classical Chinese texts.

All three curricula have a palpable purpose to nurture students' global vision and enhance their open-mindedness. The History curriculum foregrounds students' abilities to “dialectically perceive.... the internal connections between China and the world (‘辩证地认识....中国与世界的内在联系’)” and accents the importance to “maintain international peace and promote mutual development (‘维护世界和平和促进共同发展’)” (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003c, n.p.). The component of peace education is perceptible in the History curriculum. Both History and Politics curricula refer to the value of respecting diverse cultures, including the ethnic diversity within China. All three curricula encourage students to learn and appreciate the best works created by all nationalities. The major purpose of these advocacies is to help students construct an open “cosmopolitan consciousness (‘世界意识’ Shi Jie Yi Shi)” (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003c, n.p.), but there is no explicit definition of this concept.

This section delineated the new educational and ideological trends in the new Mandarin literacy-related curricula. In the next section, I depict the Ontario literacy-related curricula and offer comparisons on some key features.

## 5.4 The Ontario Curriculum: Broadened Perceptions of Literacy

Presentation of data in this section is grounded in content analysis of the Ontario English literacy-related curricula. Inclusion of documents for analysis were based on observed classes at SCS, that is, Mr. Wilson's ENG2D, Mr. Gosnell's Grade 10 Career Education, Ms. Allen's MCR3U, and Ms. Wyatt's ESL-CO. The documents include: *English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development: Grades 9 to 12*<sup>33</sup> (Ontario Ministry

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<sup>33</sup> *English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development: Grades 9 to 12* will be abbreviated as ESL curriculum in the ensuing text.

of Education, 2007a) (ESL curriculum in the following), *English: Grades 9 and 10*<sup>34</sup> (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b), and *Guidance and Career Education: The Ontario Curriculum: Grades 9 and 10*<sup>35</sup> (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006). SCS incorporated MCR3U as a math language class because students had already taken courses on Functions instructed by their Chinese math teachers. Therefore, I only examined the literacy-related sections (e.g., “Program Considerations for English Language Learners” and “Literacy and Inquiry/Research Skills”) in the *Mathematics: Grades 11 and 12*<sup>36</sup> curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007c).

The English curriculum quotes in the forefront a broadened view of literacy from UNESCO’s “Statement for the United Nations Literacy Decade, 2003-2012”:

Literacy is about more than reading or writing---it is about how we communicate in society. It is about social practices and relationships, about knowledge, language and culture.

Those who use literacy take it for granted---but those who cannot use it are excluded from much communication in today’s world. Indeed, it is the excluded who can best appreciate the notion of “literacy as freedom”. (as cited in Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 3)

This broadened perception of literacy foregrounds the multimodal aspects of meaning making and stresses knowledge and skills in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing. It affirms the social, cultural, and ideological embeddedness of literacy and the interconnectivity between literacy, power, and identity. Besides, the English curriculum also brings to light a variety of genres that are relevant to students’ in-school and out-of-school literacy practices (e.g., formal, informal, and media literacy).

In the English curriculum, I see a nested view of literacy that unites the cognitive and social practice theories of literacy (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004). For example, the

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<sup>34</sup> *English: Grades 9 and 10* will be abbreviated as English curriculum.

<sup>35</sup> *Guidance and Career Education: The Ontario Curriculum: Grades 9 and 10* will be abbreviated as Career Education curriculum.

<sup>36</sup> *Mathematics: Grades 11 and 12* will be abbreviated as math curriculum.

curriculum states, the writing conventions of grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation “are best learned in the context of meaningful and creative writing activities” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 17). Acknowledging meaningful literacy practices, the English curriculum conceives of literacy as social practices that are connected to culture, as is illustrated in the UNESCO quote. Similar to the Mandarin Language Arts curriculum, the English curriculum emphasizes the importance of students’ exposure to literary works of “accomplished writers” of different historical periods to enhance students’ understanding of the various dimensions of human conditions (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 16). Both English and ESL curricula stress teachers’ incorporation of texts that reflect the “diversity of Canadian and world cultures” to enhance students’ vicarious experience of other cultures through literacy (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 16). Additionally, the section of media studies in the English curriculum pinpoints students’ exploration of the influences of popular culture. Students are expected to access a variety of texts that are ubiquitous in the information age (e.g., films, songs, video games, action figures, advertisements, CD covers, billboards, television shows, magazines, newspapers, photographs, and websites) and more importantly explore “the impact and influence of mass media and popular culture” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 18).

Similar to all the investigated Chinese new curricula, there is a salient emphasis on “experiential learning” in all examined Ontario curricula (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 19). For example, the Career Education curriculum advances that experiential learning helps students to “retain knowledge for longer periods and develop meaningful skills” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 19). It also enables them to apply knowledge and skills to a variety of real-life situations. The English curriculum recognizes the meaningful purposes of students’ literacy practices “in their daily lives” such as reading recreational materials and engaging in multimedia meaning making (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 6). It confirms the role of outside-of-school literacy resources in engaging students in literacy activities in schooling settings.

The broadened view of multimodal literacy in the English curriculum also echoes the core literacy skills identified in the Career Education curriculum, namely, reading texts,

document use, writing, oral communication, and computer use. Students are encouraged to communicate meanings through diverse modes such as “interviews, presentations, portfolios, graphic organizers, posters, letters, r ésum és, personal profiles, charts, reports, and summaries” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 14). All the investigated Ontario curricula highlight the role of new technologies in expanding students’ literacy learning opportunities. The English curriculum accentuates meaning constructions through interacting with various modes of literacy (e.g., images, sounds, graphics, and words) to produce diverse forms of media texts (e.g., cartoons, graphic designs and layouts, radio plays, short videos, and web pages).

The critical components of literacy are discernible in all the investigated Ontario curricula. The English curriculum expects students to understand that “all texts advance a particular point of view that must be recognized, questioned, assessed, and evaluated” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 4). The Career Education curriculum specifically states that critical thinking skills enable students to recognize and effectively deal with barriers, biases, and stereotypes in social interactions. “Critical(ly)” (“批判的[地]” Pi Pan De) is a term that appears four times in the Mandarin Language Arts curriculum. Instead of “critical(ly)”, “objective (ly)” (“客观的[地]” Ke Guan De) seems to be a preferred terminology in the Mandarin History curriculum. Both “critical(ly)” and “objective (ly)” in Mandarin literacy-related curricula place an emphasis on textual analysis that is grounded upon examinations of the historical and sociocultural dimensions of texts. The purpose of this expectation, however, is geared towards nurturing students’ critical/objective thinking skills as a path to self-perfection and self-cultivation. In the Chinese curricula, critical literacy’s attention to power and identity (Bean & Harper, 2006) is less pronounced than their Ontario counterparts. For instance, the Ontario English curriculum lists specific strategies of critical media literacy: (a) to understand how and why media texts are constructed in certain ways; (b) to differentiate between facts and opinions; (c) to evaluate the credibility of sources; (d) to problematize descriptions of violence and crime; and (e) to recognize biases that are encoded in texts and “to be attuned to discriminatory portrayals of individuals and groups” in terms of racism, sexism, or homophobia (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 18). It is worth

noting that the investigated Ontario curricula explicitly uphold the ideal of training critical thinkers for a diverse and “complex democratic society” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 23). Among the democratic goals acclaimed by the examined Ontario curricula, there is no focus on action and social change as related to critical literacy education (e.g., Bean & Harper, 2006; Lewison, Flint, & Sluys, 2002). The English curriculum specifically expects students to reflect upon and understand sociopolitical issues such as inequity, power, and social justice. However, Lewison et al.’s advocacy of “using language to exercise power to enhance everyday life” (p. 384) is absent across the examined Ontario curricula.

In the Ontario curricula, there is an overt notion of life adjustment from school life to the workplace and from ESL students’ home country to Canadian societies. Literacy education is viewed as prerequisite preparation for workplace in the ESL, English, and Career Education curricula. The Career Education curriculum is designed to develop students’ personal, interpersonal, and career planning skills and their knowledge of “current economic and workplace trends” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 33). Its ultimate goal is to provide students with knowledge, skills, and “tools they need for success in school, in the workplace, and in their daily lives” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 3). It also considers students’ “knowledge of and respect for various cultures and languages” as an asset in the global job market (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 35). The English curriculum foregrounds high-tech media literacy skills (e.g., the Internet and film) which are pervasive and influential in daily lives and in society. It even relates students’ expanded media literacy skills to enhancing “potential career opportunities” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 18). In this sense, the investigated Ontario curricula buttress a “vocational emphasis” (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 99) and the “life adjustment” from schools to the adult world (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 146). Similar to Pinar et al.’s depiction of life adjustment education, producing economically useful citizens does seem to constitute the major political rationale for the investigated Ontario curricula.

All the investigated Ontario curricula underscore the crucial importance of literacy skills in students’ success in all secondary school courses. The Ontario Ministry of Education

encourages teachers and programs to integrate literacy instruction across the curriculum. All of the investigated Ontario curricula propose a wide array of teaching strategies and assessment approaches to cater to students' diverse needs and ensure success for all. They encourage teachers to implement a variety of assessment approaches to ensure success of all students. The primary purposes of assessment are: (a) to improve student learning by identifying students' strengths and weaknesses and (b) to guide teachers to adapt curriculum and instructional approaches to students' diverse needs and evaluate the overall effectiveness of programs.

All the investigated Ontario curricula affirm a "wealth model" (Pahl & Rowsell, 2005, p. 54) that values and celebrates ESL students' perspectives and strengths that they brought from diverse cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds. The ESL curriculum makes it clear that teachers should not focus on ESL students' errors as deficits or intend to "fix" their problems (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007a, p. 10). Both English and ESL curricula quote research to support the notion that language skills and conceptual knowledge are transferrable between languages. Hence, ESL students will enjoy academic, social, and emotional benefits if they continuously develop their first languages. All the Ontario curricula attend to students' healthy perceptions of their identities in terms of cultural and linguistic backgrounds and genders. ESL students' cultural and linguistic assets not only remain as a "lifelong asset" for individual ESL students (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007a, p. 7). They can also enrich Canadian societies that are characterized as multilingual and multicultural. The Ontario ESL curriculum encourages ESL students to maintain their L1s because the stronger their L1s are, the more likely it is that they will succeed in a second language (L2). All the examined Ontario curricula encourage strategic use of students' L1s in various activities like journals, with the belief that literacy in L1s will lead to "a dual-language format" and then ultimately L2 literacy practices (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007a, p. 43). It is worth noting, there is an overt goal of the ESL curriculum to enhance students' language skills in English for successful social integration into the mainstream schooling contexts and later the mainstream society.

All the examined Ontario curricula emphasize the importance of accommodating ESL students' needs. Several types of accommodations are identified across the curricula. The curricula encourage modifications of expectations and instructional accommodations to suit students' diverse strengths and needs. The English curriculum specifically requires teachers to take into account the different "norms and conventions associated with oral communication in different cultures" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 15). These curricula also recommend modifications of learning resources (e.g., simplified texts) and incorporation of culturally diverse materials to better engage ESL students.

The Ontario curricula highlight the role of literacy in nurturing "responsible and productive citizenship" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 4) for Canadian societies and the world. They stress that literacy connects individuals, communities, and the world. The English curriculum also spotlights students' and teachers' awareness of "intercultural communication" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 33) and encourages students to explore different cultural norms associated with oral communication, eye contact, and body language. Literacy is also seen as an empowering tool that facilitates students' "active participation as world citizens" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 4). The English curriculum specifically expects students to look beyond the "literal meaning of texts" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 110) and reflect upon fairness, equity, power, social justice, and citizenship in a global society. One of the major goals of Career Education is to nurture responsible citizens for a "complex democratic society" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 23). It not only stresses students' "respect and understanding with regard to individuals, groups, and cultures in Canada and the global community" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 23). The Career Education curriculum also pinpoints the use of new technologies to connect students to overseas schools in order to bring "the global community into the local classroom" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 25). The efforts to integrate the local and global are discernible, yet not salient, across the curriculum. Both Ontario and Chinese literacy-related curricula uphold a global awareness. Ontario's intention to advocate for cosmopolitan consciousness is more situated in Canada's multilingual and multicultural reality. The examined Chinese curricula also expect students to better understand others and China's relations with the others. Nevertheless, this expectation



seems to serve an ultimate goal to “further increasing students’ citizen consciousness<sup>37</sup> and national consciousness (‘进一步增强公民意识和国家观念’)” (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2004, n.p.).

## 5.5 Summary

In this chapter, I sketched SCS’s institutional and programmatic curricula in terms of its ideal to connect the East and the West, the key features of hybridity, the credit recognition systems, and its complex evaluation system. After more than two decades of constant educational reforms, the Chinese national high school curricula that were incorporated at SCS enact progressive ideas. Hence, pedagogically, the new Chinese curricula bear more resemblances to the Ontario curricula. Nevertheless, situated in differing sociocultural and political conditions, both Ontario and Chinese curricula reveal differing curriculum ideologies and discourses that have shaped their respective curricular landscapes. The Chinese policy makers at SCS were making salient efforts to juxtapose both systems and engage educators from both sides. However, there was little evidence that SCS intended to address the competing discourses and mediate differing visions of citizens to be “produced”. The daunting task of addressing the potential tensions is thus left to the Chinese and Canadian teachers. In the next chapter, I present teachers’ narratives and practices about how they untangle the myth when they transplant the two systems of curricula to the same classrooms.

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<sup>37</sup> Note that terms like “citizen consciousness” and “national consciousness” are not defined in the Mandarin History and Politics curricula.

## Chapter 6

### 6 Implemented Curriculum

In Chapter 5, I presented findings of the intended curriculum at SCS. In this chapter, to answer the research question about the level of implemented curriculum, I draw on data collected from classroom observations and teacher interviews. Descriptions of the Chinese and Canadian teachers' classes and their own narrative accounts<sup>38</sup> illustrate teachers' challenges in a globalized schooling context where local and global currents of assessments, people, cultures, capital, and technologies met. Specifically, the vignettes demonstrate the particularities, dynamics, and irregularities in the transnational education teachers' practices. I also document the interactions of Schwab's (1973) four curriculum commonplaces (i.e., the subject matter, the learner, the teacher, and the milieu) where teachers and students created new spaces to legitimate teachers' and students' agency within the curricular landscape.

#### 6.1 Mapping the Contours of the Integrated Curriculum

The classroom observation for the study focused on elite Class C of Grade 11 where both Canadian provincial and Chinese national curricula were integrated (See Table 10 for a list of observed classes). Students in this class were generally academic high achievers. Mr. Abrams and Ms. Jiang taught English writing and English vocabulary classes oriented to IELTS<sup>39</sup> and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. Mr. Gosnell and Ms. Allen followed the Ontario secondary school curricula and taught Career Education and Math Language to Class C students. I also regularly observed three Mandarin literacy-related classes: Ms Ge's Mandarin Language Arts, Ms. Gu's Politics, and Mr. Chen's Chinese History. Two other Mandarin Language Arts teachers Mr. Ma and Ms. Feng and one Chinese English teacher Mrs. Wang also participated in the study. I

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<sup>38</sup> I translated all the Chinese teacher participants' quotes from Mandarin. Canadian teacher participants' quotes are original in English.

<sup>39</sup> IELTS: International English Language Testing System.

interviewed them and observed their open lessons<sup>40</sup>. Since the students of Class C were assigned to different ESL and academic English classes based on their English proficiency levels, I also observed two English-related classes: Mr. Wilson taught ENG2D class that mingled students from Class C and Class B; Ms. Wyatt taught ESL-CO to a mix of Grade 11 students, most of them were Class A students.

**Table 10: Observed Classes.**

Pseudonym	Nationality	Observed Class	Periods of Class Observed	Students in the Observed Class
Mr. Wilson	Canadian	ENG2D Academic English	16	A mix of Grade 11 Students
Mr. Gosnell	Canadian	Career Education	6	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Allen	Canadian	MCR3U (A math language class per se)	8	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Wyatt	Canadian	ESL-CO	12	A mix of Grade 11 Students
Mr. Abrams	American	English Writing (Oriented to IELTS/OSSLT writing)	10	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Jiang	Chinese	English Vocabulary and Grammar (Oriented to IELTS vocabulary/grammar)	11	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Ge	Chinese	Mandarin Language Arts (Mandatory)	6	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Ms. Gu	Chinese	Politics	7	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Mr. Chen	Chinese	Chinese History	6	Students from Class C, Grade 11
Mr. Ma	Chinese	Mandarin Language Arts (Elective)	1	Students from all grades
Ms. Feng	Chinese	Mandarin Language Arts (Mandatory)	1	Students from another grade
Ms. Wang	Chinese	English	1	Students from another grade

The Canadian and Chinese literacy-related subjects were integrated in one program, but both Canadian and Chinese teachers felt that they ran as two parallel tracks. Interactions between Canadian and Chinese teachers were rare because of language barriers and the design of “integrated” curricula at SCS. Hence, in the following, I document the Chinese

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<sup>40</sup> SCS launched open lessons where all interested Chinese teachers were invited to observe certain Chinese teachers' classes. After the open lessons, SCS often organized evaluation meetings to collectively evaluate and reflect upon the open lessons.

and Canadian tracks that proceeded with limited interaction: The Chinese teachers teaching the Mandarin literacy-related courses and the Canadian teachers following the Ontario literacy-related curricula. I also report another trace where Canadian and Chinese teachers interacted to prepare students for the standardized English tests (IELTS and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test). Discussion of the implemented curriculum also includes student participants from ESL-CO class (Mark-Ji and Rich-Zhi) and those from Class C and the ENG2D class (Jin-Qin, Alice-Mei, Tina-Qin, Coco-Ling, Steve-Jian, Joe-Hui, and Dave-Yue).

## 6.2 Connecting East and West: Chinese Teachers' Exploratory Journeys, Challenges, and Creativity

In this section, I present vignettes of Mandarin literacy-related classes where Chinese teachers showcased their efforts to connect the East and the West and their application of “progressive<sup>41</sup>” (Xian Jin De “先进的”) teaching approaches that are encoded in the new Chinese high school curricula. However, contrastive class descriptions and teachers' narratives suggest various factors and processes that had posed challenges to these teachers when they enacted these ideas into their classrooms.

### 6.2.1 Connecting East and West: Affirming Linguistic and Cultural Identities

When specifically asked about student “identities” (“身份认同” Shen Fen Ren Tong), Chinese teachers did not have much to say. The Chinese language does not have an original equivalent of the English word “identity” (Smith, 2006). Therefore, to bridge the linguistic and cultural gap, I asked identity-related questions in ways like this: “What kinds of talents/people do you intend to produce by teaching Chinese languages and Chinese cultures?” and “How would SCS students conceive of themselves as students learning two languages and two cultures?”

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<sup>41</sup> As was mentioned earlier, Chinese policy makers and Chinese teachers in this study used “progressive” and “Western” to describe such teaching approaches as inquiry learning, collaborative learning, and approaches that incorporate various modes and new technologies.

All the Chinese teachers concurred with SCS's mission to connect the East and the West and nurture bilingual and bicultural students. All of them had specific visions of the crucial knowledge and skills that the students should acquire before they went abroad.

The Politics teacher Ms. Gu and three Mandarin Language Arts teachers, Ms. Ge, Ms. Feng, and Mr. Ma, all agreed about the interplay between language and cultural identity. Considering SCS students' explicit goals to study abroad, the four teachers paid heed to students' exposure to the Chinese language, the Classical Chinese literature, and associated Chinese cultures. The textbook that the Politics teacher Ms. Gu used was *Ideologies and Politics (Book 3): Cultures and Life* (Teaching Materials Writing Group for the Ministry of Education's General Secondary School Ideologies and Politics Curriculum, 2008a). Talking about students' mastery of Chinese cultures, she said,

I told my students, "You will feel humiliated if you go to Japan and find out Japanese know more about the Chinese cultures than you do". Therefore, my goal is not to help students get the two credits from the Politics course, but to pass along the message that the Chinese cultural knowledge that they master will become an essential resource for them when they communicate with their future foreign friends.

Ms. Gu hence emphasized students' communication skills when they became future "cultural ambassadors". Vignette 6.2.1.1 is a specific session that Ms. Gu assigned for students' collaborative inquiry into cultures:

#### Vignette 6.2.1.1 Ms. Gu's Politics Class: Cultural Ambassador Presentations

Last week, Ms. Gu asked students to form inquiry groups and do collaborative research on cultural topics that interest them. Today, students will present their research findings in Mandarin using PowerPoint. Student Jin-Qin's group present the rise and fall of Russian culture, the cultural impacts of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the current cultural re-construction in Russia (See Figure 8). Steve-Jian and Joe-Hui's group presentation starts with the key components of French culture: fashion, cuisine, and architecture. They focus on the recent changes in China-France cultural communication because of France's ex-president Sarkozy's meeting with the Dalai Lama and the declining global status of France as a medium economic power. Coco-Ling's group present a series of cartoons to show the U.S. policy of cultural hegemony and its spread through Hollywood movies and other U.S. products. They conclude with China's contrastive policy that places emphasis upon creating a harmonious world. After each presentation, Ms. Gu provides an on-the-spot assessment and offers brief comments on

things such as oral presentation skills, consistency between content and selected topics, and informativeness of presentations.



**Figure 8: Slides from Jin-Qin’s Group Presentation on Russian Culture for Ms. Gu’s Politics Class.**

Students’ slides were designed with an ensemble of pictures, cartoons, and texts drawn from the Internet. Figure 8 entails two sample slides from Jin-Qin’s group (the Vasili Cathedral and the Russian Matryoshka). Students selected topics based on their consultation with Ms. Gu and the team members. Their major information source was the accessible Internet resources in Mandarin. Given students’ limited access to the Internet at SCS and the censored nature of the Internet resources in China, it is not surprising that students’ views about sensitive inter-cultural and diplomatic Sino-foreign relationships were biased. Raising students’ “cosmopolitan consciousness”<sup>42</sup> (‘世界意识’) (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2003c, n. p.) is salient in all Mandarin-related curricula. By contrast, the word choices in the History textbook about Sino-foreign diplomatic relations seem unfavourable to this policy position. For example, in *History (Book 1)* (People’s Education Press, Teaching Materials Research Institute, &

<sup>42</sup> Note that terms like “cosmopolitan consciousness”, “citizen consciousness”, and “national consciousness” are not defined in the History and Politics curricula.

History Curriculum Resources Research and Development Centre, 2007), there are negative phrases such as “The United States continued to be hostile to China and used Taiwan to plot the conspiracy of ‘Two Chinas’ (‘美国继续敌视中国，利用台湾问题搞‘两个中国’的阴谋。’)” (p. 113) and “After World War II, Japan followed the United States for a long term and adopted hostile policies against China (‘第二次世界大战后，日本长期追随美国，采取敌视中国的政策。’)” (p. 114). Based on my classroom observation, there was an absence of critical literacy in all the Mandarin literacy classes. Critical literacy interrogates the historical, social, and political dimensions of texts and seeks answers to questions about power, ideology, identity, and agency which pertain to meaning construction (e.g., Bean & Harper, 2006; Lewison et al., 2002). Without a critical interrogation of text construction, ideologically biased content in textbooks might reinforce students’ stereotyped others, as is manifested in students’ group presentations.

The Politics teacher Ms. Gu attempted to incorporate English in her teaching. In the original design of this “Cultural Ambassador” session, she planned to ask students to present in English with their future foreign friends as imagined audience. In order to do that, she provided a model by introducing Chinese lanterns in English. She memorized all the content in English but found it crushing after the presentation, because only a few students understood what she had said. The second time she tried an English introduction of Chinese cheongsam (“旗袍” Qi Pao: the stylish and tight-fitting traditional dress for Chinese women). With the visual aids of PowerPoint slides, students understood more. However, she told me that describing things that were complicated and typically Chinese such as the Chinese poetry and paintings was linguistically challenging for both students and Chinese teachers like herself who were not English majors. Hence, all the ensuing “Cultural Ambassador” presentations ended up in Mandarin.

Class C’s Mandarin Language Arts teacher Ms. Ge often found herself on the horns of dilemmas. The Classical Chinese texts constitute a major unit in the intended Mandarin Language Arts curriculum. On the one hand, Ms. Ge thought that the heavy emphasis on the Classical Chinese texts in the Mandarin Language Arts textbooks was not a good fit for students at SCS who were determined to study abroad. On the other hand, she held the

same opinion as the other Mandarin Language Arts teachers (Mr. Ma and Ms. Feng): it was necessary for SCS students to have a sound knowledge of the Chinese classic literary works and nurture the abilities to apply this knowledge in their literacy practices. These Mandarin teachers' definitions of classic literary works were extensive, for example, the poetry of Tang and Song Dynasties, famous writings in Classical Chinese, and even four-word idioms and classical allusions. Not going in the direction of promoting the nationalist spirit as encoded in the Mandarin Language Arts curriculum, Ms. Feng foregrounded the rich cultural meanings that are threaded through the classic literacy works and their roles in shaping Chinese people's identities. Several times in our interview, she exemplified how desirable it was to see elite Chinese scholars and Chinese government leaders quote and apply classic works of Chinese literature in their speeches. All of the three Mandarin Language Arts teachers stressed the conventional moral standards and national wisdom that were attached to the classic literary works. A glance at Ms. Ge's class on a Classical Chinese text might offer insights into how Mandarin teachers like Ms. Ge tried to transplant these ideas into SCS's classrooms:

Vignette 6.2.1.2: Ms. Ge's Mandarin Language Arts Class: A Classical Chinese Article

The bell rings. Class C students are sitting in rows as usual. Today Ms. Ge is going to teach another classic work in the Chinese literature---Mi Li's "Chen Qing Biao", a letter to Emperor Jinwu<sup>43</sup>. Ms. Ge asks students to go through the notes under the text (See Figure 9) and write the Chinese phonetic alphabets ("拼音" Pinyin) on top of the Classical Chinese characters that are not commonly used in contemporary Chinese. She asks students to identify words, expressions, and sentence patterns that they do not understand. Then she spends a big chunk of time answering students' questions. After addressing the linguistic components, Ms. Ge highlights the cultural and historical backgrounds of this article. Students who did not pay attention start to listen attentively. Ms. Ge specifically accentuates the Confucian moral values that are embedded in Mi Li's dilemma, that is, loyalty to emperors and filial piety to seniors/parents. Then she asks students to read the first paragraph in chorus and reminds them that in the last 15 minutes of the class they will be given time to recite the first paragraph. Ms. Ge knows that it is better to strike while the iron is hot because she believes none of the students will spend extra time on Mandarin Language Arts after class.

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<sup>43</sup> Mi Li is a high official and writer in the Xijin Dynasty (265-316AD). "Chen Qing Biao" is a letter Mi Li wrote to Emperor Jinwu (Li, 2004). This classic work in the Chinese literature represents the traditional virtues in Chinese society---loyalty to emperors and filial piety to parents/seniors. Mi Li explained to Emperor Jinwu he had to resign because he felt responsible for caring for his grandmother who was in poor health. This letter is famous for Mi Li's evocative writing style when he described his dilemma in choosing between loyalty and filial piety.



15 陈情表<sup>①</sup>

李密

臣密言<sup>②</sup>：臣以险衅<sup>③</sup>，夙遭闵凶<sup>④</sup>，生孩<sup>⑤</sup>六月，慈父见背<sup>⑥</sup>，行年四岁，舅夺母志<sup>⑦</sup>。祖母刘悯臣孤弱，躬亲抚养。臣少多疾病，九岁不行<sup>⑧</sup>，零丁<sup>⑨</sup>孤苦，至于成立<sup>⑩</sup>，既无伯叔，终鲜<sup>⑪</sup>兄弟，门衰祚<sup>⑫</sup>薄，晚有儿息<sup>⑬</sup>。外无期功强近之亲<sup>⑭</sup>，内无应门五尺之僮<sup>⑮</sup>，茕茕独立<sup>⑯</sup>，形影相吊<sup>⑰</sup>。而刘夙婴<sup>⑱</sup>疾病，常在床蓐<sup>⑲</sup>。臣侍汤药，未曾废离<sup>⑳</sup>。

逮奉圣朝<sup>㉑</sup>，沐浴清化<sup>㉒</sup>。前太守臣逵<sup>㉓</sup>察臣孝廉<sup>㉔</sup>，后刺史臣荣<sup>㉕</sup>举臣秀才<sup>㉖</sup>。臣以供养无主<sup>㉗</sup>，辞不赴命。诏书将下，拜臣郎

① 选自《文选》卷三十七（中华书局1977年版）。标题原为《陈情事表》。李密（224—287），字令伯，三国时武阳（今四川彭山）人。由于父亲早死，母亲何氏改嫁，他自幼由祖母刘氏抚养。表，奏表，是古代臣属给君王的上书。这是李密写给晋武帝（司马炎）的一篇表文。② [臣密言] 古代表文的开头格式，先写明上表人的姓名。③ [险衅（xìn）] 艰难祸患。这里指命运不济。④ [夙遭闵凶] 早年遭到不幸。夙，早，昔。闵，通“悯”，此指所忧愁的事。凶，这里指他家中不幸的事。⑤ [生孩] 生下来，还是婴孩的时候。⑥ [见背] 背弃我（指死去）。⑦ [舅夺母志] 舅父逼母改嫁。古人称妇女在丈夫死后不再嫁为“守志”。⑧ [不行] 不能行走。⑨ [零丁] 通“伶仃”，孤独的样子。⑩ [成立] 成人自立。⑪ [终鲜（xiǎn）] 最终没有。鲜，少。⑫ [祚（zuò）] 福分。⑬ [儿息] 儿子。息，子女。⑭ [外无期功强近之亲] 没有近亲。在宗法社会中，以亲属关系的远近制定丧服的轻重。期功，指关系近的亲属。期，周年，这里指穿一周年丧服的人。功，大功服丧九个月，小功服丧五个月的人。强近，比较近。⑮ [应门五尺之僮] 应门，照应门户。五尺之僮，五尺高的小孩。汉代的五尺相当于现在的三市尺多。僮，童仆。⑯ [茕茕（qióngqióng）独立] 茕茕，孤独的样子。独立，也是孤单的意思。独，又作“孑”。⑰ [形影相吊] 只有自己的身体和自己的影子互相安慰。吊，安慰。⑱ [婴] 缠绕。这里指疾病缠身。⑲ [蓐] 草褥子。⑳ [废离] 废，停止侍奉。离，离开。㉑ [圣朝] 指晋朝。㉒ [沐浴清化] 比喻蒙受清明的政治教化。㉓ [太守臣逵] 这人的姓不详，名逵。太守是郡的最高行政长官。这里指梁州太守。㉔ [察臣孝廉] 荐举我为孝廉。孝廉，汉代以来选拔人才的一种科目名，即每年由地方官考察当地人物，向朝廷推荐孝顺父母、品行廉洁的人出来做官。㉕ [刺史臣荣] 这人的姓不详，名荣。刺史是州的最高行政长官。这里是指益州刺史。㉖ [秀才] 汉代以来选拔人才的一种科目名。这里是指优秀人才的意思，与后代科举中的“秀才”含义不同。㉗ [供养无主] 没有人主持供养祖母的事。

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Figure 9: Mi Li's "Chen Qing Biao" from the Mandarin Language Arts Textbook<sup>44</sup>.

Classical Chinese is a poetic, rhythmical, and concise language. Sentences are shorter and grammatically different from contemporary Chinese Putonghua (“普通话”) (i.e., Mandarin). There are more cases of inverted and elliptical sentences in Classical Chinese. Sometimes pronunciation of Classical Chinese is also distinctive from Putonghua. To understand the historically and ideologically embedded Classical Chinese texts, contemporary readers need to know the historical and cultural backgrounds of the texts

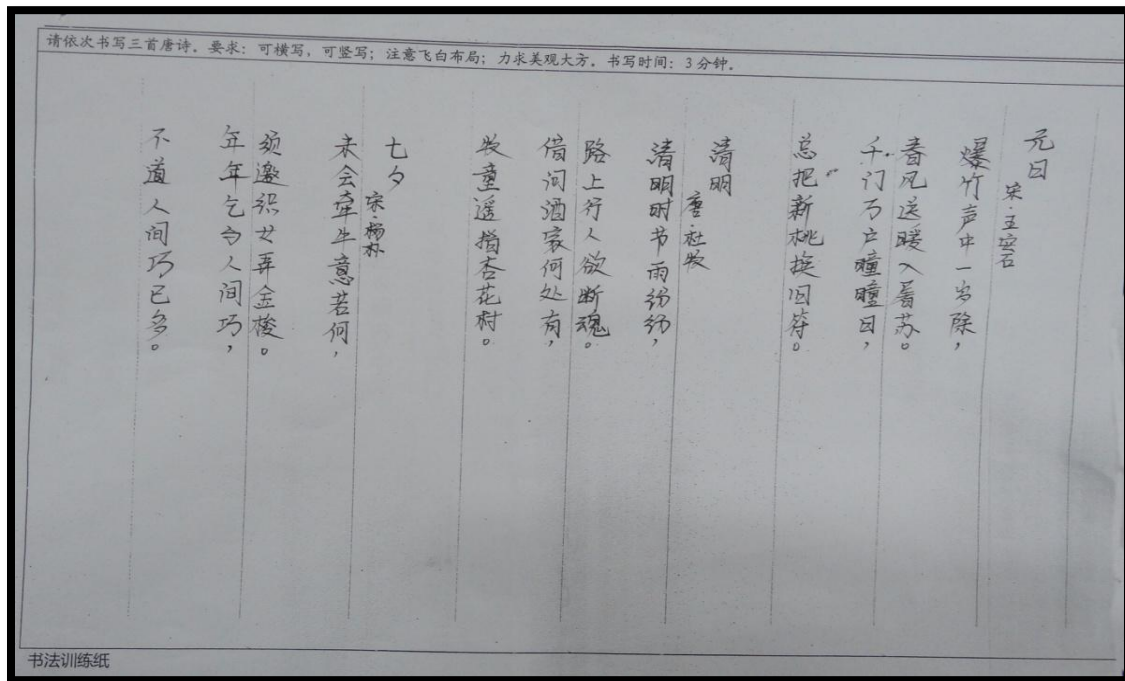
<sup>44</sup> Teaching Materials Writing Group of Guangdong Basic Education Curriculum Resources Research and Development Centre. (2004). *Mandarin language arts (Book 5)*. Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China: Guangdong Provincial Publishing Group.

(Wagner, 1998). Ms. Ge tried not to lecture all the time. However, to finish this knowledge-intensive unit within compressed session hours for her Mandarin class, she had to ensure that she took the lead and ran the class at a fairly speedy pace. Ms. Ge and Ms. Feng said that if they were at public schools, they would be heavily focusing on the function of words, content vocabulary, sentence patterns, and the cultural and historical backgrounds of the Classical Chinese texts. This was all important knowledge that Gaokao (the national university entrance examinations) gauged. However, at SCS, given the limited session hours and students' academic levels in Mandarin Language Arts, they often had to be highly selective of what to teach.

For an archaic language that originated in eras remote from the contemporary Chinese contexts, Ms. Ge believed in the role of reading aloud and recitation of classic poems and articles. Both Ms. Ge and Ms. Feng commended the wisdom of a well-known Chinese saying, "If you have recited 300 poems from the Tang Dynasty, you will be able to chant classic poems, even though you are not capable enough to create some". This view echoes Pulleyblank's (1995) belief that the only way to learn Classical Chinese is "by a kind of osmosis" (p. xiii). Pulleyblank reveals that since Classical Chinese does not have a prescriptive grammar, early literary Chinese people learned to be well versed mainly through imitation and modeling. However, Classical Chinese is not fully detached from the contemporary contexts, but practiced by Chinese people in diverse aspects of modern life. Classical Chinese is inscribed in ancient temples and architecture that still exist in Chinese societies. It also appears in pop songs, for instance, the most famous pop singer Jay Zhou's song "Green Flower Porcelain" ("青花瓷" Qing Hua Ci) (lyrics by Wenshan Fang). Intertextuality between Classical Chinese and contemporary Chinese is also salient. A typical example is: Media and contemporary literature quotations from classic works and frequently use four-word idioms and proverbs that entail the Classical Chinese grammar.

The Mandarin teachers Ms. Ge and Mr. Ma concurred with the conventional Chinese view that is embedded in a Chinese saying "A person's handwriting is like the writer him/herself" ("字如其人" Zi Ru Qi Ren), namely, people's various writing styles mirror their personalities and individual interests. Both of them regretted the diminishing

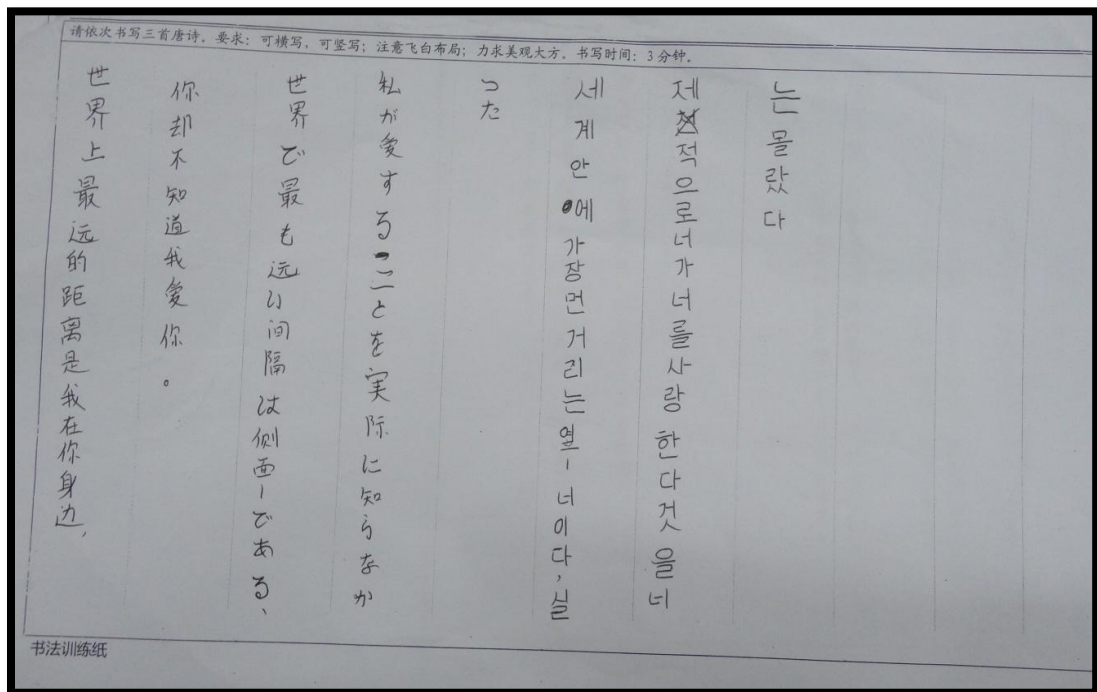
importance of practicing Chinese calligraphy in current schooling. Practicing calligraphy might sound like emphasizing the mechanical repetition of written language, but for them, calligraphy still remains a conventional literacy practice of the Chinese communities and an embodiment of the Chinese cultural heritage. Mr. Ma, hence, created a module in his elective Mandarin Language Arts course to promote this art of writing. Figure 10 is an example of a calligraphy artifact that Mr. Ma's student shared:



**Figure 10: Student's Calligraphy Artifact for Mr. Ma's Class (Sample 1).**

In that class, before students started practicing their calligraphy, Mr. Ma shared his childhood stories of how he developed appreciation of this art form while he practiced calligraphy. At the onset of the class, Mr. Ma had stringent requirements. On the self-designed calligraphy sheet, Mr. Ma expected his students to put characters within the vertical columns from top to bottom and from right to left. Given the fundamental link between calligraphy and poetry in Chinese cultures, Mr. Ma also required his students to transcribe three poems from the Tang Dynasty on the sheet within three minutes. I did not ask about his rationale for the three-minute mandate. Mr. Ma shared in the interview that he was initially shocked to see that very few students in his class had received training in

calligraphy. But later, he was pleased that students started to come back to him and asked for more calligraphy sheets to practice. Mr. Ma then realized that practices should be extended beyond class. He said, “As long as they are interested in practicing, I have plenty of calligraphy paper to supply”. Given the autonomy, some students went beyond poems from the Tang Dynasty and selected poetry from different eras. Some even incorporated scripts in other languages that they were familiar with, such as complex Chinese characters, Japanese, and Korean (See Figure 11).



**Figure 11: Student's Calligraphy Artifact for Mr. Ma's Class (Sample 2).**

Mr. Ma's own literacy journey started with writing with writing brushes (“毛笔” Mao Bi) before he learned to write with pen and pencil. His view of assessing students' calligraphy products was still stringent which emphasized the features such as page layout and the aesthetic formation of strokes and characters. Despite his original high expectations, Mr. Ma was happy to see students' increased interests in calligraphy and their diversified final artifacts. He also noticed that once students were inculcated into the art of writing, the emotional and spiritual sides of this practice sustained their interest. As a big fan of Chinese calligraphy myself, I concur with Mr. Ma that practicing Chinese

calligraphy means more than repetitious exercises. Being well guided, interested practitioners of Chinese calligraphy can experience the rich emotional and aesthetic expression that calligraphy evokes. As Li (2010) contends, the art of symbolic lines reproduces rhythms. The rhythms of movement in forms and traces of calligraphy “capture emotional and conceptual meaning” outside of calligraphy (Li, 2010, p. 113). Chinese calligraphy has had an inherited privilege as one of the key must-haves of cultivated and well-educated elite. This over-thousand-year privilege was subverted within a few decades partially by the global spread of new literacies associated with digital technologies such as texting on cell phones and typing on computers. These new technologies rely on software to produce Chinese characters from Pinyin---the Roman alphabet that only represents the sounds of Chinese characters.

Following Chinese artistic writing’s losing its place of privilege, it was people’s declining appreciation of the structures of Chinese characters, as Ms. Feng commented. Echoing recent news about Chinese youth’s character amnesia<sup>45</sup> (e.g., Evans, 2010), Ms. Feng said, students knew little about the formation of Chinese characters such as ideograms and pictograms. Furthermore, both Ms. Feng and Ms. Ge found that most of their students did not have solid grammatical knowledge of contemporary Chinese. Ms. Feng found that this “deficit” might be an inherent result of the education reforms. She said the new junior high and secondary school Mandarin Language Arts curricula to a certain extent minimized the importance of grammar but emphasized the role of giving students more opportunities to express and represent meanings. The new curricular mandates discourage teachers’ transmission of grammatical knowledge. However, both Ms. Feng and Ms. Ge concurred that a total abandonment of the traditional transmission approach had consequences for students’ literacy learning in both Mandarin and English. Students’ writing in Mandarin contained grammatical errors. Mandarin Language Arts teachers also heard complaints from Chinese English teachers that when they taught English, some students could not understand basic grammatical concepts such as prepositions, subjects, predicates, adverbials, and complements.

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<sup>45</sup> “Character amnesia” refers to the phenomenon that literate Chinese forget how to write Chinese characters that were previously known to them.

## 6.2.2 Underprivileged Knowledge and Deskillling: Marginalization in the East-West Contact Zone

The History teacher Mr. Chen said, “Nowadays, curriculum design at SCS has been more geared to ‘exporting’ students, that is, to better train students for their future overseas study”. For him, this strategic emphasis was closely related to students’ future studies in English-speaking countries and in business programs, such as math courses and English-related courses. By contrast, several Chinese teacher participants shared that Mandarin literacy-related courses were underprivileged at SCS. Probably due to Mr. Ma’s other “hat” as a school administrator and the elective nature of his Mandarin Language Arts course, he was the only Chinese teacher participant who commended teacher’s full autonomy in choosing and adapting what to teach and how to teach. Other teachers teaching Mandarin Language Arts, Politics, and History all felt Mandarin-related subjects and teachers were marginalized in SCS’s hybrid curriculum program. The program juxtaposed the 3-year Chinese high school curriculum and the 3-year Ontario secondary school curriculum and expected students to accomplish the requirements of both systems within 3 years (as discussed in Chapter 5). For Ms. Ge and Ms. Feng, this fast-tracking system had resulted in tensions among subjects; Mandarin Language Arts has been bearing the brunt of the battle. The school compressed the Mandarin Literacy-related courses to spare more session hours to incorporate the Ontario curricula starting Grade 11. Teachers instructing these Mandarin literacy-related courses were expected to cover all knowledge modules required by the curricula within compressed session hours. Ms. Feng said that general public schools normally assigned six session hours per week for Mandarin Language Arts, but at SCS, there were only four hours per week for Grade 10 and two hours for Grade 11. Ms. Ge said,

SCS is indeed trying to combine the East and the West. . . . However, when it comes to reality, school administrators, students, even teachers tend to think it is enough if students can read and understand Mandarin. Especially when it comes to students’ future adaptation to the English-only environment, people would tend to think that it is more important and realistic to focus on English at SCS.

In the interview, Mr. Chen said that the compressed session hours for History directly linked to limited time for discussion and in-class interaction. Other teachers instructing Mandarin literacy-related courses felt that they had to change their teaching strategies if

they wanted to engage their students while covering the required content within compressed hours. By changing strategies, Ms. Ge meant the “deskilling” of Mandarin Language Arts teachers at SCS:

Think about this. When I was at the public school, Mandarin Language Arts, math, and English were equally important. Now I am here at SCS, Mandarin Language Arts turns into trivial subjects like Music and Physical Education. Students do not think much of this subject. Neither does the school. To cater to students’ needs, sometimes I had to simplify the content. After I simplify and re-simplify the content, I find my class preparation becomes easier and teaching becomes less challenging. But there is little space left for me to advance my professional skills.

When Ms. Ge taught the Classical Chinese texts, she drew on what students wished to learn by answering student-initiated questions instead of systematically “imposing” semantic and syntactical knowledge about Classical Chinese. Both Ms. Feng and Ms. Ge found that most of their students were not interested in the decontextualized linguistic features of Classical Chinese. Therefore, Ms. Ge often foregrounded the cultural and historical backgrounds of the Classical Chinese texts that students showed specific interest in. Instead of a thorough understanding of the semantic and syntactical features of Classical Chinese, she only expected that her students would be able to roughly translate the Classical Chinese texts into contemporary Chinese. Ms. Ge also said she would love to encourage students to write more. However, given the high student-teacher ratio<sup>46</sup>, Ms. Ge found that it was beyond her scope to constantly review and comment on almost 130 students’ writing assignments. For Ms. Ge, catering to students’ needs and interests was good, but she believed that education should be more than passing students or granting them required credits for diplomas. For Ms. Ge, when her identity as a teaching professional was under constant challenge, teaching ceased to be fun. She said, “Few teachers would love to teach like labour workers on assembly lines”.

Ms. Gu, the Politics teacher, confirmed that the core administrators at SCS, especially the Chinese principal, explicitly upheld an inclusion of humanities and arts in SCS’s integrated program. She said that was part of the reason why SCS incorporated

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<sup>46</sup> Ms. Ge, Ms. Feng, Ms. Gu, and Mr. Chen were instructors of five parallel classes.



Mandarin-related courses such as Politics, History, and Mandarin Language Arts and gradually tried to reinforce their importance. For her, the marginalization of Mandarin literacy-related courses was more of a result of students' misconceptions. Students tended to think English and science subjects related to their future business programs were more crucial for their future education. Ms. Gu said that students in elite Class C seemed to enjoy Mandarin-related courses anyway, while for students in other classes, sometimes learning these subjects was just to gain credits recognizable for their dual diplomas.

### 6.2.3 Enacting Progressive Ideas in Classrooms: Autonomy & Challenges

Because of the compressed time for Mandarin Language Arts in Grade 11<sup>47</sup>, Ms. Ge had to be highly selective of what to teach. She tended to pick content that was either reflective of students' interests or relevant to their future education goal of studying abroad. Vignette 6.2.3.1 depicts one of her units on the Shakespearean play *Hamlet*.

#### Vignette 6.2.3.1: Ms. Ge's Mandarin Language Arts: Shakespearean Play---Open Lesson

About a week ago, Ms. Ge told Class C students that today's class is going to be an open lesson. Before the bell rings, the Chinese principal and Chinese teachers have already taken their seats in the back of the classroom. Students formed groups, did online research on four topics on *Hamlet*, and made PowerPoint presentations for today's open lesson. The first group introduces Shakespearean tragedies and the sociohistorical contexts that influenced *Hamlet*. After they finish, Ms. Ge adds her comments on the implications of humanism in *Hamlet*. She specifically illustrates examples of *Hamlet's* decay of the feudal monarchy's suppression of equality and freedom. Then Joe-Hui goes to the front and represents the 2<sup>nd</sup> group. His presentation focuses on the internal and external conflicts in *Hamlet*, especially Hamlet's procrastination to kill Claudius. Ms. Ge added a brief comment about the Christian belief that sinners go to heaven if they repent their sins. Alice-Mei's team presents the analysis of the main characters in *Hamlet*. Alice-Mei specifically talked about her group's understanding of Ophelia: "Ophelia is superficial and has no original opinions; she is her father's echo and yields to every command of his. This is one thing in common that she has with traditional Chinese women. Ophelia cannot blame her tragedy on anybody but herself".

The differences in classroom milieux and patterns of student participations in Vignette 6.2.1.1 and 6.2.3.1 are obvious. Students were engaged in their inquiry groups even prior

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<sup>47</sup> There were two to three 45-minute sessions per week for Ms. Ge's Mandarin Language Arts class.



to this scheduled open lesson. Inquiry learning was required by the intended Mandarin Language Arts curriculum. Teachers at SCS often encouraged students to explore what interested them and to work on projects collaboratively. The Chinese school administrators also constantly encouraged Chinese teachers to explore their use of progressive teaching approaches that gave autonomy to learners. As Ms. Ge commented on her class of *Hamlet*:

In one of my prior open lessons, the Chinese principal said that I lectured too much and the student-centredness was not salient....Therefore, in the last open lesson [on *Hamlet*], I asked the students to form inquiry groups and present their own findings. I only made brief comments after their presentations. I was no longer the centre and tried to give students more chances to present themselves. To be honest, I am not sure how effective that is. I am fumbling and experimenting all the time.

Ms. Feng found that the incorporation of advanced teaching ideas came naturally for her. She said that teachers' own educational and living experiences also defined their teaching approaches. Born in the 1980s, she said, "As a new generation of the 1980s, we have our own ideas and ways of teaching. We are not going to follow things that the older generations have been doing".

With the absence of Gaokao, SCS offered a milieu that enabled teachers' use of progressive ideas that valued student-centred learning. The History teacher Mr. Chen said that one thing he liked about SCS was the autonomy to teach history in the ways that he thought would be beneficial for his students. He tried to help his students to get an in-depth understanding of historical events and form their own modes of analysis. The format of Mr. Chen's mid-term exam looked quite similar to that of Gaokao. But Mr. Chen said that normally when public school students wrote tests,

they should try to figure out what kind of answer the examiners want to see, which is the only direction students can go, otherwise, they cannot get marks for their answers. However, here at SCS, it's quite a different story. Admittedly, my students normally tend to figure out what answers I want. But I'm actually much more tolerant.

Without the constraint of Gaokao, teachers like Mr. Chen tried to give students ample opportunities to express their own ideas.

On the other hand, SCS's integrated curriculum also required all Grade 10 students to take the district-level standardized tests to gauge students' performance. Ms. Feng and Ms. Ge said that this testing regime was a self-created accountability system for the Chinese teachers at SCS. Similar to the Chinese policy makers' perceptions, Ms. Feng said that this came into being because parents asked to know how their children were doing at SCS as compared to the public school students. These district-level standardized tests closely followed the requirements of Gaokao. Ms. Feng and Ms. Ge shared that they had limited autonomy to incorporate multimedia and inquiry learning projects when teaching Grade 10 Mandarin-related courses. To quote Ms. Ge, "In Grade 10, there was a district-level standardized test...we would not have that much autonomy. Only in Grade 11 would I be able to be more flexible to do so [to build in more progressive approaches]". Ms. Ge said, in Grade 11, SCS switched to another testing method. The school required Chinese teachers to design three final exam samples and then sent them to outside experts to review the samples or re-mix the samples to make new tests. For Ms. Ge, this could be seen as placing a monitoring system to make evaluations more objective. But she interpreted it partially "as school's distrust of teachers", which echoes the policy maker Ms. Lin's comments on the prevailing public distrust in teachers' professionalism in China.

The Chinese principal Mr. Guo invited me to two open lesson evaluation meetings where Mr. Guo emphasized the crucial importance of teachers following the *New Curriculum Scheme* (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2003). When it comes to implementing the *New Curriculum Scheme*, Ms. Feng had her own opinions. On one hand, she commended the progressive ideas. On the other, sometimes, she still saw her own inclination to lecturing and transmitting content. She also noted the new hierarchy that the progressive approaches had created. The original rationale for such approaches was to create a democratic class milieu that encouraged student input. However, in her view, the emphasis on students' oral input also created a new imbalance that favoured extroverted and orally competent students.

Talking about implementing the new curriculum, Ms. Ge specifically commented that the explicit tension between the *New Curriculum Scheme* and the testing regime in China often left teachers puzzled:

The new curriculum is just a policy document high above there. In China, the government has been promoting educational reforms and advocating quality education for years. But now test-oriented education still dominates....The new curriculum emphasizes student-centred learning and requires teachers to tap into students' multiple intelligences. From this, you would think the new curriculum is very humane and quite oriented to the Western education philosophies. However, in practice, it is not teachers who are not willing to do what is required; sometimes it is just too hard to change [given the testing regime].

Caught in the currents of “the old and the new imaginaries at the same time” (Smith, 2006, p. 17), from time to time teachers had to dismiss the progressive ideas encoded in the *New Curriculum Scheme*. However, given the school principal's heavy emphasis on implementing the ideas, teachers such as Ms. Ge, Ms. Feng, and Mr. Chen often chose to follow it when they were giving open lessons.

Several teachers expressed their strong desire to change textbooks or even create their own textbooks for students at SCS because the target student population of the current textbooks was public school students who were required to write Gaokao. These textbooks were irrelevant to SCS students' needs. Not having to teach to the standardized tests in Grade 11, teachers such as Ms. Ge, Ms. Gu, and Mr. Chen felt that they had more freedom to tweak the curricula. However, as Ms. Ge pointed out, sometimes this still seemed like a falsified freedom. SCS obviously encouraged teachers' creativity. However, given the compressed time for Mandarin literacy-related courses and the heavy workload, the Chinese teacher participants felt that they did not always have full autonomy to create spaces to teach what might be helpful for the students at SCS based on their understanding of the students' needs.

The Mandarin Language Arts teacher Ms. Ge said that she created her own textbooks when she was teaching last year's Grade 11 cohort. In her teaching, she drew on traditional Chinese linguistic and cultural components (e.g., Dui Lian “对联”: antithetical couplets written on scrolls), the beauty of language in pop songs and commercials, and a comparison of cyber language, everyday Chinese, and Classical Chinese. She aimed to

arouse students' interest in learning Mandarin by acknowledging its history and making links between formal literacy and diverse forms of literacy associated with everyday life. In the interview, she said, "Those classes were well received by the students".

It is worth noting that for teachers whose classes were not gauged by any standardized tests, they had more autonomy at SCS than at public schools. Mr. Chen said, except compressed time, he generally enjoyed his freedom at SCS because he could teach in the ways that he liked. Mr. Chen and Ms. Gu said that History and Politics were minor subjects at public schools. They were not as concerned with the underprivileged status of their subjects as the Mandarin Language Arts teachers did. Ms. Gu enjoyed the autonomy at SCS. She was the only Chinese teacher participant who persisted in her use of the "low-efficient" progressive approaches. Apparently introspective, she said,

With regard to the concepts advocated by the new curriculum, including the collaborative inquiry learning buttressed by the Western education systems, I saw that a lot at the Canadian teachers' classes. For many times, when I used my traditional knowledge-intensive lens to observe [their classes], I always thought: what did they teach and what did they accomplish in this class? Just a few English words. But after careful reflection, I realized that in the process [of collaborative learning], students have learned way more than those few English words.

Ms. Gu added that the traditional transmission approach was associated with high efficiency in terms of the volume of knowledge that teachers could transmit to students. When she was new to SCS, she was very frustrated to see SCS students' "poor" academic levels and their limited knowledge of Politics. Gradually, she found that when students were given opportunities and spaces to explore on their own, their creativity and strong practical skills shone through. The reason for her to be persistent in incorporating students' agentive roles in the classroom was because she saw the value of giving students spaces to be designers of learning processes. Collectively, they might come up with a new activity idea or even a little invention of something. She said, "Who chooses the topic, who designs, who offers novel ideas, and who develops and applies the ideas? Decisions about these matters all turn out to be beneficial learning opportunities for them". However, at the end of the interview, Ms. Gu revealed that the work load of teaching five classes sometimes wore down her passion. At the end of the day after all the teaching and "mass production", she said, "I barely had energy to talk". For her, limited

teacher resources were the biggest issue at SCS. The lack of teaching resources also echoes what Mr. Chen said about the evolution of SCS's ways of curriculum making. He said SCS's curriculum was getting mature after almost ten years' constant revisions, but the current curriculum making was still affected by the availability of teachers and teaching resources at this private school.

#### 6.2.4 Living with Ideologies & Expanding the Constraining Space

The Chinese teacher participants' beliefs about literacy-related education and their teaching practices were mediated by an array of ideologies that were either historically situated or deeply entrenched in the economic and sociopolitical realities of China.

Almost all the Chinese teachers believed that literacy-related education was primarily a path to moral self-improvement. Mr. Chen said, "Reading history makes men wise". Drawing lessons from historical events could illuminate students' future life. Mr. Ma thought that systematic teaching of traditional texts about Confucianism and Taoism was a must because these philosophies had the potential to shape students' manners and their ways of treating others. Ms. Ge stressed the traditional value of filial piety when teaching Mi Li's letter to Emperor Jinwu. Ms. Feng also said,

Mandarin Language Arts is not just about teaching literacy knowledge. It is more permeated with moral education components. It is also about valuing kinship and family bond. I often tell my students, to be a master in Mandarin literacy, first of all, you must learn how to be a human being. We are not only learning the technical skills like analyzing the thematic meanings of paragraphs. Instead, it is more valuable to capture the emotional meanings and the profound wisdoms that are delivered in texts.

For Ms. Feng, her selected text about "home" exemplified how family bonding was specifically valued by the Chinese ethics. Caring and close family ties were two of the qualities that Ms. Feng thought the Chinese excelled at when compared to the Westerners.

Ms. Gu surveyed her students' favourite books and then showed her own list of the best literary works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. She intended to illustrate how literature, as an essential part of culture, might impact individuals' spiritual worlds and their overall development. This list included books by authors from China (e.g., Lu, Xu, 2008), Taiwan (e.g., Jin,

Yong, 2009), the former Soviet Union (e.g., Gorky, 2005), and the United States (e.g., J. D. Salinger, 1951). She then used three examples of public service advertisements to elicit students' thoughts about filiality, nature-human harmony, and human-human harmony. Like other Chinese teacher participants, Ms. Gu also paid heed to the role of individual self-cultivation in creating a responsible and harmonious society.

Based on my observations, I noticed that teaching ideologically embedded texts was a challenge that these Chinese teachers confronted on a daily basis.

First of all, “critical” is a terminology that is favoured by the Ontario curricula. Chinese teacher participants were more geared to using “objective (ly)” (“客观的[地]” Ke Guan De) and “rational(ly)” (“理性的[地]” Li Xing De). There are wisdoms on both sides, though the emphases are discernibly different. Vignette 6.2.4.1 provides a glance at the specific teacher-student dialogues about “thinking objectively”, to use Mr. Chen’s words.

#### Vignette 6.2.4.1: Mr. Chen’s History Class: The Anti-Japanese War

This is Mr. Chen’s first open lesson for this semester. Today, he is going to teach the anti-Japanese war. As usual, he does not worry about the technical aspects of this lesson. He is confident that his adept application of multimedia would engage students and facilitate their learning. However, he has concerns about students’ anti-Japanese sentiment. Well-guided, this lesson could leverage students’ patriotism, as stressed by the curriculum. Mr. Chen is careful not to let students’ antipathy toward Japan take over. Guided by the curriculum, he hopes that situating this lesson in the context of international peace and development will enhance students’ rational patriotism and avoid blind sentiment of national revenge. Students watch attentively the movie clip of *Tokyo Trial* on the projector screen. Then Mr. Chen smoothly directs them to the textbook’s brief introduction of how Japanese initiated the invasion activities. Mr. Chen goes on to show another documentary and photos about Japanese’s “debts of blood” in the war and Chinese people’s fierce resistance. Mr. Chen tries to make sure classroom interactions are about how to put Japanese’s crimes into perspective. Addressing former students’ comments on launching Tokyo Massacre and Tokyo Rape, Mr. Chen reemphasizes the importance of revitalizing the Chinese nation and maintaining world peace.

In the History textbook (People’s Education Press, Teaching Materials Research Institute, & History Curriculum Resources Research and Development Centre, 2007), the lesson about the anti-Japanese war incorporates texts and images about the Japanese’s crimes against humanity, Chinese people’s formal and informal resistance, and the ongoing negative effects of the Japanese invasion because of the Japanese-produced chemical

weapons buried in China. There is limited space in the textbook for a critical understanding of the past, nor a problematization of the “stereotypes about ‘the other’” (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 35). Nevertheless, Mr. Chen believed that reading more history resources and using the right analytical tools (e.g., historical materialism) would better engage students in “impartial judgment” of historical events. Therefore, in this lesson, he incorporated inquiry questions for group discussion. One of the questions asked: “After the anti-Japanese war, a hotel in Hong Kong put on a sign on its entrance: ‘Japanese and dogs are not allowed’. After the Japanese Embassy’s outcry, the hotel took off the sign and set a new minimum consumption requirement for the Japanese---0.8 billion Hong Kong dollars. Please discuss: Is this an embodiment of patriotism? ” When I asked about incorporating critical thinking, Mr. Chen said,

I don’t see that as critical thinking because I see it more like guiding them to think more objectively and impartially. But “being objective” and “being impartial” are actually contested in the sense that people could easily claim that they are objective and impartial based on what they see and what they read. So I can only teach them the methodology [of historical materialism]. When the students read more things about one certain topic, they might realize that their prior thoughts might not be objective and impartial enough.... this methodology is always right because such a judgement is based on facts and historic materials.

Interrogating the contested nature of “facts” and “historic truths”, Mr. Chen and I reflected upon the scenarios where students brought in small talks about “being harmonized”. Students often joked about “harmonized” (i.e., censored) information in China. When teaching the New China’s construction of political democracy, Mr. Chen said that there were actually eight democratic parties in China that participated in the administration and discussion of state affairs. Class C students questioned its truthfulness and interrogated the Chinese Communist Party’s monopoly on power and its strategy of “harmonization”. Mr. Chen shared that students’ reactions revealed their eagerness to know the “truths” and desires to make accurate judgments of things that interested them. In the meantime, they were aware that information that was available for them to read and access actually limited their opportunities to reach truths or “objective” judgments. I understood students’ frustrations as a result from their awareness that “truths” might be constructed differently by the mainstream media with a salient ideological control. For me, it might be more helpful to incorporate a critical interrogation of voices that had been

“silenced and marginalized” (Lewison et al. 2002, p. 383). On the other hand, I am aware that I should not take for granted that such a critical interrogation could happen in any sociopolitical context. For example, one teacher<sup>48</sup> talked about the impacts of curricular policy makers removing sensitive topics, like Tian’anmen Massacre, in the textbooks,

To talk about these things or not in class, or to discuss them in depth or not, these are all tough decisions because some students are determined to get to the bottom of the matters. Some curriculum designers have decided to remove these sensitive topics. This actually freed us from vexing situations.

I infer that critical literacy as advocated by critical Western scholars (e.g., Bean & Harper, 2006; Lewison et al., 2002) might incur risks on teachers living in other sociopolitical conditions. Please note that by saying that, I do not have the intention to stereotype censorship in China. My Canadian research participants like Mr. Sedley also reported that things like intentionally removing content from textbooks happened in developed countries too. Ms. Gu and Mr. Chen also argued that the ruling classes of most countries would interweave their ideologies into the social studies curricula. Mr. Chen tried to play down the ideologies embedded in the subject of History. He tended to focus more on enhancing students’ competencies to use scientific methods to read, comprehend, interpret, and analyze history resources and also their skills in communicating and sharing what they learned. Students in Class C often critically interrogated sociopolitical issues in China such as media censorship and the Chinese Communist Party’s exclusive control. Chinese teacher participants all agreed that the students at SCS were bolder and had more opportunities than their public school counterparts to air their opinions of the political systems. During my observations, sometimes teachers overlooked such talks, intentionally or unintentionally. Sometimes, teachers tried to guide students to compare the development history of China’s and other developed countries’ democratic systems and then encouraged them to think about the affordances and constraints of major political systems. These moments were brief. But I

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<sup>48</sup> I do not specify the teacher’s name here to make sure the teacher is not traceable.



did see students quieted down, seemingly absorbed in thoughts. To quote one Chinese teacher<sup>49</sup>:

I struggle a lot....What we teach is more about the bright sides of China's political systems and the ideals of building a country that vests authority in people. However, the reality is out there. Today, students see and hear about people being compulsorily relocated. Tomorrow, they will see [protests] being suppressed. And the day after, they will probably hear about another story of corrupt government officials... I never try to conceal anything. I often tell them the reality is that our democratic system is not perfect.... There are historic reasons. When the students compare the democratic systems between China and the United States, I often ask them "How many years has U.S. democracy gone through? What about China? How fair is it to expect a child to talk like a twenty year old?"

Approaching democracy and censorship, Mr. Chen said,

I would say if students complained about "harmonized" statistics in China, it's only because they are lacking in experience. In my view, the statistics released by most governments are more or less deviated from the "truths". I would normally point out to the students that there is a general pattern with most governments. If students want to do some thorough research, they need to make a judgement on their own about the truthfulness of the released statistics. When different interest groups document certain historic events, there are unavoidably discrepancies in their accounts.

Both Ms. Gu and Mr. Chen accentuated the important skills of "thinking objectively", especially for students at SCS who were going to experience other cultures and political systems. Both of them chose not to impose ideologies on students and tried to listen to students' views. However, being strongly patriotic herself, Ms. Gu shared that she could not stand to see students directing anger towards the government. She encouraged students' "rational interrogation" of social problems. She also hoped learning philosophies in *Ideologies and Politics (Book 4)* (Teaching Materials Writing Group for the Ministry of Education's General Secondary School Ideologies and Politics Curriculum, 2008b) would help to enhance students' "rationality".

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<sup>49</sup> For this sensitive topic, I am not quoting teacher's name directly to ensure that this participant is not traceable.

Ms. Gu also felt that after several rounds of curricular reforms in the last two decades, the current intended curriculum of Politics does not contain strong class consciousness. She said, there were political intentions to legitimate the existent political system and ideologies, but the content appeared to be more relevant to students' outside-of-school experience. She felt that her students were more receptive of what they were learning within the current curriculum. There were fewer cases of students' resistance when she taught the third Politics textbook *Ideologies and Politics (Book 3): Cultures and Life* (Teaching Materials Writing Group for the Ministry of Education's General Secondary School Ideologies and Politics Curriculum, 2008b) than the book about political ideologies and philosophies. Ms. Gu was happy to see students' sense of national pride when they learned "Cultures and Life" and talked about the cultural heritages of China.

This section presented Chinese teachers' efforts to connect the East and the West and the challenges they encountered in the cross-border schooling context. In the next section, I document Canadian teachers' experience.

## 6.3 Teaching & Experiencing the Others: Canadian Teachers in the Contact Zone

### 6.3.1 Enabling Students' Literacy Practices in Diverse Modes

The Canadian teacher participants at SCS made many efforts to capitalize on students' diverse literacy practices that were validated by new technologies and popular cultures. They tried to teach various literacy skills in their classes. In Ms. Allen's math language class, students were asked to work on math problems collectively. They discussed ways to solve the problems, wrote structured answers on the blackboard, and orally explained their problem-solving rationales and processes. Ms. Allen hoped that activities as such could hone students' skills to present their solutions logically and their abilities to communicate mathematical knowledge in English.

Mr. Wilson believed that literacy went beyond reading and writing texts. He said,

I am a firm believer of experiential learning, like learning through doing, rather than learning through hearing about it, and kind of trying to tap into that higher order of thinking, you know, like problem solving skills and being able to relate to

it and doing things like that versus here is the text, learn it... I think [ask] “What’s the meaning behind it?” “Where did it come from?” So I think just opening students’ eyes to as much as we possibly can because as a teacher, you know, you are teaching them social skills. You are teaching them citizenship. Yes, you teach them curriculum, but our job is to prepare them for their life after high school when they are on their own.

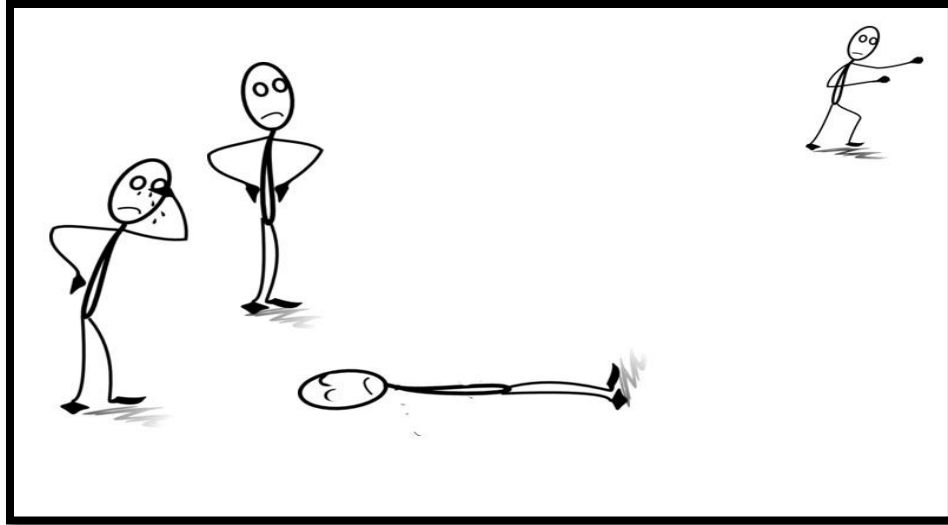
Instead of an Ontario curriculum follower, Mr. Wilson saw his role at SCS as teaching social skills, citizenship, and preparing students for their futures which he understood as being in primarily English-only environments. In his ENG2D class, Mr. Wilson tried to give his students diverse literacy learning opportunities such as taking notes, creating short stories, and making meaning from media like movies. Vignette 6.4.1.1 exhibits the forms of meaning making Mr. Wilson incorporated in his regular ENG2D class.

#### Vignette 6.3.1.1: Mr. Wilson’s ENG2D Class: Creating Tableaux

To reinforce what students have read and watched about *Romeo and Juliet*, Mr. Wilson has devised several in-class and after-class activities. Today, Mr. Wilson decides to try something new and he is confident that his students will like it. After watching Act III, Mr. Wilson introduces the idea of “Tableau”<sup>50</sup> and asks students to collaboratively create their own tableaux and tell stories about their favourite scenes. After a heated discussion, Tina-Qin and Steve-Jian’s group decide to present the series of killings in Act III, but they are not sure whether they are going in the right direction. Hence, Mr. Wilson reassures students and says, “There is no right answer. You already have amazing ideas.” Now it is time for the show. Dave-Yue’s group present the scene where Romeo kills Tybalt. Later, in another group, Alice-Mei acts as Romeo who stands right in between Tybalt and Mercutio when he is killed by Tybalt. She says that Mercutio’s death plants a seed for a series of misfortunes that happen thereafter. Joe-Hui’s group go to the front of the class, freeze, and make their own Tableau (Figure 12). Their audience start to guess which scene they are representing: “Romeo killed Tybalt?”, “Tybalt killed Mercutio?” Joe-Hui explains that it is actually the scene where Juliet’s nurse is weeping over Tybalt’s dead body and Juliet is sad that Romeo has been banished. When asked about the significance of the scene, they reply, it is this moment when Juliet confirms her love for her husband Romeo and no longer remains attached to her family lines.

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<sup>50</sup> Mr. Wilson defined “Tableau” as people posing and freezing like in a picture to represent a scene.



**Figure 12: The Tableau Presented by Joe-Hui’s Group at Mr. Wilson’s Class<sup>51</sup>.**

This was the first time when Mr. Wilson’s ENG2D class heard about and created Tableaux. Mr. Wilson was happy about their performance and their interpretations of the story, characters, relationships, and themes. For Mr. Wilson, these were the key elements that he expected students to master in Shakespearean plays.

Considering that these students were ESL students, Mr. Wilson decided not to totally rely on the Early Modern English version of *Romeo and Juliet*. He said, “The last thing I want to do is to get them hang up on the language itself. So I did the contemporary version because I didn’t want them to have to translate twice. I think that’s really rough”. Mr. Wilson did not entirely eliminate the Early Modern English texts in the activities and assignments. To give students a feel for Shakespearean English, he incorporated the Early Modern English texts in sections like the Prologue (See Figure 13) with a vocabulary breakdown.

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<sup>51</sup> I used online images from <http://www.elker.com/clipart-sad-stickman.html> to reproduce the tableau.

<i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i>	Breaking down the vocabulary
<p>William Shakespeare</p> <p>PROLOGUE</p> <p>Chorus Two households, both alike in <b>dignity</b>, In fair Verona, where we lay our scene, From ancient grudge break to new <b>mutiny</b>, Where <b>civil blood</b> makes <b>civil hands</b> unclean. From forth the fatal loins of these two foes A pair of <b>star-cross'd</b> lovers take their life; Whose <b>misadventured</b> piteous overthrows Do with their death bury their parents' strife. The fearful <b>passage</b> of their death-mark'd love, And the continuance of their parents' rage, Which, but their children's end, nought could remove, Is now the two hours' <b>traffic</b> of our stage; The which if you with patient ears attend, What here shall <b>miss</b>, our toil shall strive to <b>mend</b>.</p>	<p>1. <b>dignity</b>: rank.</p> <p>3. <b>mutiny</b>: strife, rebellion against law and order.</p> <p>4. <b>civil blood</b>: the blood of civil strife. <b>civil hands</b>: citizens' hands. The repeated use of the word "civil" creates an irony: the citizens of Verona should be civil—respectful and civilized—, but they are the opposite.</p> <p>6. <b>star-cross'd</b>: thwarted by the stars.</p> <p>7. <b>misadventured</b>: caused by bad luck.</p> <p>9. <b>passage</b>: progress, from beginning to end.</p> <p>12. <b>traffic</b>: business. The phrase "two hours' traffic" poses a puzzle. On the modern stage, the full text of the play cannot be done in two hours; does this mean that it was cut in Shakespeare's time, or that Shakespeare's actors spoke very fast?</p> <p>14. <b>miss</b>: miss the mark. <b>mend</b>: repair. This line seemed to suggest that the play or the acting could be revised for the next performance.</p>

**Figure 13: Mr. Wilson's Handout of the Prologue of Romeo and Juliet.**

Mr. Wilson also asked students to work as groups to translate the Early Modern English in *Romeo and Juliet* to contemporary English (See Figure 14).

<p>JULIET Here's such a coil! Come, what says Romeo?</p> <p>NURSE Have you got leave to go to shrift today?</p> <p>JULIET I have.</p> <p>NURSE Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell. There stays a husband to make you a wife. Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks. They'll be in scarlet straight at any news. Hie you to church. I must another way. To fetch a ladder, by the which your love must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark. I am the drudge, and toil in your delight. But you shall bear the burden soon at night. Go. I'll to dinner. Hie you to the cell.</p> <p>JULIET Hie to high fortune! Honest Nurse, farewell.</p>	<p>Here goes come on, what did Romeo say?</p> <p>Have you already told Romeo that you will marry with Romeo is the church.</p> <p>I have</p> <p>For this reason, you need to go to Friar Laurence's church, which you will get married. Now the wanton blood up comes in your cheeks. They'll be in bright and straight at any news. Go to the church at once. I must go to take the ladder and your love must climb as high as a bird's nest when it is dark. I am a drudge and I make you happy by working hard. But you shall bear heavy burden soon at night. Go. I will go to cook for the dinner. Go into your bedroom now.</p> <p>I will. The good fortune come to me in hurry. Honest nurse, farewell.</p>
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**Figure 14: One Sample of Alice-Mei and her Partner's Translation of Romeo and Julie, Act II Scene IV.**

In Figure 14, Alice-Mei and her partner copied the original text of Act II Scene IV on the left and their translation on the right. To facilitate students' learning through translation, Mr. Wilson provided online resources for students' reference and in-class scaffolding when students had questions about vocabulary and sentence structures.

It is worth noting, students' assignments for ENG2D were largely in written forms despite the in-class opportunities to develop their skills in listening, speaking, reading, viewing, and representing. Almost half of the assignments were structured exercises that Mr. Wilson designed collectively with other ENG2D teachers (See Figure 15).

*Romeo & Juliet*  
Act 2 Significant Moments

Quote	Translation	Scene	Who said it?	Significance
O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father and refuse thy name; Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love, And I'll no longer be a Capulet	Where are you Romeo? Turn away from your father, and say you're not a Montague any longer. If you won't, I will show you my love by no longer being a Capulet.	2	Juliet	Juliet loves Romeo so much that she is even willing to change her name to love and be with Romeo.
"Tis but thy name that is my enemy. Thou art thyself, thou not a Montague. What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot, Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part Belonging to a man. O, be some other name! What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other word would smell as sweet."	Juliet accused Romeo's father. But but she loved Romeo so Juliet hope Romeo can abandon his father, if he can't, Juliet would abandon her father	2	Juliet	Juliet loved Romeo so much but their clan had contradiction so she <del>let</del> hoped that is not true.
...What a change here! Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear, So soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.	Friar told Romeo a young men's love was not truly in hearts, but only in their eyes	3	Friar Laurence	Because of Romeo would love Juliet but he would forsake his first girlfriend.
For this alliance may so happy prove To turn your households' rancor to pure love	Friar thought if Romeo and Juliet got married, maybe can solve <del>the</del> conflict from two households	3	Friar Laurence	Capulet household and Montague's has much conflict. why else?

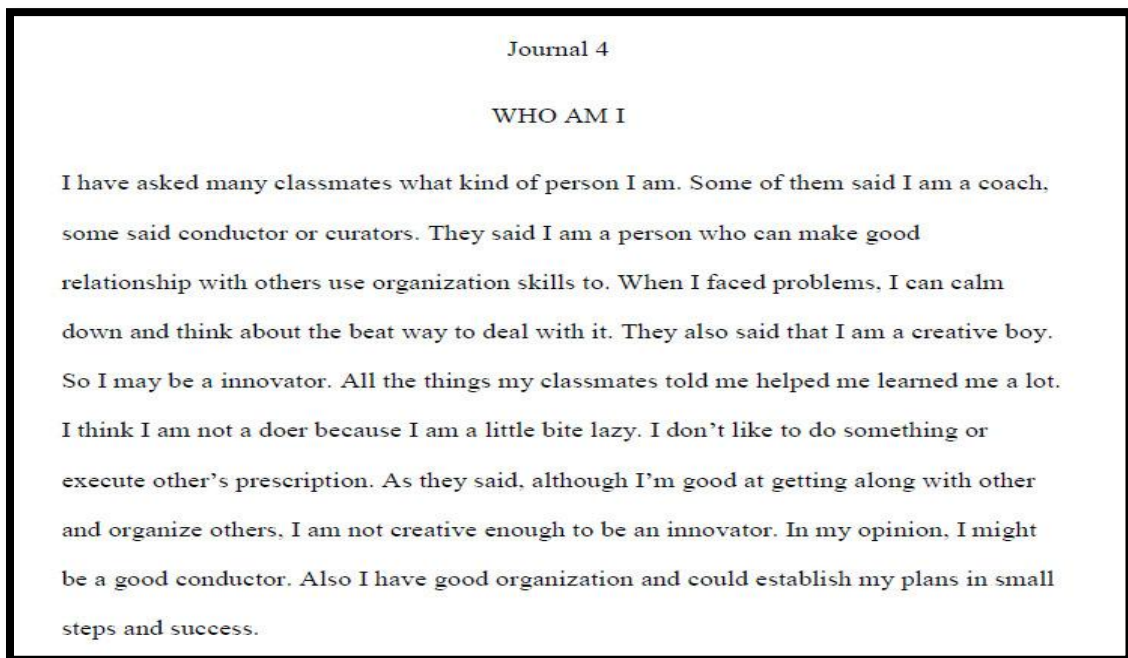
**Figure 15: Dave-Yue's Assignment of the Most Significant Moments in Romeo and Julie Act II.**

In this assignment (Figure 15), Dave-Yue translated the quotes in Shakespearean English to contemporary English. He identified the scenes where these quotes occurred and the persons who made the utterances. In the last column, he explained why these moments



were the most significant. According to Mr. Wilson, one major purpose of these exercises was to reinforce students' understanding of the characters and plots, their mastery of literary devices in the literature, and their knowledge of structures of plays and short stories (e.g., rising action, climax, falling action, and points of views). Besides, he said, the purpose of journal entries was to provide students opportunities to let in things that interested them in their daily life. He also tried to build in creative writing components into the assignments.

The Canadian teacher participants tried to connect the course content with students' outside-of-school experience. Before Ms. Allen started teaching increasing and decreasing exponential functions, she showed a picture of bacteria to convey the idea of "exponential growth". She then went on and asked students, "What other things can grow like this?" When interactive talks expanded from population to money in the bank and investment in antique bells, most students got interested. In Mr. Gosnell's class, students were asked to conduct surveys among their peers about their personalities and then write up reports of their findings and their self-reflections. Figure 16 is Steve-Jian's personality survey report.



**Figure 16: Steve-Jian's Personality Survey Report for Mr. Gosnell's Class.**

Mr. Gosnell's rationale for including survey activities as such was to help students find out who they were and then let their personalities shine a bit through various literacy practices.

Besides oral survey and written reports, Mr. Gosnell also built in other modes in his Career Education class to hone students' communication skills, even though he insisted that "I don't do that [building literacy skills] directly in the Career's class". Students were asked to collectively create drama scripts about positive and negative ways of solving conflicts and then play them out in front of the class. At the beginning of his lesson on "respect", Mr. Gosnell played Aretha Franklin's song "Respect" to hook students in. While viewing videos of soccer players who collaborated to score and the dance troupe Riverdance, I heard students murmuring, "Got it! Team work". To reinforce the idea of team work, Mr. Gosnell took the students downstairs to play a game. Students formed a human puzzle by standing in a circle, crossing their arms, and holding hands with each other. Mr. Gosnell stood in the centre and asked the students to figure out how to undo the puzzle without letting hands go and still facing him. Students explored collectively and discovered several solutions. In that day's journals, students shared the different things they had learned from the game. The following is what Alice-Mei wrote in her journal<sup>52</sup>:

Teamwork should have a clear communication, sharing ideas with your partner. Because teamwork is rely [relies] on cooperation, you should communicate with your partner exactly that [to] make sure your job can go fluently and finish it quickly. You must believe your partner and [be] honest to your partner, even if sharing your experiences [?]. It can help you a lots [lot]. There are many ways to solve problems, it cannot have only one solution to solve it [delete "to solve it"]. Therefore, sharing ideas is so important.

Mr. Gosnell made it clear to the students that he was not particular about grammar and vocabulary in the Career Education assignments and quizzes. He always corrected grammar for the students, but grammatical errors had little effect on final marks for assignments. Mr. Gosnell expressed his awareness of certain intelligences and literacy

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<sup>52</sup> In this chapter, I correct errors in students' writing or speaking square brackets. For unclear meanings, I put a question mark in the brackets.



skills that were privileged by the Chinese high school education. Therefore, he consciously tried to create opportunities and tools for students to thrive on the knowledge and communicative skills that they brought from their everyday life, even if these skills were not commonly valued by the mainstream education in China. To quote him,

China loves exams. Exams favour a certain kind of intelligence, like memory recall, being able to understand certain facts, a certain kind of literacy like actually being able to write well.... So definitely in China, education system is very exam-oriented, which focuses on kind of logical kind of intelligence and fact recall, and it doesn't focus on creativity.... Because the students are elite kids<sup>53</sup>, almost all of the parents are successful business men or business women, whatever. So probably from home, they bring with them maybe more of the life skills that education doesn't necessarily provide. So they tend to be good talkers, they tend to be witty, and they tend to have those social skills that probably will help them a lot in the workforce, but academically, not all of them are that way.

Following the Ontario Career Education curriculum, Mr. Gosnell tried to guide his students to discover their strengths. Concurring with the broadened conception of the Ontario literacy-related curricula (e.g., Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b), he also tried to include diverse forms of students' local literacies that were not often legitimated by schooling. But there were dilemmas. He was aware that some of his students might not see the "indirect benefits of the Ontario curriculum". Instead, students sometimes got frustrated and asked questions such as "How is this helping me with my IELTS? How does studying Shakespeare help me, you know, get a higher score on my IELTS scores? How does studying poetry help me get a job in the business school in Canada?" For Mr. Gosnell, since IELTS's expectation tended to be heavier on reading and writing than other skills, he had to train students' comprehensive skills, but before he focused more on the oral.

All the Canadian teacher participants told me in the interviews that to better prepare their students for their post-secondary study, an English-only program should be in place. However, most of them encountered challenges with imposing an English-only policy at SCS. Ms. Allen's MCR3U was assigned as a math language class by SCS. Following the

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<sup>53</sup> In this context, Mr. Gosnell said that he referred "elite kids" generally to SCS students from families with high socioeconomic status.

Canadian principal Mr. Collin's English-only mandate, Ms. Allen specifically required students not to speak any of their first languages (L1s) in group discussions, be it Mandarin or Cantonese. Students' L1s were not allowed in Ms. Allen's class, but Ms. Allen was widely aware that there was a great deal of mathematical vocabulary in her class. She invited students to "stop" her anytime when they did not know a vocabulary term. She also found it comforting that she and the students could always understand each other through mathematical formulae and graphs. The following dialogue is a typical teacher-student interaction in Ms. Allen's math language class:

**Ms. Allen** (draws a straight angle on the board and asks): What kind of angle is this?

**Alice-Mei**: Straight angle (A literal translation from Mandarin "Ping Jiao [平角]").

**Ms. Allen**: Very good guess. This IS a straight angle.

**Ms. Allen** (draws a right angle and asks): What about this?

**Students** (laugh and respond): Hehehe, then half straight angle.

**Ms. Allen**: A right angle.

**Ms. Allen** (draws an acute angle and says): This is an acute angle.

**Ms. Allen** (goes on and draws an obtuse angle): Then what is this angle called?

**Steve-Jian**: Ugly angle (all students laugh).

**Ms. Allen**: Did you say "ugly"?

**Steve-Jian**: Well, a cute angle . . .

**Ms. Allen**: Oh, it is "acute"; not "cute" (all students laugh).

Cross-language transfers in concepts (Cummins, 2005) were more evident in this math language class than any other observed Canadian classes. Group work enabled students to think aloud, which also enabled me to see how the students frequently employed the strategies, mantras, and tables they mastered through "memorization" from their Mandarin math classes. For instance, once Ms. Allen wrote down  $y=2^{x-3}$  on the blackboard and asked "Does this move to the right or left? If right, please raise your hands." Then I heard occasional murmurs from students "Zuo Jia You Jian ('左加右减') ('Left plus; right minus')" in Mandarin before they raised their hands. This is just one example of Mandarin math mantras that students learned from their Mandarin math classes. Ms. Allen was aware of the role of students' L1s, at the same time, she also believed that an English-only environment could boost students' second language (L2) learning. As she said,

I follow the English-Only posit[ion] because that's what the principal requires of our courses. But in practice, a lot of times, they get away with speaking in Chinese. I let it go sometimes, because they do need to be able to translate. Sometimes it's so tempting to ask a student to explain something in Chinese after they understand so that all the other students can understand. But at the same time, I really want them to practice their English as much as possible. Because English immersion would really... If this class was taught in the same group of students, if they were learning this course in Canada, and if they were immersed in an English environment, they would learn English so much more quickly.

The struggle between incorporating L1s and the promulgated impacts of English-only approaches was also evident in other Canadian teachers' interviews. Mr. Gosnell said,

At the very beginning, I have [had] a very strict policy, which lasted about one week (laughing). I said I would take 1% off their participation mark every time they spoke Chinese, Cantonese, Mandarin, or even French, they spoke French, but their English level was way too low. It wasn't reasonable to expect them to do that. So I just stopped. ... As you saw in my Career's class, I never enforced it, you know, and I am sure, they, usually, I think often they spoke Chinese whenever they had to do group work, but I also knew that they stayed on topic. So I was happy about that.

Like Ms. Allen and Ms. Wyatt, Mr. Gosnell also encouraged students' peer scaffolding in Mandarin. They said, from their teaching practices, they realized how unrealistic it was to impose the English-only mandate and gradually saw the value of cross-language transfer between students' L1s and L2 (Cummins, 2005).

### 6.3.2 Implementing Intended Ontario Curricula: Autonomy & Challenges

The Canadian teacher participants all felt that they had the autonomy to tweak the Ontario curricula. Both Mr. Gosnell and Mr. Wilson concurred that they had to follow the Ontario curricula that came from top down. But the current Ontario curricular expectation and outcome statements were fairly general, which gave teachers a certain freedom to implement it in their own ways. As Mr. Wilson said,

I believe that I take the top down approaches as far as our expectations that I have to hit, but I then go from the bottom for how I do that. I think that every class that I teach is very different. I teach five classes, but it's, and four of them are the same course, but it's all different, based on the students' needs.

Similarly, Mr. Gosnell said that he read the Ontario curriculum and applied it, but he “never apply [applied] it exactly”. He selected content from the Career Education textbook based on his judgment of what would work and what would not for the students at SCS. For the ENG2D class, Mr. Wilson said that he had the freedom to use any kind of “vessel” (novels or short stories) as long as he was hitting the curricular expectations. But because there were three other teachers who were teaching ENG2D at the same time, the Canadian principal Mr. Collins suggested uniformed planning. Thus, the other three teachers thought Shakespeare should be included even though Mr. Wilson held the opinion that Shakespeare did not necessarily have a place in ESL learning. He explained,

I was really the only one who said why we NEED to do Shakespeare, like why it is essential that we do Shakespeare. And I mean to be completely honest and frank, you get, you kind of get the responses like “That’s the way it is; for it’s an English class, you do Shakespeare”. I remember when I was doing Shakespeare in high school I struggled with it. And I am an English person.... I was putting my shoes, myself in the shoes of people who are actually learning it, forget about what I want and what I like, I guess, I try to base what I want to do, based on the students, based on the curriculum because we need to follow that, but also where they are going and their needs and strengths.... if I am forced, if I am forced to do the story of Shakespeare and *Romeo and Juliet*, I am going to do it the way that helps the students understand the story...doing it in a way that really helps them, but doesn’t spoon-feed them because I still think they are challenged.

His rationale for not including Shakespeare was based on his own experience of learning it and his beliefs about ESL education.

Similarly, Ms. Allen thought her math class should follow Ontario’s MCR3U curriculum. However, because students had learned most of the Function concepts from their Mandarin math classes, Ms. Allen decided not to repeat, but focus on new concepts and push students to think in a deeper way or from a different view. For Ms. Allen, her math language class was not just about math literacy in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing. It was also a cultural preparation and life preparation for the students’ future study because the students got the opportunities to see what and how their Canadian peers might be learning in local Canadian math classrooms. More than that, Ms. Allen also hoped that through her class, these Chinese ESL students could nurture a sort of Canadian mindset and study skills that would help their future study in Canada.

There was no math curriculum that was adapted for ESL students for Ms. Allen to use. But she confirmed, as long as she covered the curricular expectations, she was given the freedom to adjust her pace and also the focus areas where she thought these ESL students might need.

In terms of Canadian-Chinese interaction at SCS, Ms. Allen shared:

I would actually really like to sit in and to get to know the Chinese curriculum because that would help me to kind of... be able to better prepare or better plan for my classes, so that ... because in Ontario, what I would do is, I would be more familiar with what the students know up till then. And I would also be able to refer back to previous year's curriculum expectations, and see, oh, they should have covered such and such expectations. Of course, there are always students who are better or not as good, but here, I really have no idea. So every day, I asked [the students], "Ok, have you learned this?"

Ms. Allen concurred with other Canadian teacher participants that she would prefer if there were more academic interactions between the Chinese and Canadian educators at SCS so that they would know how to better cater to students' needs.

All the Canadian teacher participants instructing elite Class C applauded their unique learning milieu as "highly motivated", "bright", "enthusiastic", "cooperative", "dynamic", and "hardworking". Mr. Gosnell said, this group of students were trying so hard to please their teachers. Mr. Wilson used "workhorse" to depict the students in his ENG2D class from elite Class C and Class B. When comparing these students with his prior Canadian students, he said,

I think motivation and engagement has a lot to play. You know, when a student is motivated to learn, you do whatever you want.... Even if you are a bad teacher, they are still going to learn from it. That's what I find these students are. They are motivated to go and push and to learn as much as they can. They are also really, from what I see, they like to please the instructor, they like to please, you know, I'm in a position of authority, I find they really want to make sure that I am happy.

When asked about whether the unique milieu was created by the labelling of "Elite Class", Mr. Gosnell said,

Because they are strong, they do well. Because they do well, they get placed in the elite Class C. Because in elite Class C, they feel good, so they do better. So

there is competition within the class, and there is competition with the other classes.

Mr. Gosnell understood competition in China as resulting from limited education resources. He said that China's school system and SCS might also use competition as an implicit motivation mechanism. All the Canadian teacher participants teaching elite Class C students agreed that the students appreciated the streaming system and the Ontario curricula because of their strong English abilities. However, for Ms. Wyatt's ESL-CO students, it was a different story. The majority of these students at Ms. Wyatt's class were originally from Class A---a group of students streamed together by SCS because of their low English proficiency levels but strengths in science. According to Ms. Wyatt, these students "passed" ESL level 1 and level 2 for various reasons, for example, through the intensive English summer classes. But based on their vocabulary, speaking, and listening skills, Ms. Wyatt felt that most of these students seemed more at a high Level 1. Based on my observation and interactions with Class A students like Mark-Ji and Rich-Zhi<sup>54</sup>, individualized in-class and after-class ESL support was in urgent need for at least half of the Class A students. Without it, they would not be able to understand teachers' instructions, finish assignments, or participate in class activities. Because of language barriers and the lack of individualized ESL help, Ms. Wyatt said that her students felt frustrated. Then a series of problems emerged. To quote her: "sleeping in class, fooling around, and making quips" about teachers and other students.

Teaching through various modes did sometimes make a difference for these Class A students. When Ms. Wyatt taught the song "If I had a Million Dollars", more students participated in the class activities than in her prior classes. The students sang along, caught missing words in lyrics, and listened to Ms. Wyatt's explanations about the cultural references engrained in the song (e.g., Kraft dinner, K-car, tree fort, and John Merrick's remains). Extra help also made a difference to this group of students who were eager to learn but were not offered sufficient scaffolding for them to progress and thrive. My role as the observer almost shifted to an ESL helper half way through my observation

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<sup>54</sup> The Chinese principal invited me to provide after-school English tutoring to five students from Class A in the evening from Monday to Friday.

of Ms. Wyatt's class. My daily evening tutoring with the five Class A students also helped me to make connections with Ms. Wyatt's teaching. For instance, together, Mark-Ji and I finished Ms. Wyatt's in-class exercise of making 20 sentences using comparative and superlative adjectives. Mark-Ji had not been doing ESL assignments for a long period. This time he showed his assignment to Ms. Wyatt voluntarily. When he came back to his seat, Mark-Ji was excited and told me, "Ms. Wyatt said 'It was GOOD!'" For another after-class assignment, Ms. Wyatt asked students to prepare a brief presentation of their favourite sports. In our evening lecturing, the students shared in Mandarin their favourite sports. We checked up the Internet to see what information they wanted to include in the next day's presentation. The students then prepared their own notes with 3-4 sentences. The next day, Rich-Zhi presented as follows: "Marathon is a good sport. There are 500 Marathon races every year. Marathon is a long-distance race. It is 4,000 kilometers long. So if we have time, let's join a Marathon". Ms. Wyatt applauded Rich-Zhi's performance. Rich-Zhi's face was glowing with happiness. As far as I observed, that excitement kept him for the whole 45 minute session---this was one of the few sessions that Rich-Zhi did not sleep through. What I did at the evening tutoring was simple, but this one-on-one ESL-specific scaffolding was what these students needed in order to have their knowledge shine through. Unfortunately, such support was scarce at SCS given the business model that the school had adopted. Following the Canadian principal's mandate, Ms. Wyatt required English-only in her ESL-CO at the beginning. Later, she realized,

...in higher levels, I do think that it is necessary for the classroom to be an English only place. At that level with this class, it's impossible, because they do not have the language ability. So...in order for the students to excel and for me to be able to help them, I need that intermediary person.

Talking about communication and interaction between the Canadian and Chinese teachers, Ms. Wyatt responded,

No, no, no communication at all with the Chinese English teachers, I have no idea what they are doing. I was unaware that it was even happening. The only time that I've noticed it happening was when I come into a classroom and they are just leaving and there's English on the board.... That would be beneficial, if there was a higher communication between the English teachers overall, especially English teachers who are teaching certain, you know each class, what you're going to

cover when you're going to cover, to be able to balance each other off...or I'm going to back that up in my classrooms. And then you know what I'm doing and then the students are constantly getting reinforced, because it's only through repetition that it's going to happen. Especially in a situation where as soon as they go out the front door, they are not thinking of speaking English again.

Ms. Wyatt hoped that the Chinese and Canadian teachers would increase their communication and interactions across curriculum in this hybrid education context. Ms. Wyatt, Mr. Gosnell, and Mr. Wilson appraised the learning opportunities this educational hybridity provided students. Ms. Wyatt commended the opportunities for students to interact with native English speakers, the linguistic and cultural preparation for their future overseas study, and their enhanced cross-cultural understanding. Both Ms. Wyatt and Mr. Gosnell applauded SCS's extracurricular platforms that mobilized students' creativity and the growth in their individual strengths and interests. But Ms. Wyatt, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Gosnell agreed, given most students' English proficiency levels, it was too much for the students at SCS to finish requirements for both systems within three years. Ms. Wyatt felt that long hours were too much for these adolescents who needed time to spend with friends. Echoing all the Canadian teacher participants' concern, Ms. Wyatt said that the goal of a hybrid education should not be just about getting credits and dual diplomas. Ms. Wyatt, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Gosnell concurred that expecting students to thrive in both systems within three years, was too unrealistic. To quote Mr. Gosnell,

So it's unfair, it's so unrealistic to expect them, like some of kids, like three grades of English, high school English in one year, that's just unrealistic, even for Canadian students, that would be tough, and ESL, and low ESL, not even like competent ESL.

Mr. Gosnell and Mr. Wilson saw how elite class students could handle the pressure and "pull that off"; Ms. Wyatt lived regular class students' struggles and attitude problems. Therefore, both Ms. Wyatt and Mr. Gosnell thought that students' actual academic and English abilities were crucial for students to appreciate the Ontario curricula. Hence, Mr. Gosnell suggested that such a hybrid education structure should not be geared to dual diplomas and profits to be generated from this education product, but should be oriented to students' wellbeing and learning.



### 6.3.3 Imagining & Experiencing the Others: Cosmopolitan Sensibilities

Experiencing people of another culture and language at SCS, almost all the Canadian teacher participants had their assumptions and imaginings of the others, be it Chinese students, Chinese teachers, or Chinese classrooms. Ms. Wyatt applauded students' exposure to various cultures and various learning styles at SCS. Like other Canadian teacher participants, she found some students more engaged in the Canadian style of classroom because they enjoyed group work and class debates more than individual seat work in the Chinese classrooms. Mr. Wilson hoped that the learning opportunities his ENG2D class created would help students succeed in their Grade 12 English immersion program and their future study in English-only environment. Academically and pedagogically, he admitted that he had not been able to step into Chinese teachers' classes and to really see what it was on the Chinese side. He assumed that there would be "a lot of rote learning".

In Mr. Gosnell's view, self-discovery was an approach favoured by the West. Comparing different focuses of identity formation in China and Canada, he felt,

In China, the way people are categorized are the ways they have always been categorized. It's sort of maybe the way we would have done it fifty years ago in Canada. Like he is outgoing. He is not. She is shy. There are traditional norms for people.

Mr. Gosnell contended that his Canadian understanding of identity went beyond ethnicity, gender, and linguistic heritage. His Career Education class attended to students' personalities, hobbies, favourite movies, and the like. In contrast, Chinese teachers' conceptions of "identity" seemed to be more associated with national identities and the pertaining linguistic and cultural identities, as is shown in 6.2 of this chapter.

Later, Mr. Gosnell admitted in his interview that the time when he played Aretha Franklin's "Respect", he had been curious to see the students' responses to an African American singer. He said,

China is a funny place, in some way, China is very polite and gracious, but sometimes, China is very direct. And so, I was curious to see what their response would be to see like African American woman, Aretha Franklin, singing

“Respect”, like why do I have to listen to... But interestingly, my perception of their response was like, they are like, “uh”, but maybe because she is singing about respect, so no one made a comment like she is so ugly. I’ve heard in China many a time, especially with African American or African Canadian people some of it is racism, some of it is just ignorance, just like people who don’t know a whole lot about it. So they just say what’s on their mind. Not a so harmful thing. So pleasantly surprised, students took that in.

Mr. Gosnell was the only teacher participant who mentioned “racism” in Chinese society. This echoes what Dave-Yue sang in his self-created hip-hop song (See Figure 37 in Chapter 7) about how he adopted a black hip-hop identity regardless of the adults’ biases against the black culture.

The Canadian principal Mr. Collins’s and the Ontario policy maker Mr. Allington’s vision of Ontario offshore programs was more like English immersion programs. Specially, Mr. Allington did not expect to see too much integration between the Chinese and Canadian education. However, the Ontario policy maker Mr. Sedley applauded SCS’s creativity in interacting both systems and hoped that transnational education could expand Canadians’ vision of international education. Coinciding with Mr. Sedley, some Canadian teacher participants employed strategies to expand the boundaries of their classrooms. Vignette 6.4.3.1 shows a two-way traffic that Mr. Wilson created at his ENG2D class.

#### Vignette 6.3.3.1 Mr. Wilson’s ENG2D Class: Poems from Canadian Pen Pals

Mr. Wilson walks into the classroom with glittering excitement. “EXCITING THING!”. He has already got students’ attention. “Well, I got them today. They mailed them out three weeks ago.” All students sit up to see what is in the big envelop. Mr. Wilson goes on, “These are from your pen pals. They write poems to you. They are really cute. Remember they are only Grade 4 and 5. They are Xiao Di Di (little brothers ‘小弟弟’) and Xiao Mei Mei (little sisters ‘小妹妹’)”. Students all laugh. Then Mr. Wilson calls each student’s name and hands out colorful letters from ENG2D students’ French-speaking ESL pen pals in Canada. Steve-Jian reads carefully and exclaims “My pen pal is a boy!” Students walk around with excitement and check one another’s poems. Mr. Wilson then gives instruction for the next step, “You don’t have to write poems back. Tell them about yourself like your hobbies. Tell them about China and ask them questions about themselves and Canada”.

Mr. Wilson created a Pen-Pal platform for the Chinese and Canadian students to make local-global connections. Based on my class observations, I also saw Mr. Wilson and Mr.

Gosnell trying to apply Mandarin in their regular English classes, which well manifests their sensibilities as global educators. Among the Canadian teacher participants, Mr. Gosnell had been in China for the longest. The following Vignette exemplifies teacher-student interaction in his Career Education class.

Vignette 6.3.3.2: Mr. Gosnell's Career Education Class: Canadian Speaking Mandarin

Mr. Gosnell tries to convey the differences between “hearing” and “listening” and says, “Hearing is subconscious, while listening is conscious. Basically, you hear but you don't understand, like in Chinese, 听不懂 (Ting Bu Dong)”. Students are surprised, “Wow!”. Mr. Gosnell goes, “Come on. This is easy”. Mr. Gosnell refers the students to the textbook and highlights six steps for active listening. When talking about “doing a listening check”, Mr. Gosnell says, “People in Beijing speak standard Mandarin. When I went shopping there, I needed to differentiate “*Si Kuai Qian* (四块钱: four Chinese Yuan)” and “*Shi Kuai Qian* (十块钱: ten Chinese Yuan)”. Here, most Cantonese don't know how to pronounce “Shi”. So I often have to do a listening check and ask, “You mean Si Kuai not Shi Kuai Qian. Is that right?” Students all laugh.

The inter-cultural dialogues in Mr. Gosnell's class were bi-directional. Mr. Gosnell was often surprised at how much North American culture his Chinese students knew. Talking about “respect”, Mr. Gosnell once asked students to work as groups and name a person they respected most. Besides two other famous Chinese figures, students also named Norman Bethune, Terry Fox, and Lincoln. Mr. Gosnell said, “Wow, we have two Canadians”.

The critical components of literacy are discernible in all investigated Ontario curricula. For instance, the English curriculum expects students to understand that “all texts advance a particular point of view that must be recognized, questioned, assessed, and evaluated” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 4). However, what is encoded in Ontario curricula about critical literacy and critical media literacy was not obvious in these Canadian teacher participants' practices. Students' limited use of computers at SCS might have led to the limited chances for critical conversations about digital and media literacies in English literacy-related classes. Chinese authorities' protective transnational education policies against political, religious, and military content might be another factor that potentially impacted the social interactions at SCS. Several Canadian teachers shared their understandings about open-mindedness and a world view in globalized

schooling contexts. Mr. Abrams concurred that the school did alert foreign teachers to be careful when they addressed issues pertaining to governments and religions. He said, when he asked students to choose IELTS writing topics to debate in class, there were roughly 140 IELTS writing topics for them to choose. For most of the topics, he would give students the freedom to discuss and argue. There was only one scenario where one student chose the topic of freedom of speech. He said, “I just didn’t know where he was going to go and I wouldn’t take that chance”.

Putting China’s censorship into perspective, Mr. Gosnell said, “I think even in Canada, the government tries to control the media”. That was where Mr. Gosnell felt that critical literacy and critical media literacy would be of help. He said if students ever brought up the anti-Japanese talk again, he would push them to think more critically and “not just accept anything”, “whether it’s news, whether it’s the messages the teachers gave us, whether it’s the books that they read”.

Ms. Wyatt’s response exhibits a Canadian educator’s sensibilities in a globalized education milieu. She said,

Like I do not think that an educator’s job is to come in and tell the students what to think. It is the educators’ job to come in and open the students’ minds to different possibilities and allow them to make their own decisions and have the tools to be able to make informed decisions. So, do you go in and talk about religion, and say this religion is bad, and this is why? No. Do you go into a classroom and say: Ok, these are different religions, this is what this religion believes, this is what this religion believes, here are the pros and cons of both, make your own decision? Sure.

Ms. Wyatt’s comments echo the Ontario policy makers Mr. Collins’s and Mr. Sedley’s cross-cultural understanding of the others. These Canadian teachers’ responses also echo the Canadian principal Mr. Collin’s mandate of being “careful” but “respectful”, which left limited spaces for critical interrogations of why some predominant sociopolitical discourses were embedded in texts but others were absent.

Mr. Gosnell once saw the Japanese flag on the ground two or three days in a row. The school administrators caught students and yelled at them. Mr. Gosnell saw a contradictory space at SCS where the school, especially the Ontario side, hailed respect

for cultural diversity; however, in the meantime there was an implicit message of nationalism and patriotism permeating among Chinese school owners and students. He said, “The comments the students make here about Japan, in Canada, they would get into such a big trouble, like they would be considered racism and xenophobia”. He thus depicted a Monday Flag Raising Speech by one of the school owners:

But what I thought would be interesting was, when one of the administrators of the school gave the speech, my Chinese is not excellent enough to understand like every single word in that speech. But that person has been a long time talking about how, because that’s in September, China’s economy passed Japan’s economy. And the person has been a long time talking about this, like China, like “how well we are doing”. They are very patriotic. Although that person never said that Japan was bad. It’s about China became Number 2, and Japan became Number 3, and the feeling was only one step away from anti-Japan or two steps away.... I agree with the Chinese position completely. I don’t agree with the racism that comes out of it.... Going back to how open-minded they are, (sighing), I wouldn’t say they are any better than the average public school students.

In Mr. Gosnell’s view, SCS students’ lack of open-mindedness and limited understanding of respect for diversity might be because China was “not a liberal democracy”, whereas Canada expected its citizens to “uphold a certain standard of tolerance of other people, other cultures, [and] other ideas”. He said that it might also be rooted in their relatively limited social interactions with people from other backgrounds. To quote him:

Well, first of all, I would think that their [SCS students’] understanding of a word is more narrow [compared to local students in Ontario]. Simply because in Toronto, I wouldn’t say all of Canada, I’m saying Toronto where I am from, in Toronto, the whole world is there, so whereas as here, when you say Taliban, the students would laugh and think a man with a hat. But in Canada, Taliban, and the student, right here, whose uncle was killed by American forces in Afghanistan. So it’s a whole different world. Here, a black person is just someone who is different. A white person is someone who comes to school to teach English, so their interaction with the world is still very limited.

This comment echoes the Class C student Jean-Qin’s hope that her participation in the imagined community could be expanded beyond interaction with a limited number of Canadian teachers (See 7.5 in Chapter 7). For Mr. Gosnell, he still thought critical literacy would be of help. He imagined that if his students at the Career Education would bring up talks such as anti-Japanese, anti-Taiwan, or anti-Xinjiang, he would like to use

the concept of “respect” and ask students to debate how to be more open-minded. Being an avid explorer of cultural differences between the Chinese and Canadians, Mr. Gosnell seemed to be aware of his own Western-centric values. He said that Canadians’ top values were social justice and personal freedom whereas Chinese were less political and more focused on harmony and peace. From the findings from Chinese teachers’ interviews and class observations, “harmony” was a contaminated term for SCS students. But Mr. Gosnell did not see a problem with this traditional Chinese value which he believed could have helped enhance students’ self-perfection and self-cultivation. He said, “The kids back home are more rebellious. [Here] we have one tough kid in Senior Three [Grade 12], but on the whole, the kids are really pretty innocent angels, you know, by Western standards”.

Ms. Allen was new to SCS, but she expressed her feeling of the tensions and conflicts between the Chinese and Canadian sides at SCS. But she did appreciate school administrators’ and educators’ efforts to find ways to compromise, balance, and integrate the strengths from both sides. Mr. Gosnell suggested that Canadian educators need to unlearn their privileges. To quote him,

For foreigners in China, they get privileged treatment. So I would say that’s the case definitely, like, a lot of the conflict between the foreigners and the Chinese. Like the foreigners need to change their mindset. Like you are complaining about your \$30,000 dollar a year salary when you make more money in a month than a whole bunch of workers here on campus earn.

He recommended Canadian teachers get as much exposure to Chinese cultures as possible and initiate interaction with the local Chinese. He also suggested a two-way learning model be integrated at transnational education classrooms:

I’m able to do a little bit, um, it’s to integrate their own experience. So for example, to do a comparative essay with the Chinese work on literature and the English work on literature. In Canada they would love that. They’ll think that’s great. I’ll love that too. So for example, if we are going to do something about Canada, also do something about China, do a comparison, and that’s great learning to compare and contrast. So I think, in terms of integrating the curriculum, one way to do is in the classroom, and for the Canadian teachers to modify their curriculum, and allow the Chinese students to teach us. Not just to learn about Canada, we are in China. There are so many amazing things about China, beautiful things about China that we can learn about.

Mr. Wilson, Mr. Gosnell, and Ms. Wyatt agreed that there should be administrative efforts at integrated Sino-Canada programs to interact and harness the strengths of different educational philosophies and teaching approaches.

### 6.3.4 Encountering Education as Business

Canadian teachers were concerned with the problems of configuring education as a business. Ms. Wyatt and Ms. Allen said she preferred to be paid to come to school early enough to familiarize themselves with school, with students, and plan ahead. Yet they were only asked to come to school days earlier before they went into the class. Given the high turnover rate at the school, there was a breakdown of communication in the creation and implementation of the courses. Ms. Wyatt could not get the regular and additional ESL help for her Class A students, not even an in-class translator.

One Canadian teacher participant<sup>55</sup> questioned SCS's profit-driven move to pass ESL students through intensive English summer classes. These students failed Canadian teachers' ESL teachers' classes but suspiciously passed these summer classes that were taught by teachers hired through other channels. Mr. Gosnell felt that the school's market was largely for low academically-achieving students whose parents wanted a short cut for their children to go abroad. Through his conversations with parents in the parent-teacher's interviews, he confirmed SCS's Chinese policy makers' statements: parents did play a role in what to teach and even how to pass the students. To quote Mr. Gosnell,

So like in parent-teacher's interviews, I've had one set of them, but it's always the same thing, it's not really "What my child is learning", "What skills are they taking". It's more about "Are they going to pass the IELTS test?", "Which schools should they go to overseas?" So part of it is Chinese mentalities I think, but part of it is also, maybe, maybe parents have been very successful, so they think education is commodity, so you can sort of get what you want. There is probably, I imagine, there is a pressure on the school to pass students.

In terms of the neoliberal trend of education, Mr. Gosnell contended that there were definitely schools like SCS that were profit-oriented, but it was also driven by parents' understanding that education should be traded as a commodity. Mr. Gosnell also

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<sup>55</sup> I do not specify the participant's name here to make sure he/she is not traceable.

commented on parents' explicit impact upon students' future career choices: most parents "would want them to study business". He said, "In the West, the idea is pursue your dreams", which was pretty much what he had been doing in his Career Education class. By contrast, "In China, it's 'secure your future'"---Mr. Wilson shared the same observation. He said, "Every student you asked 'What are you going to do when you graduate here?'; [the answer] was 'business'; 'I want to be a CEO.' 'Of what?' I asked them, you know; [I got] 'I haven't thought about that.'" Both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Gosnell agreed that the business culture was prevalent among students and parents.

In the meantime, for Mr. Gosnell, it was the neoliberal trend of education in China that nurtured the advent of private schools that used Canadian curricula. Cherishing his "Canadian philosophy", Mr. Wilson was concerned about selling dual-diplomas as a commodity. He said,

I don't know how this program is sold. But my impression is that coming to this program, you are going to be ok, you are going to go to overseas institutions, by the end of the day, they have a year and a half of English instruction. Well, you've learned English as a second language, is that going to give you enough language ability, you know, to go over there and be ok? I don't think so. Yeah, I don't think so. I think my personal feeling is we are setting these people up for some sad failures for a lot of them.

Mr. Wilson, Ms. Wyatt, and Mr. Gosnell concurred, to turn the hybrid education into benefits for the students, one way out was to have a bigger picture and move education away from commodification. As Mr. Gosnell noted, the global trend and the trend back home in Canada at the tertiary education level to free up education for market-oriented competition were more hidden. These trends actually worked together with the neoliberal trend in China to push for-profit offshore programs to grow. What is also hidden is the "Sink-or-Swim" concept prevailing in the Canadian tertiary education. As all the Canadian teacher participants shared, their major concern with this hybrid education program was that most students might not be able to survive the English-only education environment at Canadian colleges and universities.



## 6.4 Preparation for International English Tests: Where Two Tracks Intersected

To prepare students for the IELTS test and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test, SCS created three test preparation courses: Mr. Abrams's English Writing, Ms. Jiang's English Vocabulary, and another Chinese English teacher's English Reading. SCS gave the three teachers autonomy to discover the most effective test preparation methods.

There was no specific test preparation curriculum that these teachers could follow. Being assigned to the same office, they collectively decided which books to use and what to teach based on students' English levels. Ms. Jiang's class was focused on English vocabulary and grammar. The following vignette offers a glimpse of Ms. Jiang's regular class.

### Vignette 6.4.1: Ms. Jiang's Class: IELTS Vocabulary on Sports Activities

Today is the first day that students come back for their regular classes after the exciting Sports Meeting. Ms. Jiang is the class advisor of Class C. She is very happy about Class C's achievement in the Sports Meeting and decides to connect it with today's teaching. "We won No. 1 in the Sports Meeting. I am very proud of you!" Students look excited. Ms. Jiang goes on, "Besides, you all know, China will soon host the 2010 Asian Games. Therefore, it is better we familiarize ourselves with some common vocabulary of sports activities". As usual, after Ms. Jiang disseminates the handouts of bilingual vocabulary lists (See Figure 17), she starts to go through the list by asking questions like "How to say 'She Jian (射箭: archery)' in English?" Almost all the students follow attentively with the corresponding English words. Whenever students have difficulties with pronunciation, Ms. Jiang provides help. Ms. Jiang often tries to incorporate writing, listening, and oral activities in her vocabulary and grammar class in order to hone students' integral English skills. Today, she decides to ask students to work in groups and create improvisational oral stories based on her advanced IELTS vocabulary list: "apartment, reputation, garbage, sports facility, antique, colleges, jade, undergraduate, Marathon, assurance".

I was surprised to see that most Class C students were attentive in Ms. Jiang's class even when she was employing the very traditional "grammar translation method" and focusing on reading-aloud, memorization of vocabulary, grammatical rules, translation of sentences and texts, and written exercises such as filling blanks and multiple choices (Brown, 2007, p. 18). When asked about why most students stayed motivated under such a traditional method, Ms. Jiang laughed and said that these students, especially those from elite classes, were very utilitarian. They were willing to learn anything that could help them achieve their goal of studying abroad.

常见的体育运动			
archery	射箭	badminton	羽毛球
baseball	棒球	basketball	篮球
boxing	拳击	bungee jumping	蹦极
canoeing	独木舟	throwing the discus	掷铁饼
equestrian	马术	fence-play/swordplay	击剑
fishing	钓鱼	football	美式橄榄球
handball	手球	high jump	跳高
hockey	曲棍球	hurdles	跨栏
hiking	远足	javelin	铁饼
jogging	慢跑	ice hockey	冰球
judo	柔道	long jump	跳远
marathon	马拉松	marble	弹球
Martial art / Kung fu	武术	pole vault	撑杆跳
walking	竞走	boat rowing	划船
sailing	帆船	shooting	射击
shot put	推铅球	snooker	斯诺克
soccer	足球	softball	垒球
squash	壁球	surfing	冲浪
table Tennis	乒乓球	tae kwon do	跆拳道
Tai Chi	太极拳	volleyball	排球
water polo	水球	water-skiing	滑水
weightlifting	举重	wrestling	摔跤
yoga	瑜伽	swimming	游泳
breast stroke	蛙泳	freestyle	自由泳
butterfly	蝶泳	backstroke	仰泳



**Figure 17: Ms. Jiang's IELTS Vocabulary List on Sports Activities.**

I was invited to Ms. Jiang's open lesson where she taught English Language Arts to Grade 10 students. In that class, she incorporated multimedia such as PowerPoint slides about natural disasters and a movie clip about the Tangshan Earthquake in 1976. She asked the students to do oral presentations based on their collective research prior to the open lesson. She also assigned 15 minutes for students to do mock interviews with "earthquake survivors". When asked about why progressive approaches were more evident in her open lesson than in her regular IELTS classes, Ms. Jiang said, she was teaching three different English courses in one semester, which took her an enormous

amount of time for preparation. Besides, as the class advisor, she had to take care of her daily administrative and consultative work. She was aware that students found multimedia resources engaging, but her work load had left limited time and space for her to prepare every class like the open lesson. Moreover, given the considerable amount of advanced vocabulary and grammatical knowledge that were involved in the IELTS test, Ms. Jiang said, these Grade 11 ESL students had a lot to learn within a short period of time. This was the first time Ms. Jiang instructed IELTS preparation classes. She did not receive any relevant training beforehand. Nor had she ever taken the test. She said, basically she just learned the ropes while she taught and probed which approaches might work better for the students, be it traditional approaches or more progressive Western styles.

Ms. Jiang spent four sessions reviewing attributive clauses. She knew students might have found it dry, but they knew they needed the review because this was where most of them made mistakes in their oral and writing IELTS tasks. When observing Ms. Jiang's class on attributive clauses, I found some students struggling with grammatical concepts such as relative pronouns and relative adverbs because Mandarin did not have such grammatical features. Ms. Jiang explained them to the students based on the concepts of pronouns and adverbs in Mandarin grammar and students eventually got it. It is worth noting, as a Chinese, Ms. Jiang was the only English teacher participant who had the privilege to switch between L1 and L2 in instruction and to use translation as oral and written exercises. Ms. Jiang shared that the students that she talked to did find instruction in both languages and translation exercises helpful.

Ms. Jiang also realized that once she incorporated oral activities, such as group storytelling and IELTS oral exercises, students became more engaged. They were eager to present their stories. Through these presentations, they began to incorporate newly acquired vocabulary and grammatical knowledge into their oral presentations. The following were Joe-Hui's and Steve-Jian's oral narratives of one IELTS task "the best present/gift you have received":

Joe-Hui: The best gift I have received is a cell phone, which is from my mom. Though it is not very expensive, but [delete "but"] it is useful for me. Why it is

the best gift? Because the cell phone [is] not only useful, but also it represents my mom's love.

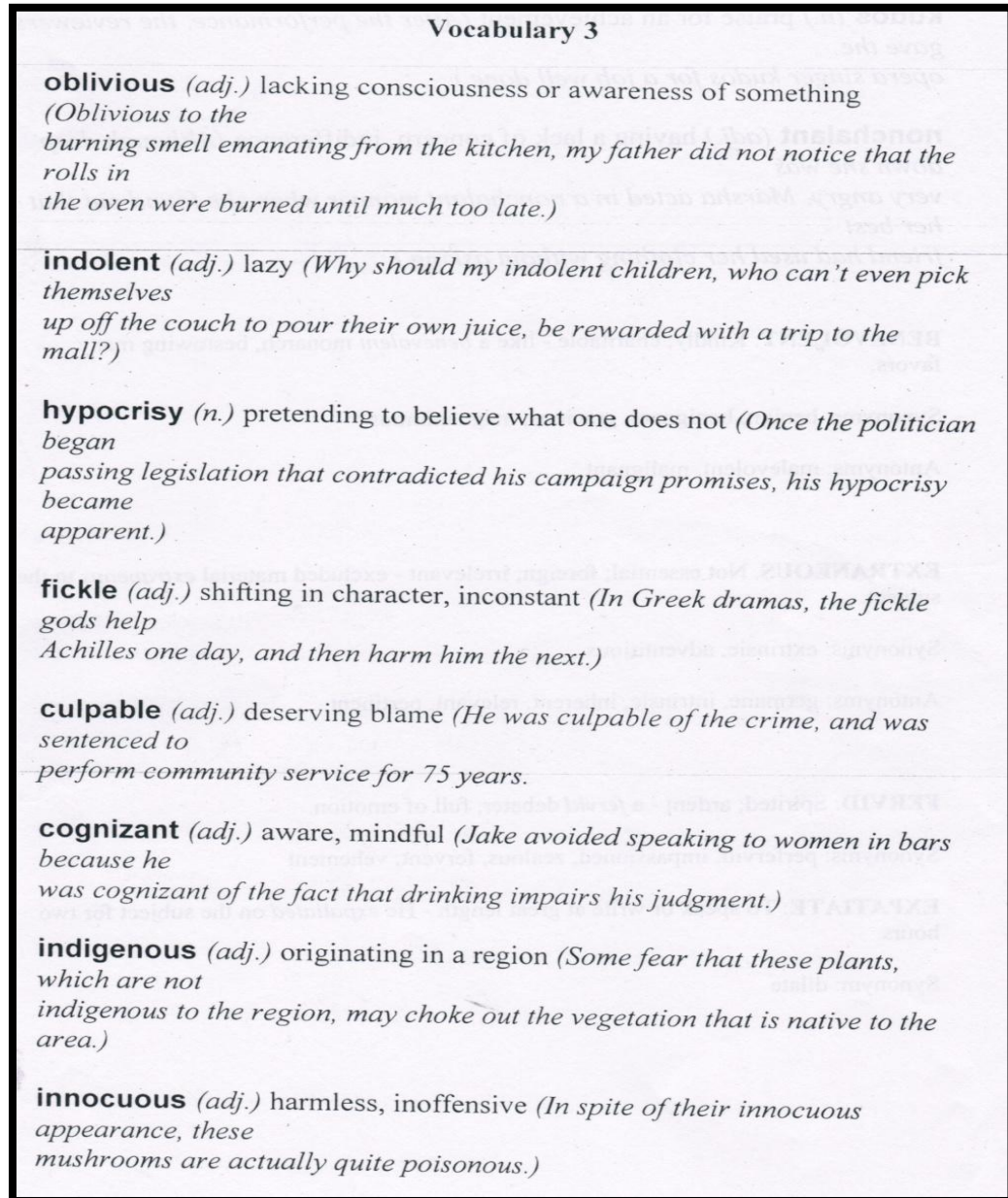
Steve-Jian: I am the only man in this group, so they pick me to talk. My best gift is a very big toy tank. It was from my father. He gave it to me on my twentieth's birthday (other students laugh). Oh, twelve. My father is always busy. He is always outside do [doing] his business. He couldn't stay at home. I haven't received any gift from him until my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. It is as big as a box. It has a controller to control the tank. Although it is broken now, but [delete "but"] I put it on my desk because it is important to me.

As did the Chinese Politics teacher Ms. Gu, Ms. Jiang also used the on-the-spot assessment to evaluate students' oral presentations. Ms. Jiang timed students' talks as required by the IELTS oral tests. After they finished their talks, she commented on the structures of their talks and ensured them that there were several WH-questions they needed to cover in their talks to get higher marks. She also corrected students' grammatical mistakes such as verb tenses and the "(al)though...but" structure. Based on my observation, students seemed to enjoy speaking activities as such. There were quite a few funny students like Steve-Jian who often tried to amuse their peers with witty talks and hilarious jokes. In a later interview with Alice-Mei, she said that there was a session when Ms. Jiang asked them to talk about their favourite photos. Alice-Mei prepared a moving story about her favourite photo and she was very eager to share. But there were too many students raising their hands and she expressed disappointment as she did not get the chance to talk.

As a Chinese teacher of English, Ms. Jiang commended SCS's incorporation of the East and the West in its integrated curriculum. As the class advisor of Class C, she talked to students often and found that they were happy with their interaction with the Canadian teachers and their Canadian ways of teaching at SCS. However, when it came to Chinese and Canadian teacher interaction, Ms. Jiang felt that not too much was happening. Because of their IELTS classes in this semester, she talked to Mr. Abrams a lot and found this form of collective planning very helpful.

This was Mr. Abrams's first year at SCS. He was quite determined to be a good and responsible teacher. Last year's pass rate of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test at SCS was 15%. He raised the bar for himself and hoped that he could have 30%

students passing the test this time based on students' current progress. Mr. Abrams persisted in encouraging students to write journals, create stories out of his advanced IELTS vocabulary lists (See Figure 18 for a sample list), and write five-paragraph IELTS essays and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test news stories.



**Figure 18: A Sample of Mr. Abrams's Advanced IELTS Vocabulary List.**

I assumed that the IELTS words in the list might look daunting for Grade 11 ESL students. But based on student interviews, most Class C students applauded the exercise and the opportunity to be creative writers (See Figure 36 in Chapter 7 for a student's writing sample).

Since Mr. Abrams was teaching English writing to five classes of Grade 11, he reviewed around 130 students' various types of writing per week and corrected grammar mistakes in every assignment. Normally he assigned 10 minutes in his writing class to highlight the most common mistakes in students' writings, for example:

Error Sentence 1: If somebody is shrewd, he will do something practice, many people will appreciate him because he has his own strengths. (Mr. Abrams's highlighted correction: Students should be aware of where to use periods.)

Error Sentence 2: There are many famous car company in this country. Such as Benz, BMW, Maybach, and so on. (Mr. Abrams's highlighted correction: Students should be aware of where to use commas and the inflections of verbs and nouns.)

The workload of reviewing hundreds of ESL students' writings per week was enormous, but Mr. Abrams said that he was getting used to it. However, he admitted that it was a bit frustrating to see the same mistakes coming back again and again in students' essays, such as the verb-noun agreements and use of punctuation marks. Mr. Abrams felt that most students thought in Chinese first before they put English words down. For him, the mistakes were caused by the features of students' L1s. In Mandarin there are no inflections of verbs and only a few cases of inflections of nouns, which is different from English, for instance, the "There be...company/companies" structure in Error Sentence 2. For Mr. Abrams, L1 features and habits formed in students' L1s might potentially be obstacles when they learned an L2. Disagreeing with Mr. Abrams, I think these bilingual adolescents had a wealth of tacit metalinguistic knowledge, which, according to Bialystok (2001), refers to "the explicit representation of abstract aspects of linguistic structure that become accessible through knowledge of a particular language" (p. 124). Well harnessed, these Chinese students' metalinguistic and metacognitive knowledge in Mandarin can be transferred to an L2 (Cummins, 2005). Drawing on prior studies on L1 and L2 transfer between similar languages (e.g., Spanish and English), Cummins (2005) contends that both linguistic and conceptual elements can be transferred from L1 to L2

for similar languages. For dissimilar languages, primarily it is the conceptual elements (e.g., the concept of photosynthesis) that are transferred. Cummins (2005) does not exclude the possibility of the following transfers between dissimilar languages like Chinese and English. As an ESL learner myself, I see how I have benefited from other forms of transfers that Cummins (2005) identifies: “transfer of metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies” (e.g., learning strategies such as mnemonic devices, vocabulary acquisition strategies), “transfer of pragmatic aspects of language use” (e.g., strategies to use paralinguistic features like gestures to aid communication), and “transfer of phonological awareness” (i.e., the knowledge that words consist of distinct sounds) (p. 5). Specifically for the students at SCS, there was no obvious ESL scaffolding that could guide them to reflect upon the wealth of the latent metalinguistic knowledge they already had. Nor was there salient interaction between the Chinese side and Ontario side of the program to accentuate an active teaching of “transfer across languages” in forms of contrastive linguistics (Cummins, 2005, p. 8). When the two sides run like parallel lines, students might not be able to receive sufficient scaffolding in this regard. As Cummins (2005) argues, the primary reason that such active teaching has not been in application in many bilingual and immersion programs is that “it is seen as axiomatic that each language be kept rigidly separate from the other(s)” (p. 8) and any application of L1(s) is seen as “a regression to the grammar-translation method” (p. 9). Like all the other Canadian teacher participants, Mr. Abrams also agreed that it would be preferable if there were more interactions of both sides at SCS. He said,

But in the sense that the school does have different cultures .... I think there should be activities that allow the students to have more of a world view. I mean, the China diploma, the Canada diploma, and so they focus on these two sides, but ... I think that anything can improve, the communication could make it probably better.

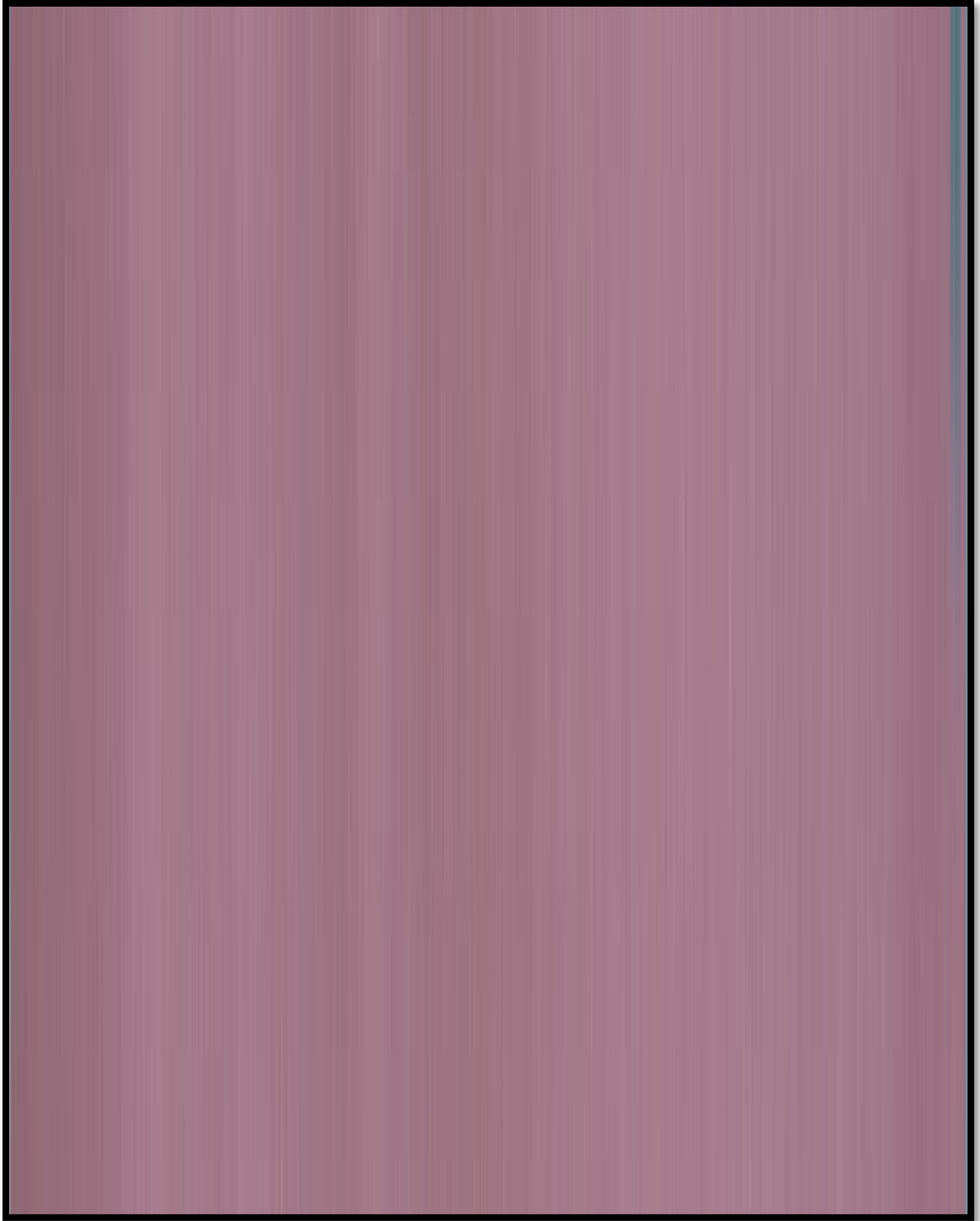
As did Ms. Wyatt, Mr. Abrams also realized that it could be beneficial to provide some on-the-spot scaffolding.

Mr. Abrams reiterated the conventions of five-paragraph writing for the IELTS test and those for the news story writing for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test, for example, the newsworthiness of the stories and news articles’ emphasis on facts instead



of authors' opinions. After he saw the students' continuous use of "I" and "my" in their news stories, Mr. Abrams decided to change his approach. He slowed down his pace, paired students up, and asked them to collectively work on poster projects of news stories. The original Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test news stories only gave students a stimulus picture and a headline. Students are expected to create news stories from there. But the stimulus picture might disadvantage students who are not proficient at reading visual texts or who do not know about certain topics. The news story writing in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test expects students to be more familiar with the genre traits of news reportage. However, not allowing students to air their own opinions might also be restricting the space for students' meaning making. Yarger (1996) challenges the authentic purposes for writing a story based on a stimulus picture. For Yarger, the motivation of not using spontaneous writing tasks may be because they introduce greater subjectivity and complexity into the scoring procedure, particularly in the hands of unskilled examiners. Noticing students' anxiety and disengagement, Mr. Abrams decided to tweak the original Ontario Secondary School Literacy news story writing to better engage his students. He gave students the autonomy to discuss and write about news story topics of their own choosing with the hope that "two minds were better than one" and that students could get the detailed requirements of news stories collectively. As groups, students selected topics and wrote headlines, bylines, and leads for one session. They wrote the body of news stories by answering five WH-questions and included final details for another two sessions. And then they orally presented their posters in the last session (See Figure 19 for a sample poster by Tina-Qin's group). When asked about the rationale for incorporating group work and oral presentation in the test-oriented writing class, Mr. Abrams responded, "I am not the type of a teacher that teaches for a test". He was aware that test-oriented writing tasks were dry and structure-based, but he preferred to look at his class and decide what was more important for his students and how to expand the learning opportunities for them. For him, collaborative learning was a key skill SCS students needed anyway for their future overseas study. He also hoped that idea exchanges through brainstorming and debating might offer more food for students' writing.





**Figure 19: A Sample of Students' Group Work of News Story Posters for Mr. Abrams's Class.**

Like other groups, Tina-Qin and her partner used cell phones to access information on the Internet while they worked on the poster project. I questioned why they used digital technologies cautiously. Then students told me that the school did not allow Grade 10 and Grade 11 students to use digital technologies at school, such as cell phones and laptops.

The Canadian courses that I observed such as ENG2D, ESL, Math Language, and Career Education were not directly bounded by standardized language tests at the local and global levels. The teacher participants thus commended the autonomy they had to expand their assessment practices. The portfolio assessment that Mr. Gosnell and Mr. Wilson incorporated into their Career Education and ENG2D classes encouraged students' meaning making in various modes. By contrast, Ms. Jiang's and Mr. Abrams's test-oriented classes had no curriculum to follow. But their teaching practices and students' literacy practices were fairly bounded by the expectations of the standardized English tests.

## 6.5 Summary

In this chapter, the presentation of data displays an expanded vision of teachers who confronted the constraints from the push-and-pull forces of localization and globalization. To engage students, almost all the Chinese and Canadian teacher participants incorporated multiple modes of literacy in their classes. Literacy seemed to be more broadly defined within the classrooms. But print-based assessment in Mandarin and the standardized English tests were still potent in shaping teachers' teaching practices and students' literacy practices. In the next chapter, I focus on students' lived curriculum and the ensuing implications for their identity formation in this globalized schooling context.

## Chapter 7

### 7 Lived Curriculum: A Focus on Students' Emic Perspectives

To answer the research question about students' lived curriculum and their identity formation, in this chapter I focus on data that reflect students' emic perspectives (i.e., participant's/insider's perspectives [e.g., Pike, 1954]). The finding in this respect is based on my analysis of student interviews and a micro-analysis of the multimodal artifacts of students' lived experience at SCS. The presentation of students' emic perspectives is enriched with ethnographic data from class observation and students' assignments<sup>56</sup> in Mandarin and English. In the following, I present snapshots of seven student participants. Among them, Joe-Hui, Tina-Qin, Steve-Jian, Jean-Qin, and Coco-Ling were from the elite Class C where students were academic high achievers. Dave-Yue was from Class B---a class of students understood by the context to have mid-range academic achievement. Rich-Zhi and Mark-Ji were from Class A---a group of students streamed together by SCS because of their low English proficiency levels but strengths in science. In this chapter, except for interview excerpts marked as "original", others were translated from Mandarin.

#### 7.1 Snapshot #1: Joe-Hui

Joe-Hui quite vividly portrayed himself in his multimodal artifact (Figure 20<sup>57</sup>). He hoped that adding a self-portrait might help change the dullness of the written texts.

The time when we met, it was Joe-Hui's fourth month at SCS after he transferred from a public high school. When asked about the reason for the transfer, he said that given his academic levels, he might not be competitive enough in Gaokao (the national university entrance examinations) to get into top Chinese universities. To quote him:

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<sup>56</sup> The assignments that students shared are dominantly for English courses. The Mandarin samples that I collected were mostly from their mid-term exams. Rich-Zhi and Mark-Ji from Class A did not share any assignment.

<sup>57</sup> For blurry pictures, I type up the texts.

I feel that if I stay in [public] high school in China and write Gaokao, it does not seem possible for me get into a top [Chinese] university. If that is the case, the [university] degree will not give me too much competitive advantage when I graduate from university. Nowadays, there are too many university graduates.

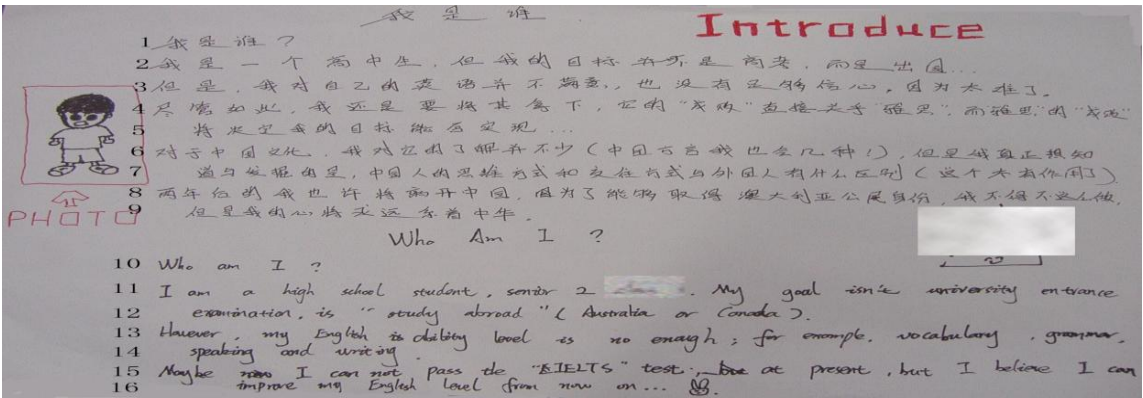
After carefully considering the diploma inflation<sup>58</sup> in China, Joe-Hui chose SCS as it prepared students for studying abroad instead of Gaokao. He said,

So I think if I study abroad, I can stay and work there after graduation. Even if I cannot find a job there, at least if I learn English well, one more language will make it easier for me to get a job [in China's job market].

Joe-Hui was aware that an additional foreign language (i.e., English) and an overseas university degree could add to his competitive advantage.

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<sup>58</sup> Diploma inflation describes a situation in China where a plethora of educational credentials are issued, yet their ubiquity causes them to carry little prestige in the job market (China Daily, n.d.; Fong, 2004).

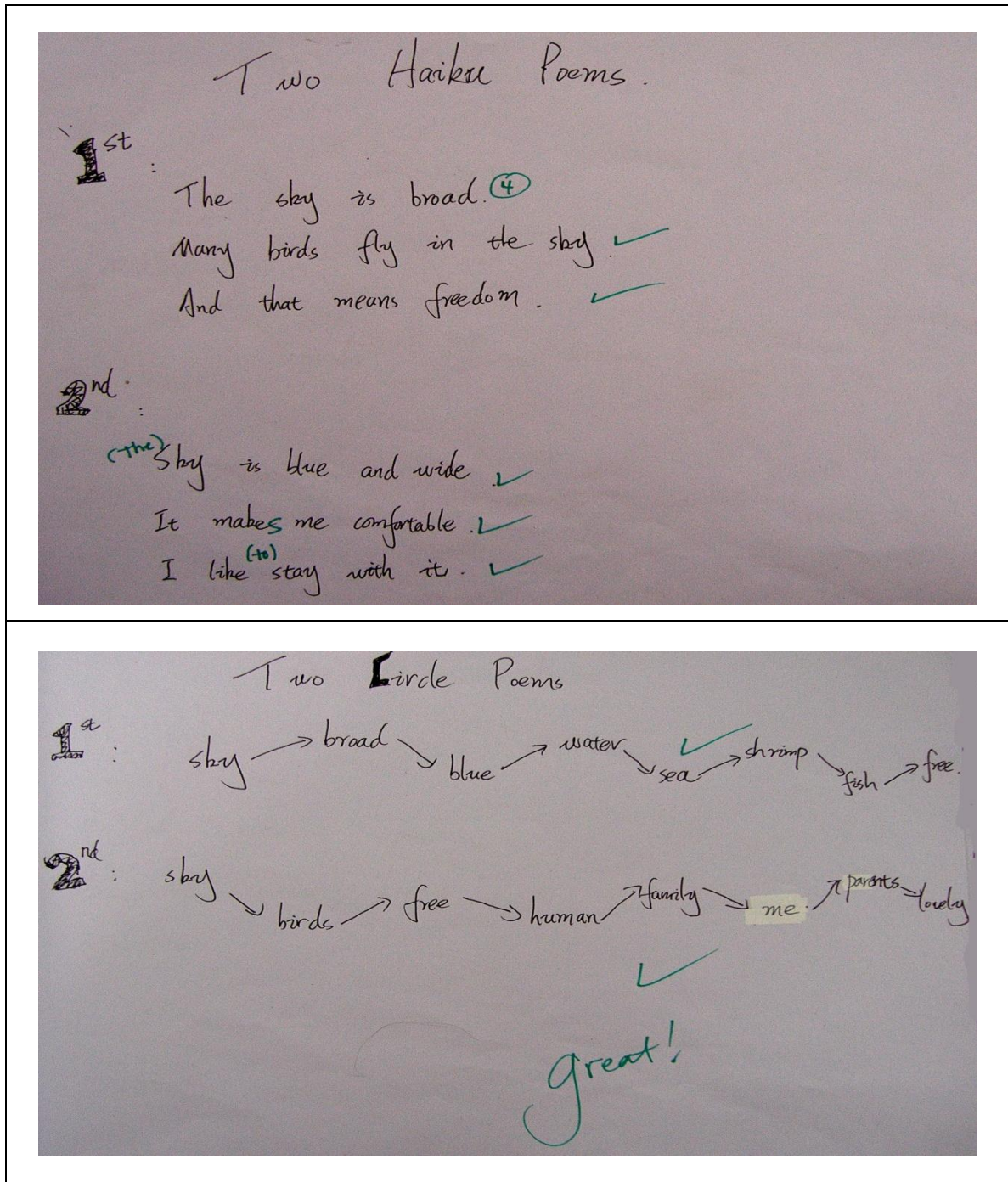
	
<b>Transcription</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">我是谁</p> <p>1 我是谁? 2 我是一个高中生, 但我的目标并不是高考, 而是出国..... 3 但是, 我对自己的英语并不满意, 也没有足够信心, 因为太难了。 4 机关如此, 我还是要将其拿下, 它的“成败”直接关乎“雅思”, 而“雅思”的成败 5 将决定我的目标能否实现..... 6 对于中国文化, 我对它的了解并不少(中国方言我也会几种!), 但是我真正想知 7 道与发掘的是, 中国人的思维方式和交往方式与外国人有什么区别(这个太有作用了)。 8 两年后的我也许将离开中国, 为了能够取得澳大利亚公民身份, 我不得不这么做。 9 但是我的心将永远系着中华。</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Who Am I?</p> <p>10 Who am I? 11 I am a high school student, senior 2 Class C. My goal isn't university entrance 12 examination, [; it] is "study abroad" (Australia or Canada). 13 However, my English ability level is no [not]<sup>59</sup> enough; for example, vocabulary, grammar, 14 speaking and writing. 15 Maybe now I can not pass the "IELTS" test at present, but I believe I can 16 improve my English level from now on....</p>
<b>Description</b>	<p><b>Image:</b> Self-portrait</p> <p><b>Rows 2:</b> Imagined community: studying abroad (See also Rows 11-12 in English).</p> <p><b>Rows 3-5:</b> Lived curriculum--Challenges in English and IELTS: "However, I am not satisfied with my English. Neither do I have confidence in it because it is too hard for me. Nevertheless, I will work hard to improve it. My English levels determine my success in IELTS. My success in IELTS further determines whether my goal will be realized."</p> <p><b>Rows 6:</b> Identity: knowledge about Chinese cultures and several Chinese dialects: "With regard to Chinese culture, I have a fairly good understanding of it. (I also know quite a few Chinese dialects!)"</p> <p><b>Rows 6-7:</b> Identity: eagerness to learn cultural differences: "What I really want to explore is the differences between Chinese and Western ways of thinking and communicative approaches. (This is very useful)."</p> <p><b>Rows 8-9:</b> Identity &amp; imagined community: "Maybe I'll leave China in two years. In order to get an Australian citizenship, I will have to do so. But my heart will be always attached to China."</p>

**Figure 20: Joe-Hui: "Who Am I?"**

<sup>59</sup> In this chapter, I correct errors in students' multimodal artefacts and their assignments in square brackets. For unclear meanings, I put a question mark in the brackets. I also removed students' names from the selected assignments and multimodal artifacts.

Different writing systems and conventions in English and Mandarin texts showcase how Joe-Hui conceptualized meanings differently in different languages. In Joe-Hui's artifact, there are no handwritten bands or boxes. Most Chinese characters are picto-phonetic [Ding, 2010], while English is basically alphabetic. Differences in these two semiotic systems automatically serve as framing devices in Joe-Hui's artifact. The "logographic" Chinese writing is characteristic of different combinations of strokes and the spatial framing of individual strokes and characters (Kenner, 2004, p. 36). Different from the English script, there is literally no space between the Chinese characters. As you can see in Joe-Hui's and Tina-Qin's (See Figure 23) Mandarin scripts, the space to construct individual Chinese characters can be "visualised as an empty square" (Kenner, 2004, p. 92). Besides, in Mandarin, there are no inflections of verbs. For example, in Mandarin "是" (shi) means "to be" in English. In Joe-Hui's artifact, he said "我~~是~~谁? 我~~是~~一个高中生, 但我的目标并不~~是~~高考, 而~~是~~出国". In English, he writes, "Who *am* I? I *am* a high school student, senior 2 class C. My goal *isn't* university entrance examination, [it] *is* 'study abroad' (Australia or Canada)" (Rows 11-12). The verbs "是" ("to be") do not inflect from "am" to "is" as in English, even though the subjects change from "我" ("I") to "目标" ("goal"). There is little to no inflection for cases in Joe-Hui's Mandarin text. For instance, the difference between the nominative and the genitive in Chinese is only an addition of "的", like "我" ("I") and "我的" ("my") and "中国人" ("Chinese people") and "中国人的" ("Chinese people's").

Joe-Hui's self introduction in English is not as informative as his Chinese narrative. This reflects his lack of comfort in sophisticated meaning making in English, as he made explicit in the artifact. In the interview, he also shared that due to the language barriers, it often took him longer to comprehend and respond to what the Canadian teachers said, even though the content they taught was less difficult than that of the Chinese subjects. Therefore, when Joe-Hui wrote English assignments, he tended to choose topics that offered possibilities to convey ideas easily, given his vocabulary and language proficiency level. The following poems exemplify his rationale for selecting certain topics to write in English:



**Figure 21: Joe-Hui's Haiku Poem & Circle Poem Assignments for ENG2D.**

When asked about whether “sky” and “freedom” were poetic themes that he really wanted to communicate, Joe-Hui admitted that “sky” was just a topic he could write readily. He knew the nouns and adjectives so well (e.g., *broad*, *shrimp*, *freely*, and

*comfortable*) that he could easily incorporate them into a poem about “sky”. It had little to do with self-expression of what he felt strongly about.

Bilingual texts in Joe-Hui’s multimodal representations are also indicative of his literacy practices in both languages within the transnational education program. For him, learning Mandarin-related literacies broadened his knowledge. For example, an in-depth understanding of Chinese history and geography could come in handy if he met foreigners who were interested in relevant topics. However, he said, “The subject of Politics was more about morality, ideology, and shaping students’ moral being. I learn things from Politics, but there is little I can apply to my everyday life”. For him, the course of Mandarin Language Arts only served to strengthen his Mandarin language skills.

Joe-Hui was the only participant who spoke more than four languages/dialects (i.e. Teochew/Chaoshan dialect, Mandarin, Cantonese, and English). He was confident with his language abilities, but English was his biggest concern. After leaving a good public school because of the highly competitive Gaokao, Joe-Hui finally realized that another high-stakes international test (i.e., IELTS) could decide his future. He acknowledged the roles of Mandarin-related literacies; however, he highlighted in the interview and his artifact (See Rows 3-5) that English-related Canadian courses were more important for him to achieve his goal of studying abroad. Enhancing English proficiency and being better prepared for the IELTS test were crucial for his future education path.

Joe-Hui’s artifact opened up more communicative space in our interview. Throughout our in-depth talk about SCS students’ bilingual literacies, Joe-Hui constantly depicted the “usefulness” of certain courses. He said, “I am mainly interested in useful things. I only learn things that are valuable for me”. He reflected upon a scenario where a teacher asked students to cut and paste pictures from magazines, write about the images, and do oral presentations. He said, “Copy and paste, I have no interest in it at all. So I cooperated with a friend and let him do copying and pasting. I did all the writing and oral presentation. Eventually, we did a fairly good job”. Some SCS teachers tried to engage students in creative meaning making in various modes and processes. However, these



types of participation in and interaction with literacies are not the focal points of overarching language assessments like IELTS. For Joe-Hui, tasks focusing on conventional communicative modes such as writing and speaking were more useful for his “English development” as defined by international English tests that focused on decontextualized and isolated language skills (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Test takers like Joe-Hui captured this message from the standardized language tests and inclined to give more credit to test-oriented English classes. Joe-Hui specifically commended Mr. Abrams’s English Writing course that was geared toward writing for IELTS and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. He said that he benefited a lot from Mr. Abrams’s teaching about five-paragraph essays, news stories, and ways to develop the body of a composition. The quote below shows that the IELTS test was the actual gauge Joe-Hui used to define what subjects were more “useful”:

Up till now, I still have had no idea of the usefulness of courses like ENG2D and ESL. For example, recently, we learned Shakespearean plays, poetry, and short stories. However, I think if we are university students conducting research in certain [literature-related] areas, we might find them useful. But if we want to apply what we learn to language exams, like the IELTS test, I don’t think they would be helpful. Well, if I want to improve my [communicative] English, you can say they are useful. We are interacting with foreign teachers anyway. So it helps us with our listening comprehension. But courses like Career Education, I don’t think they are useful for me personally.... For me, I can only learn English out of it.

Joe-Hui conceived of language learning as practising discrete modules of speaking, listening, reading, and writing which were privileged by the IELTS test. He overlooked interconnected skills outside of this grid such as the research and inquiry skills in Career Education and critical literacy skills in ENG2D. Besides, Shakespearean plays, poetry, and short stories were genres that the IELTS test does not measure; hence, for Joe-Hui they would not be helpful to improve his IELTS scores.

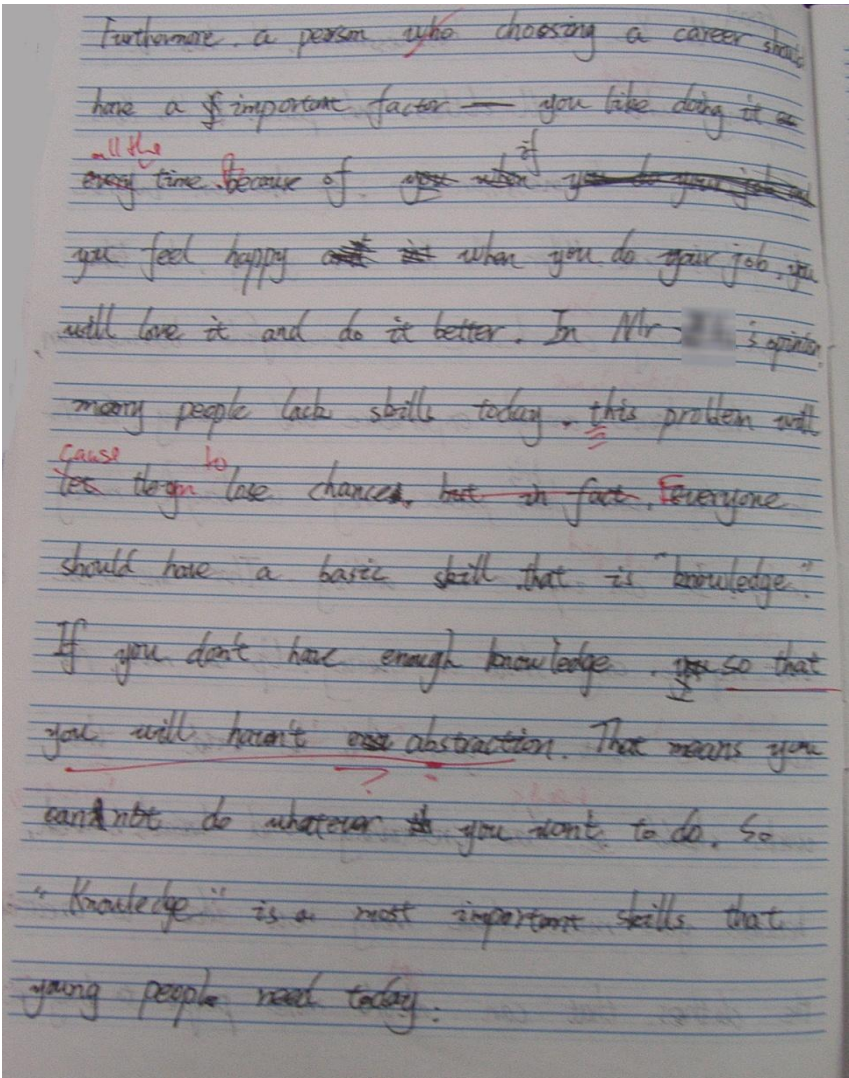
Joe-Hui saw test preparation as crucial, but he did not like courses that put too much emphasis on testing strategies. He said that most students at SCS could hardly understand the IELTS reading texts; so there was no point to just teach test-taking tips, such as skimming, scanning, and looking for key words. Instead, he recommended teachers make more efforts to actually improve students’ reading abilities. Joe-Hui was not a big fan of

the credit recognition policy at SCS which guaranteed students' dual diplomas upon graduation. He said, "If we only take Canadian courses for credit, but still cannot understand English when we go abroad, it would be very awkward. So, I hope [what they teach now] can truly enhance my English".

Joe-Hui seemed to be exceptionally interested in interpersonal communication skills. As is shown in his artifact, he was an eager learner of the differences between Chinese and Western ways of thinking and communication. Outside of school, he was an avid reader of psychology books about interpersonal relationships:

I always feel that Chinese and Westerners think differently. I really want to know more about Westerners' ways of thinking. I know how to communicate with Chinese people because I know what they think and what personalities they have. I know which tone to use when I talk to them. At my old school and at SCS, I read a lot of books on psychology... so I know how to read people's minds or communicate with them. But I know too few foreigners.

Joe-Hui also engaged in literacy practices with interpersonal goals. He often tried to read teachers'/readers' minds and tailor his writing to their likings. In the following excerpt of a Career Education assignment (Figure 22), Joe-Hui interviewed his father Mr. W. as a successful person and asked for career advice.

	Transcription
 <p>Furthermore, a person who choosing a career should have a \$ important factor — you like doing it <sup>all the</sup> every time. because of <del>you when you do your job</del> you feel happy <del>and</del> <del>it</del> when you do your job, you will love it and do it better. In Mr. <del>W.</del>'s opinion many people lack skills today. this problem will <sup>cause</sup> <del>lose</del> <sup>to</sup> <del>lose</del> chances, but in fact, <del>Everyone</del> should have a basic skill that is "knowledge". If you don't have enough knowledge, <del>you so that</del> you will <del>haven't</del> <del>lose</del> abstraction. That means you can't do whatever <del>it</del> you want to do. So "knowledge" is a most important skills that young people need today.</p>	<p>Furthermore, a person who choosing [chooses] a career should have a [an] important factor---you like doing it every time. because of [Because] if you feel happy when you do your job, you will love it and do it better. In Mr. W.'s opinion, many people lack skills today. this [This] problem will let they lose chance, but in fact, everyone should have a basic skill that is "knowledge". If you don't have enough knowledge, so that [delete "so that"] you will haven't abstraction [?]. That means you can not do whatever you want to do. So "knowledge" is a most important skills [skill] that young people need today.</p>

**Figure 22: Excerpt from Joe-Hui's Interview Assignment for Career Education.**

In this assignment, Joe-Hui reported: as a successful businessman in clothing, Mr. W. regarded creativity, knowledge, and passion as important factors for career success. However, he shared in our interview that what his father said was actually more utilitarian than he reported. Instead of general knowledge, Mr. W. actually suggested that English, math, and business were the most important things for Joe-Hui given his aspiration to become an international businessman.

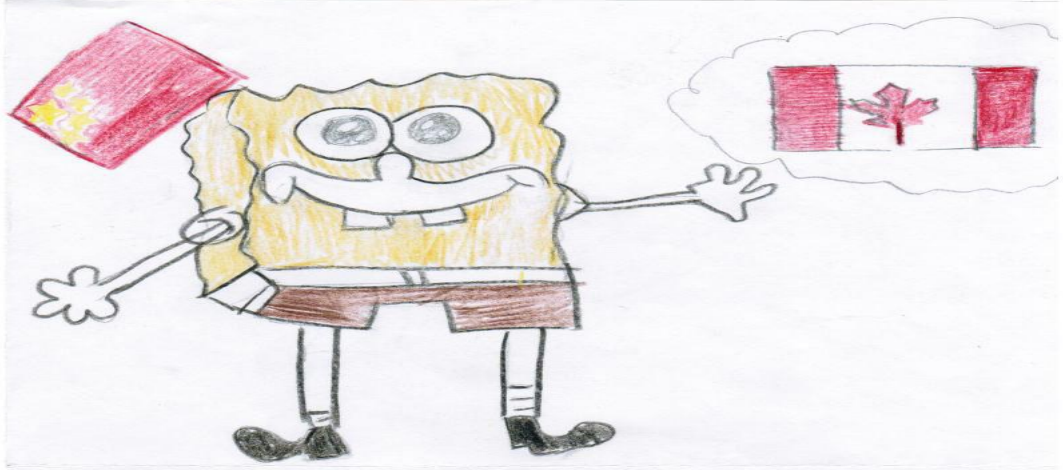
Immigration was Joe-Hui's terminal goal of studying abroad, notwithstanding China as his life-long beloved home. The possibility of global mobility was a key reason that Joe-Hui and his parents chose SCS. For him, the UK and the U.S. universities were too competitive to get in. So he narrowed down his choices to Australia and Canada whose immigration policies favoured international students' desire for global mobility. Talking about differences in mobility and school choices between public school students and students like him, Joe-Hui astutely pointed out that elite school choices and oversea study all required financial resources:

The main thing is financial abilities, because everyone knows studying abroad is better than studying at Chinese universities....If you ask public school students about their life goals, none of them would know....All they know is Gaokao.... However, students in exclusive elite schools are from rich families. They have bigger space for future career development... For students in Class C, they all have their potential.... They have their individual strengths and also the financial resources that can support these strengths. In contrast, for the things students learn in public schools, they will not be able to use them after they walk out of schools.

This quote displayed Joe-Hui's awareness of the role of families' financial support in amplifying elite students' educational choices. Financial resources granted them access to exclusive transnational education resources and enabled them to beat the local system and pursue their interests on a global basis. In contrast, students in the public education system remained local and exposed to the standardized knowledge systems that were tailored for standardized testing regimes.

## 7.2 Snapshot #2: Tina-Qin

The big Sponge Bob in Tina-Qin's artifact (Figure 23) was the first image that caught my attention. When asked about why she used Sponge Bob to represent herself, she said, "My teacher says I am a person who is like a sponge.... I can learn something [things] very quickly. So I put a sponge for me" (original).



1	我是一个在中国学习的学	12	I am a student who is
2	生, 我叫 <del>李婷婷</del> 。作为一个高	13	studying in China now, my
3	中生, 我有一个目标, 我想成	14	name is <del>李婷婷</del> . As a senior
4	为一名高水平的医生。然而,	15	student, I have a goal —
5	我还希望在加拿大学习医学,	16	I want to be a good doctor.
6	尽管要求很高, 机会微乎其	17	However, I hope I can study
7	微。但是我却是一个“不到	18	Medicine in Canada. Although the
8	黄河心不死”的人, 无论有多	19	requirement is very high, I want
9	困难, 我都还是会不断加强自	20	to make it, because I am a
10	己的实力, 为自己的理想而	21	girl who refused to give up
11	奋斗! 这就是我, 坚强又努力!	22	until all hope is gone. I will
		23	prove myself continually for my
		24	ideal. That is me, strong
		25	and hard-working.

Description	<b>Image: Identity and imagined community:</b> Sponge Bob and Canada in the cloud callout.
	<b>Rows 15-17:</b> Identity and imagined membership: to become a doctor and study Medicine in Canada.
	<b>Rows 17-18:</b> Challenge: high academic requirements at Canadian medical programs.
	<b>Rows 20-25:</b> Identity: a strong, hardworking, and persistent girl.

**Figure 23: Tina-Qin's Multimodal Artifact.**

Images in students' artifacts are semiotic resources that are more than just decorations to the written texts. I see Tina-Qin's Sponge Bob, the national flags, and their spatial relations as signs with situated meanings. Tina-Qin drew borders and lines to frame the Mandarin and English texts. The spatial gaps serve as a framing device that has the potential to convey meanings (Kress, 2009). She positioned herself as living in a temporary space between China and Canada. Sponge Bob's different positioning to the Chinese and Canadian flags suggests Tina-Qin's mental distance to these two places. The

little cloud callout that wraps up the Canadian flag indicates that Canada is a space of “to be” instead of “being”.

Tina-Qin was determined to become a doctor in the future, even though she knew the academic requirements at Canadian medical schools were very high. Tina-Qin depicted herself as a hardworking and resilient young woman. She wrote in the Mandarin text: “我却是一个‘不到黄河心不死’的人” (Rows 7-8). “不到黄河心不死” is a famous Chinese proverb which literally means “[someone] does not stop until he/she reaches the Yellow River”. Instead of translating the proverb literally, in the English text box she wrote “I want to make it, because I am a girl who refused to give up until all hope is gone” (Rows 19-22). When creating her artifact, she imagined its viewers to be both Chinese and Canadian. She consciously avoided a literal translation of the proverb with the assumption that the culturally-loaded connotations might hinder the communication between her and the potential Canadian viewers.

When asked why she wanted to become a doctor, she said she wanted to cure her family members who were in poor health. Her Career Education teacher Mr. Gosnell introduced a *Maclean's* magazine to the students. Then she knew that medical schools in Canada were world-renowned. I then asked about the learning opportunities that SCS provided her to achieve this specific goal. She replied,

In SCS, I have many chances to perform myself. But in other schools [public schools], I can't, because [there are] too many people. And teachers sometimes ignore me... In SCS, the teachers always give me chance[s] to talk about something, about myself, or about my life, um, so, the teachers at SCS have given me a lot of chances to let me perform myself (original).

For Tina-Qin, SCS served as a temporary space that facilitated her “becoming” in her dreamed place.

Similar to Joe-Hui, Tina-Qin also used bilingual texts as framing devices. Nonetheless, different from Joe-Hui, Tina-Qin offered an almost exact translation of her Mandarin account. Tina-Qin was a highly motivated language learner who was willing to take every opportunity to hone her English skills. Tina-Qin insisted on being interviewed in English. She highlighted how she enjoyed learning different cultures and various genres of



English literature from the Canadian courses. New spaces and literacy options created at SCS were catalysts for her becoming a Canadian. Tina-Qin’s themed poems (Figure 24) for Mr. Wilson’s ENG2D class showcase her increased confidence in creating new genres. As she said, “In Chinese cultures, teachers wouldn’t ask us to write poems in Chinese. But in Mr Wilson’s class, he asks us to write about it. And maybe he wants us to be a creative person” (original).



**Figure 24: Tina-Qin’s Themed Poems on Meteorology for ENG2D.**

Tina-Qin chose the theme of “meteorology” for her collection of poetry using different figures of speech. For her, it was amazing that a palette of meteorology could inspire a plethora of miraculous ideas. In one of the poems, she wrote:

Here is frozen and  
 Snow-covered world  
 Children is making  
 Snowmen on the road  
 I think they are fools  
 Because it’s very cold

She explained later in a bigger poster that she really liked this free-verse poem; growing up in the South, she had never seen snow. She wrote in the poster, “...my father told me

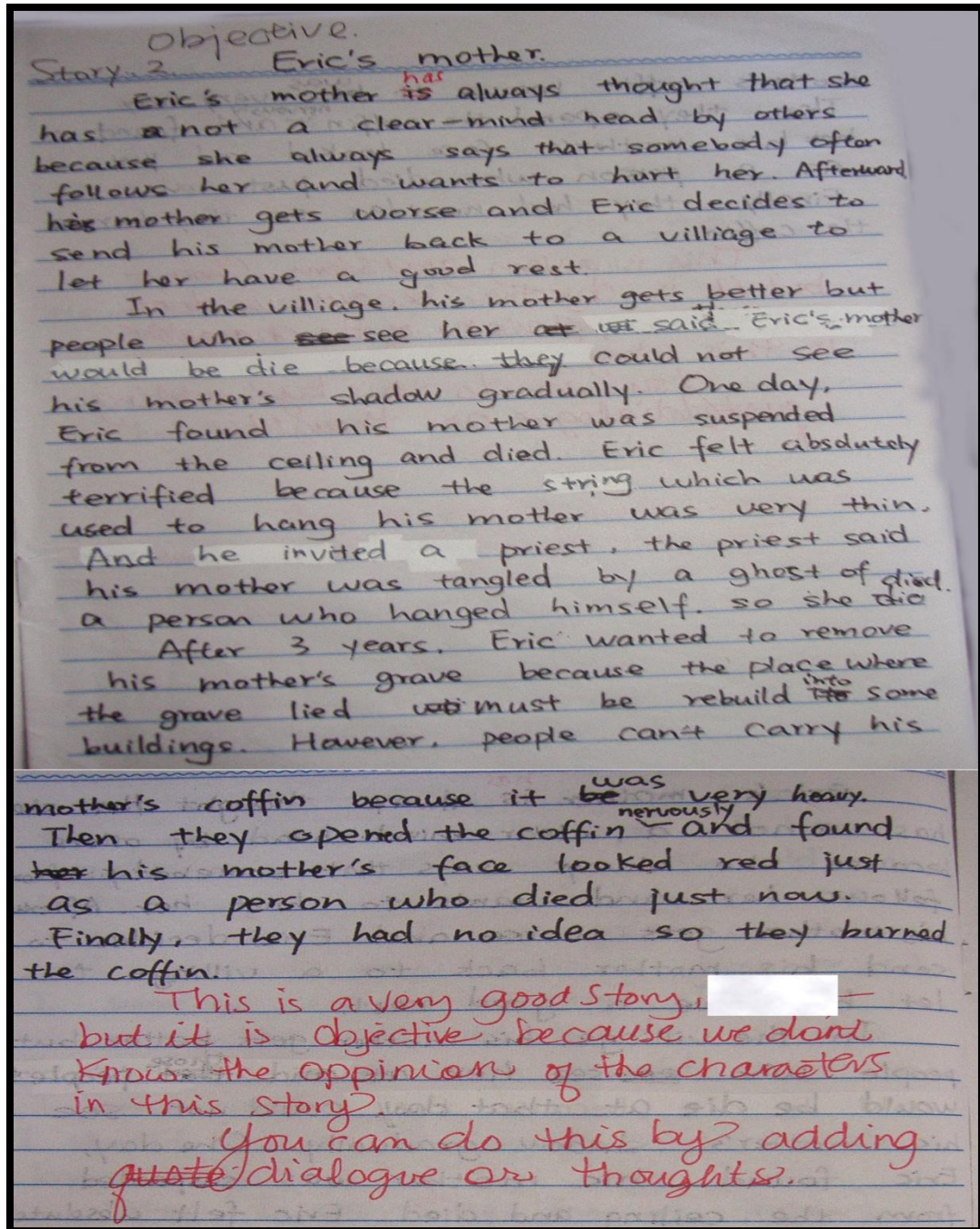
[a] snowy day was very cold. My teachers always said children like making snow man. So I think they are fools. It is too cold for me to stay outside”. Besides her conscious use of other figures of speech in other poems, she unintentionally employed sensory imagery in this poem. For a person who had not seen real snow before, this poem suggests her desire to see and experience snow. Later, she said that was one of the reasons why she chose Canada as her destination for post-secondary education.

Tina-Qin strung her poems together with a rotating pin. She said, for her, rotating items evoked unique feelings. If it were a traditional rectangular poster, given the linear nature of the content, readers might read it through, but might never go back and look at it again. However, she found that rotating artifacts appealed to people and often motivated them to turn the items and experience them as they revolved.

At Mr. Wilson’s ENG2D class, Tina-Qin also enjoyed her new experience of creating stories. After introducing Edgar Allan Poe’s (1843) *The Tell-Tale Heart* and Ray Bradbury’s (1951) *The Veldt*, Mr. Wilson asked students to create their own stories using different perspectives (i.e., objective, first person, omniscient, and omniscient limited). The horror and drama in these two stories were contagious; Tina-Qin added twists to the stories that she entirely mined from her imagination. As Joe-Hui agreed, “You have to spice it up to make your stories more horrible but catchy”.

Her story of objective perspective (Figure 25) is a spooky tale about Eric’s mother. The story started with a supernatural touch as Eric’s mother complained that “somebody often follows her and wants to hurt her”. Then there was a rumor that Eric’s mother was going to die soon since the people around her did not see her shadow. The tale reached its climax when Eric’s mother was seen dead hanging from the ceiling and the priest said she was strangled by a ghost who hanged himself.





**Figure 25: Tina-Qin's Story in Objective Perspective for ENG2D class.**

Tina-Qin was very happy about her newly discovered ability to write creatively. She said, "After his [Mr. Wilson] class, I think I am very creative because I can write some English stories by myself" (original). Overall, she liked that teachers at SCS encouraged her to

invest her strengths in different forms of literacy practices, even though most of the practices were still paper and pen. She specifically stressed that teachers often created platforms for her to hone her skills in public speeches and oral presentations. Besides, she enjoyed the exposure to classic English literature in Western countries and saw such experience as eye-openers. Unlike Joe-Hui who saw a little meaning in learning Shakespeare, Tina-Qin liked watching *Romeo and Juliet* and translating Shakespearean English to contemporary English. Tina-Qin's interest in learning English-related literacy went beyond the cognitive literacy skills such as coding and decoding. She was engaged in interactions with the Canadian teachers and applauded the new set of practices that the Canadian teachers built into their literacy instruction, such as viewing, representing, and dramatizing.

When asked about students' roles in shaping curriculum, Tina-Qin mentioned that so far students' outside-of-school literacy interests had not been included in the curriculum. For example, no teachers at SCS knew that her favourite out-of-school reading was *Twilight*. She said that from time to time SCS offered courses that students were not interested in or they could not understand at all. Tina-Qin argued that the school should at least listen to students' voices and use them as references when they designed the curriculum. But Joe-Hui held a different opinion. Probably being used to a collectivist culture at public schools, Joe-Hui said that it would be selfish to ask the school to tailor curriculum to his individual needs and interests.

Comparing Mandarin literacy-related and English literacy-related classes, Tina-Qin ranked English courses as more important because of her future education choice. Plus, she was more drawn to English classes because of the dynamics of interaction and the freedom to choose what to write in the English assignments. Nevertheless, she liked Politics because Ms. Gu connected what was happening in China with the current affairs around the world. As an avid reader who read lots of love stories, science, and detective fiction after school, she did not feel it necessary to learn Mandarin language arts at SCS. She disliked History because this was a course she had never been good at. However, because of a popular time-travel TV series, she recently developed a new line of out-of-school reading---history books. In our email communications, she "giggled": "Hehehe,

like a miracle, right?”. In cases as such, popular culture yields information about adolescents’ literacy habits and their identities (Hagood, 2002). It also transformed their old habits of mind and activated new literacy interests and new discoveries about their subjectivities.

### 7.3 Snapshot #3: Steve-Jian

After beginning SCS, Steve-Jian became used to his new role as a multimodal “designer” in meaning making, even though most of his Mandarin and English assignments were purely in written forms. Steve-Jian enjoyed the designing, cutting, and pasting components of the assignments required by the Canadian teachers and some Chinese teachers. In Steve-Jian’s artifact (Figure 26), he printed off a castle in *Harry Potter* and pasted it on the upper left corner of regular A4 paper. He said in the interview that this image conveyed messages about his identity and his yearning to study in the UK. He wrote in the artifact: “The first time that I heard about the British glory and its culture, it resonated deeply with me. Knights, castles, gentlemen, ancient cities, and the Colosseum<sup>60</sup> are all that I am longing for” (Rows 12-14).

Steve-Jian grew up in a single-parent family. His father had always been his role-model.

In his artifact, he wrote:



In a single-parent family, my father has been very strict on me. So I become strong and independent. In my mind, my father is a legendary person. Even when he was in grips of diseases or business downturns, he stretched himself to provide for the family. (Rows 4-7)

I often think about my life after I finish my overseas study: In a not too big house, talking about life with my father. I want to become an outstanding businessman and run my own business. When I make enough money, I will tour around the world with my father (or probably my wife). This is my biggest dream. (Rows 14-17)

Steve-Jian’s father was often the main character of his assignments and oral presentations, as is shown in this artifact.

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<sup>60</sup> “Colosseum” does not seem to fit here, but this is a translation of what Steve-Jian said in his artifact.

	 <p>Who am I?</p> <p>1 我是谁?  2 我是一个普普通通的黑发黄皮肤的中国男生,也许有点黑  3但我从不以这奇怪或自卑,因为这是健康的肤色。<sup>^^</sup>  4 也许我也有跟别人不同,没有很大的雄心壮志。在一个离异  5的家庭中,我受到爸爸的严格要求,自力自强能力比较好。  6爸爸在我心中是个传奇人物,一次次的起伏跌宕的事业,病  7魔的缠身却仍担起家人的生计。我很庆幸自己却仍然拥有乐  8观开朗的性格,也得以结交许多朋友。许多人都说我是个乐  9于倾听他人,读懂他人的人,在与别人相处过程中非常融洽。  10这,也许就是别人口中的社交能力好吧。</p> <p>11 左边的图,是哈利波特电影中的城堡,我的理想是  12去英国读书。从第一次听谈到英国的辉煌与文化,我  13就被深深打动。骑士,城堡,绅士,古城,斗兽场,都  14是我向往的东西,我常常想着留学回来的生活:在  15一座不大的房子里,与爸爸交谈人生。我想成为一位优  16秀的商人,经营着自己的公司,在有足够的钱之后,与  17爸爸(有可能妻子)环游列国,这也是我最大的梦想。  18 许多人认为,留学是个很好的移民外国,在国外  19生活的好机会,但我不认为。外面的世界不管多么  20精彩,印在内心深处最温馨的仍是我的家——  21中国(China)。只有中华文化,才是我最向往的文化。  22因为,我是一个中国人。</p> <p>December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 (2010年12月15日)</p> 
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Description</p>	<p><b>The Harry Potter Castle image &amp; Rows 11-14: identity and imagined community:</b> “The image on the left is the <i>Harry Potter</i> Castle. My dream is to study in the UK. The first time that I heard about the British glory and its culture, it resonated deeply with me. Knights, castles, gentlemen, ancient cities, and the Colosseum are all that I am longing for.”</p> <p><b>Rows 1-2: Identity: a Chinese boy with darker skin:</b> “I am an ordinary Chinese boy with black hair and yellow skin. My skin is probably a bit darker, but I never feel self-abased because of this since this is a healthy skin color.”</p> <p><b>Rows 4-5: Identity:</b> from a single-parent family with his dad as the role-model.</p> <p><b>Rows 7-10: Identity:</b> a good listener.</p> <p><b>Rows 15-16: Identity &amp; imagined community:</b> to be an outstanding businessman.</p> <p><b>Rows 15-17: Dreamed future:</b> to travel around the world with his dad.</p> <p><b>Rows 18-22: Imagined community &amp; identity:</b> to study abroad and China always being the beloved homeland.</p>

**Figure 26: Steve-Jian’s Multimodal Artifact.**

The images of the Harry Potter castle and the hand-drawn map of China were integrated with the written texts to unveil Steve-Jian’s identity formation in terms of being and becoming. Steve-Jian was fascinated by British culture, but he disagreed with people who would use studying abroad as a stepping stone for migration to developed countries:

No matter how wonderful the outside world is, the sweetest home in the depth of my heart will always be China. Chinese culture is the culture what I am longing for the most because I am a Chinese.

Both Steve-Jian's and Joe-Hui's artifacts reflect their attachment to China. In my modeling artifact, I portrayed myself as a Western "Robot Eva" with a transplanted Chinese heart. These two young men identified well with my reflexivity as a cross-cultural educator probably because we share a "cosmopolitan sensibility" (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010, p. 344) toward our roots and our otherness in relation to our imagined memberships in Western cultures.

Class C where Joe-Hui, Tina-Qin, and Steve-Jian belonged was a special class with almost all the high achievers in Grade 11. Like all the teachers teaching Class C, all the student participants from Class C appraised the exceptional synergy in that class. Like his classmates, Steve-Jian highly valued friendship in this small community though his peers often mocked his darker skin color:

I am happy that I still have an optimistic character and am able to make so many friends. Many people say that I am a good listener, I can really read people's minds, and I can get along with people very well. That might be what people call "good social skills. (Rows 7-10)

When asked about what else he liked at SCS, Steve-Jian highlighted the hybridity of Chinese and Canadian curricula, cultures, and pedagogies. He said that the workload to fulfill the requirements of both Chinese and Canadian curricula was not heavy at all if compared with preparing for Gaokao in public high schools. He said, he was happier at SCS than at the public school. He especially liked that Canadian teachers encouraged students' "semiotic sensibility" (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010, p. 350) and creativity in meaning making. To quote him,

We can design the whole thing, the whole poster based on our own ideas. We then decide how to write in order to match the layout design. There are lots of hands-on actions. We don't have to hold pen [and write] all day. We can at least use scissors sometimes to cut and paste things, and also design, these are the things that I am more interested in.

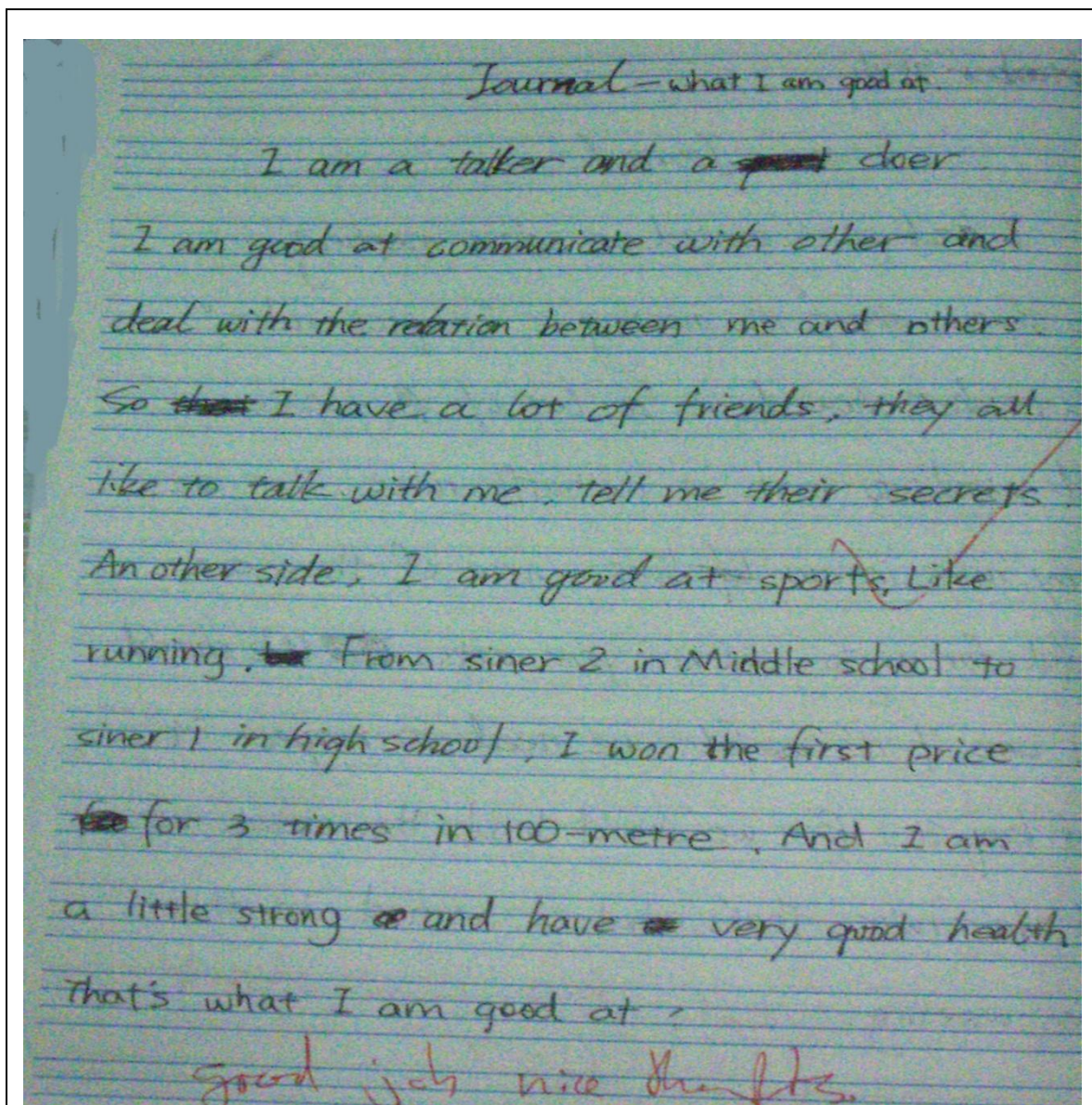
Talking about design, Steve-Jian did not exclusively comment about his experience as an individual designer. He also enjoyed team work and collaborative design in some

Canadian teachers' classes. Initially, he found Mr. Abrams's and Ms. Jiang's test-oriented classes less engaging, though he applauded Mr. Abrams's expertise in teaching IELTS and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test essays. He liked Mr. Abrams's recent adjustment in his test-oriented teaching. As was mentioned in Chapter 6, Mr. Abrams had focused heavily on lecturing about five-paragraph IELTS essays and the three-paragraph Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test news stories in the first several units. Then he tried to bring in elements such as debates on IELTS topics and poster projects on news stories. Steve-Jian commented,

If the teacher asks us to do a project or poster together, we need to bring together several peoples' efforts. We would encounter lots of difficulties when we process. To solve these problems, we are also cultivating a bunch of skills. I think these are all very important for our future career and life.

For Steve-Jian, Canadian teachers' emphasis on collaboration and SCS's accentuation on community participation enhanced his abilities to effectively interact with peers, thus better prepared him for his future overseas study. Steve-Jian found writing a fun task especially when he was allowed to bring in writing ingredients from his daily life. For example, the English texts Steve-Jian created or co-created with his peers were socioculturally shaped by what happened within his school community and outside of school. In a journal for Mr. Gosnell's Career Education class (Figure 27), Steve-Jian wrote about what he felt he was good at:





<b>Transcription</b>	<p>Journal – what I am good at</p> <p>I am a talker and a doer. I am good at communicate [communicating] with other and deal [dealing] with the relation between me and others. So I have a lot of friends, they all like to talk with me, tell me their secrets. Another side [Besides], I am good at sports, like running. From siner [senior] 2 in Middle school to siner [senior] 1 in high school, I won the first price for 3 times in 100-metre. And I am a little strong and have very good health. That's what I am good at.</p>
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**Figure 27: Steve-Jian's Journal for Mr. Gosnell's Class.**

In this journal, Steve-Jian described himself as both a talker and a doer and elaborated on his strengths in communication and sports.

Steve-Jian preferred free choices in expression over structured writing tasks. The Mandarin Language Arts teacher Ms. Ge once asked the students to write about “My Motherland” during the National Day holidays. He described his writing process as such:

The writing assignment for the National Day holidays was about “My Motherland”. However, if I have no inspiration about this topic, or nothing in my life can ignite my passion about this topic, every Chinese character would be like squeezed out, I mean, seriously. After I finally finished it, I was so happy, because the process of squeezing was truly painful.

Commenting on prescribed writing tasks, Steve-Jian said that most Chinese teachers still expected students to work on their own and find out the only right answers.

Steve-Jian especially liked Ms. Gu’s Politics class because she often made real-world connections to the course content. The units about the diversity of world cultures and the cultural heritages of China were Steve-Jian’s favourite. He found Mr. Chen’s Chinese History class interesting, but he saw it as unnecessary to probe too deep into some historic events. He held similar opinions about Ms. Ge’s Mandarin Language Arts class. In the interview, he said that when learning ancient Chinese texts like Mi Li’s “Chen Qing Biao” (Figure 9 in Chapter 6), he was interested in knowing the ancient background where the writing was situated. However, Classical Chinese is semantically and grammatically different from contemporary Mandarin. Steve-Jian particularly disliked when the teacher lectured on the semantics and syntax of the Classical Chinese texts and the word-by-word translation into contemporary Chinese. Interestingly, Mr. Wilson spent several weeks on the unit of *Romeo and Juliet*. One of the major assignments for that unit required students to work as teams to translate Shakespearean English into contemporary English. Steve-Jian found this task less daunting than translating Classical Chinese to contemporary Chinese because he felt that “old English has not changed that much after hundreds of years of evolution [as Classical Chinese did]”. In contrast, he thought that Classical Chinese was detached from and disconnected with everyday languages. Similar to Joe-Hui and Tina-Qin, Steve-Jian felt affiliated with the local, but attached utmost importance to learning about the distant others and their predominant language.



## 7.4 Snapshot #4: Alice-Mei

Alice-Mei's two artifacts embody stories of her experience at SCS. She loved painting and playing the piano. In her first artifact (Figure 28), she sketched a yellow sunflower with a red smiling heart in the middle:

Because I love sunflowers, so I draw [drew] sunflower. And this heart is then for China because I love China. And this root is then for we connect different country [countries]... (original)



**Figure 28: Alice-Mei's Multimodal Artifact.**

The root map outlines Alice-Mei's vision of the global connectivity at the international school where SCS was situated. The student population was more diverse at the international school, while the majority of SCS students were Chinese (with a few from places such as Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong). Interaction with teachers from all over the world was a plus for Alice-Mei when she compared SCS with the public high schools in China. Alice-Mei's artifact showed that her literacy learning experience at SCS was

“lived out in the interface of the local and global” (Harper et al., 2010). Her happy experience at SCS was rooted in her participation in the tangible global. It was also related to her “imaginative engagement” (Jewitt, 2005, p. 323) with the unfamiliar global. The local-global nexus fueled her imagination in meaning making, as is shown in her sunflower root map and the following audio recording of her playing Pachelbel’s *Canon*.



Alice-Mei  
Canon. mp3

#### **Audio Recording 7.4.1: Alice-Mei Playing Pachelbel’s Canon.**

Playing piano was Alice-Mei’s favourite outside-of-school activity. She has practiced the piano for 11 years and started tutoring younger children several years ago. She used her cell phone to record her playing of *Canon* (Audio Recording 7.4.1). Her identity as a piano player breathed life into her recording. The emotional affordance of music helped embody her learning experience at SCS. When asked which piano masterpiece can best describe her experience at SCS, she said “I would choose *Canon*, because the melody in *Canon* signals mixed feelings. Joyful moments in the peak go hand in hand with sadness”. In our interview, Alice-Mei explicitly expressed her joy in learning about foreign cultures through courses like “Canadian and World Studies” and having more extracurricular time and opportunities to invest in reading and activities that she liked. However, there were down moments when she was bombarded with assignments from both Chinese and English classes and frequent quizzes, tests, and the IELTS test.

Pink (2011) notes that modes such as images and music have “great potential for representing/evoking other sensory experiences” (p. 266). Since I had experienced a somewhat shared space with Alice-Mei at SCS for almost three months, many memories came flashing back when I played her rendition of “Canon”. Images of students’ happy faces and confused gazes surfaced because of the shared emotional resonance. Some of the “affordances” (Kress & Jewitt, 2003, p. 14) of Alice-Mei’s *Canon* were realized when the player (Alice-Mei) and the listener (I) collaborated in meaning making. Besides the emotional affordance of this piece of music, both Alice-Mei and I became aware of the


social effects of the music, communicated in a special space, and co-constructed the self and a shared world that we had co-inhabited (Krueger, 2011).

Alice-Mei capitalized on the affordances of painting and piano performance to communicate multi-layered meanings. The two artifacts combined depict a fuller picture of who she was and what she experienced at SCS. She appraised the hybrid nature of SCS's curriculum. Unlike Tina-Qin, Joe-Hui, and Steve-Jian, Alice-Mei liked the incorporation of Mandarin literacy-related courses in SCS's curriculum. When asked about her perceptions of learning Mandarin language arts and Classical Chinese, she said, "It is useful. As Chinese, we need to know the culture of our mother land. If we go abroad and meet foreigners who ask about Classical Chinese, how would people think if we say 'I have no idea'?" She also enjoyed the Chinese History class. For her, learning history made people wise; learning the history of other countries also broadened her vision. For her, Ms. Gu's Politics class helped cultivate students' moral being. Meanwhile, she found Ms. Gu's recent foci on foreign cultures well connected to SCS students' future goals of going global.

Talking about the uniqueness of her literacy learning experience at SCS, Alice-Mei highlighted teaching and learning in diverse modes:

Just like Career Education, Mr. Gosnell showed us a video about team work. Then he took us downstairs to play a game, and then asked us to write about what we have learned from these.

Alice-Mei well captured the mobility of modalities in Mr. Gosnell's class. She accentuated that some SCS teachers encouraged students to stretch their fingers as creative writers and make connections between literacy practices and their daily life. The following assignment is a "recipe" of respect (Figure 29) that Alice-Mei co-created with her best friend for Mr. Gosnell's Career Education.

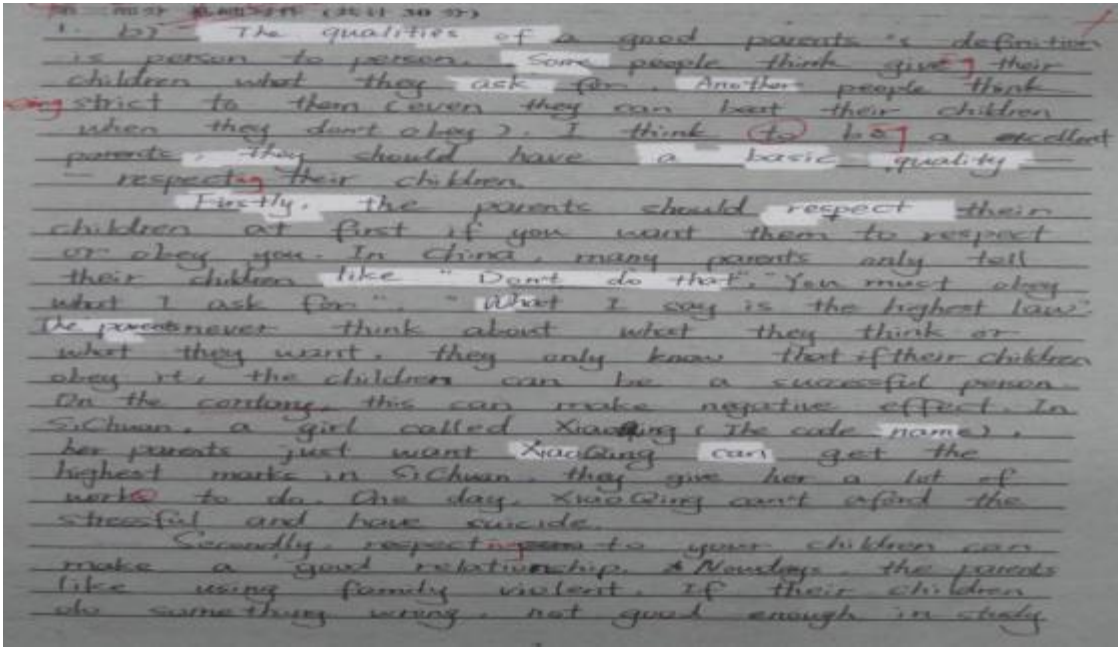
	 <p>The Recipe Respect</p> <p>Ingredients: smile, eye contact, "I" message, polite, attention, temper, positive body language, positive spoken language, behaviour</p> <p>Seasoning: tolerant, mutual, patient, kind</p> <p>Step 1: When you talk with sb, use eye contact and "I" message, but always with your smile.</p> <p>Step 2: Your behaviour should be polite.</p> <p>Step 3: When sb presents or speaks sth, pay your full attention and keep the good temper.</p> <p>Step 4: After their conversation, give them the positive body language or positive spoken language.</p> <p>Step 5: Always have tolerant, mutual, patient and kind.</p> <p>This way to cook the "Respect" can receive a good result and also you can get the "Respect" from others.</p> <p>Great job! Very articulate.</p> <p>Stinger Cindy</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Transcription</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Recipe Respect</b></p> <p>Ingredients: smile, eye contact, "I" message, polite[ness], attention, temper, positive [positive] body language, positive [positive] spoken language, behaviour</p> <p>Seasoning: tolerant, mutual, patient, kind</p> <p>Step 1: When you talk with sb, use eye contact and "I" message, but always with your smile.</p> <p>Step 2: Your behaviour should be polite.</p> <p>Step 3: When sb presents or speaks sth, pay your full attention and keep the good temper.</p> <p>Step 4: After their conversation, give them the positive [positive] body language or positive [positive] spoken language.</p> <p>Step 5: Always have [be] tolerant, mutual, patient and kind.</p> <p>This way to cook the "Respect" can receive [receive] a good result and also you can get the "Respect" from others.</p>

**Figure 29: Alice-Mei's "The Recipe of Respect" for Career Education.**

Mr. Gosnell designed several activities around the topic of "respect" to communicate a message about the Canadian or Western practices of "respect", such as "I" message and

active listening. After class, Alice-Mei and her best friend blended different cultural norms and created their own “Recipe of Respect”. The ideas of “ingredients” for “respect” were partially inspired by the classroom activities where students talked about their understanding of the accepted norms of “respect” in the local (i.e., Chinese society), such as “tolerance” and “kindness”. The richness of “ingredients” was also seated in Alice-Mei’s own life experience. On the same day, she wrote a journal about the conflicts that she had with her parents when she was younger and rebellious. She regretted her bad temper and disrespectful behaviour when her parents “nagged” her. Clearly introspective, she hoped that she had used “I” message more often and behaved more peacefully when she talked to her parents. The creativity reflected in Alice-Mei’s “Recipe of Respect” was rooted in her everyday life. It also transcended the local and exemplified an “openness” (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010, p. 92) to consider the perspectives of the “other”.

In a nutshell, Alice-Mei enjoyed the “freedom to choose what I want to write based on my authentic life stories”. She said, in the mid-term English test students were given two choices for the major writing task (an IELTS-type writing). She chose to write about parent-child relationships because of its resonance with her outside-of-school experience (Figure 30).

	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Transcription</p>	<p>The qualities of a good parents's definition is person to person [The definition of the qualities of a good parent varies from person to person]. Some people think give [it is about giving] their children what they ask for. Another people [Others] think strict [being strict] to them (even they can beat their children when they don't obey). I think to be a [delete "a"] excellent parents, they should have a basic quality---respect[ing] their children.</p> <p>Firstly, the parents should respect their children at first if you want them to respect or obey you. In China, many parents only tell their children like "Don't do that", "You must obey what I ask for", "What I say is the highest law". The parents never think about what they think or what they want, they only know that if their children obey it, the children can be a successful person. On the contrary [contrary], this can make negative effect. In SiChuan, a girl called XiaoQing (The code name [the pseudonym]), her parents just want XiaoQing can [to] get the highest marks in SiChuan, they give her a lot of works [homework] to do. One day, XiaoQing can't afford the stressful [bear the stress] and have [committed] suicide.</p> <p>Secondly, respect to [respecting] your children can make a good relationship. Nowadays, the parents like using family violent [violence]. If there children do something wrong, [or if they are] not good enough in study.... (Page 1 ends here)</p>

**Figure 30: Alice-Mei's Mid-Term IELTS-Type Writing (Page 1).**

In her text, Alice-Mei exhibits a sound knowledge of the IELTS writing conventions, for instance, restating the topic, expressing author's own opinion, and supporting opinions with details and examples. Her main argument in the writing was: showing respect to children is the key quality of parenting. In the interview, she said that her passion to write about the desired quality of parents was ignited by the real-life scenarios when her parents pushed her three elder siblings too hard for academic achievement. On the second

page, she wrote about how some parents liked to “peek their children’s diary” and text messages. She cited her own experience and said “they punish me that [if] they know I get together [hang out] with the boys”. She challenged the traditional parenting style in China where most parents expect their children to “obey” what they say. To accentuate Chinese children’s pressure of living up to parental expectations, she illustrated an example of a Sichuan girl Xiao Qing. Xiao Qing tried to be “successful” and “get the highest marks”, as expected by her parents, but she ended up committing suicide. Her story about Xiao Qing echoes several SCS students’ depiction of stress in public schools. Steve-Jian said that he did not experience the test-preparation for Gaokao, but all the news about high school students’ suicide due to tremendous academic pressure made it sufficiently formidable. Mostly because of the absence of Gaokao, Alice-Mei enjoyed her experience at SCS. Noting a smaller student population and fewer structured and test-oriented assignments at SCS, Alice-Mei said that individual students were given more opportunities to show their talents within the program. Alice-Mei explicitly expressed her preference for Canadian teachers’ teaching styles. Commenting on transnational education programs in China like SCS, she said,

[Transnational education programs] in China, I think it is very good, because there will be more chances for Sino-West communication. Later, there will be more people who get to know about the Western cultures. Also there will be a possibility to change the teaching approaches in China.

This final note of Alice-Mei is a critical reflection of the local Chinese education. It also demonstrates Alice-Mei’s openness to the “other” and her perceived benefit of hybrid education models.

## 7.5 Snapshot #5: Jean-Qin

Jean-Qin was technologically savvy. She liked to read Mangas and play the piano and Pipa (a four-string Chinese lute) after school. But media editing was her favourite pastime. Jean-Qin’s use of technology was predominantly social. She often edited audio, video, and photos, merged them with writing, and shared with friends.

In Jean-Qin’s artifact, a little rabbit with angel wings represents her and shows her love for bunnies (Figure 31). Incorporating digital literacy components, Jean-Qin used *Paint*



to create images and *Microsoft Word* for the written text in her artifact. *PowerPoint* was used later to merge the images and the text.

	
<h3>对SCS的感受</h3>	
1	我上SCS高中的原因是因为我的个人户口问题，不可以在北京高考。在来到SCS之前，我只知道这是一个很注重英语
2	具有浓厚西方文化的学校。
3	在经过几个星期的在校生活之后，我体会到了SCS的特别之处。中加方课程同时教学，西方式教学方法，各种各样的大型活
4	动等。完全不同于普通高中的教学，在这里我过着与以前完全不同的生活，我了解并体会到了很多新鲜的东西。当然，我也知
5	道了我未来人生的大致方向，并为此努力。
6	“你们是群要出国的孩子。”我们经常听到老师这样说。我们的目标不再是那仰望已久的清华与北大，而是世界级名牌大
7	学。这对我们这些对国外一无所知的高中生来说，是一个很有压力但又必须尽快解决的问题。
8	在学校的帮助下，我开始适应西方的教学方式。全英文上课让我更好地掌握英语的听和说。听到母语是英语的外教说
9	的本土英语，理解外国人独特的思维方式和生活文化。这样可以让我们更好的提前准备和适应在国外的生活。
10	我们还通过学校了解了很多国外名牌大学。通过与专业老师的交流选择了切合自己的专业、学校和地区。大致确定了大的
11	目标，再分成很多小的目标，一个一个解决。
12	我觉得SCS是一个我去到国外大学以至于国外生活的捷径桥梁，SCS让我更便捷更顺利地到去外国留学。这就是我喜欢SCS
13	的理由。
<b>Description</b>	<b>Image on top: Identity and imagined community:</b> “Me” as a hard-working rabbit flying from China to Canada.
	<b>Rows 1: Identity and educational choice:</b> choosing SCS because of her Beijing Hukou (the household registration system in China).
	<b>Rows 1-5: Lived curriculum:</b> enjoying integrated Chinese-Canada curricula, Western teaching approaches, extracurricular activities.
	<b>Rows 6-7: Identity:</b> different educational goals than public school students---aiming at studying abroad.
	<b>Rows 6-7: Lived curriculum:</b> pressure coming from limited knowledge about the world outside and the overseas world-renowned universities.
	<b>Rows 8-11: Lived curriculum: preparation at SCS:</b> adapting to the Western pedagogies with English as the medium of instruction, understanding foreigners’ ways of thinking and culture, and knowing more world-renowned universities.
	<b>Rows 12-13: Lived curriculum:</b> enjoying experience at SCS as a bridge to studying and living abroad.

Figure 31: Jean-Qin’s “Thoughts on SCS”.



In Jean-Qin's artifact, she described her experience at SCS by juxtaposing two modal fixings: pictorial depiction and written narrative. She shared that she saw pictorial and compositional meaning making as modes that can represent her more readily and easily, given their cultural and social history. Like other student participants, for Jean-Qin, writing was a conventional and habitual mode for expression throughout her literacy practices. Digital imaging was a novel skill that Jean-Qin had recently acquired. At SCS, she even expanded her activities as the image editor of the school's *Year Book*.

The spatial logic afforded by the image allows the readers or viewers to see the unity and coherence of the entities (Kress, 2009). The Canadian flag and the map of China were used as framing devices. "Frames *hold together* and they *segment*" (Kress, 2009, p. 66) (italics in original). Demarcating Jean-Qin's current space and future destination, these framing devices signify the spatial connection of her present and future identities. The spatial gap in between signals the temporary space where Jean-Qin (the rabbit) belonged. The direction that the rabbit is flying foregrounds her perceived identity transformation in her "imagined communities" (Norton, 2001): from her being a Chinese to becoming a Canadian. The marking of herself in an in-between space in the image echoes what is said in her written accounts,

I think SCS is a shortcut or a bridge that leads to overseas universities or even overseas life. It facilitates my goal of studying abroad. This is why I like SCS.

The wings are signifiers that have plentiful "meaning potentials" (Kress, 2009, p. 66). With SCS's logo on the left wing, Jean-Qin acknowledged SCS as a facilitator that made possible her educational mobility from one country to another. Writing "hard-working" on the rabbit's right wing, she also gave credit to her own efforts. Appraising the hybridity in curriculum and pedagogy at SCS, Jean-Qin emphasized the learning opportunities SCS provided her to participate and function in an unfamiliar education space in the future. For example, she was exposed to the Western pedagogies with English as the medium of instruction (MOI). She tried to understand foreigners' ways of thinking and appreciate different cultures. She received advice about university and program selection, and participated in various extracurricular activities. When asked what was missing in the curriculum, she said:

I want to know how our Canadian peers lead their lives, what they do on a daily basis, how they learn [new things], and how they deal with peer relationships.

Jean-Qin specifically hoped that her participation in the imagined community could be expanded beyond interaction with a limited number of Canadian teachers.

Jean-Qin was originally from Beijing---a girl with a Beijing Hukou (“户口”). Hukou is the household registration system in China that restricts people’s migration from one place to another. After migrating with her father from Beijing to this southern city, Jean-Qin had to choose SCS because without Hukou in this new city, she was not allowed to write Gaokao there. Hukou is a regime that imposes limitations on individual migration, especially migration from rural to urban. It practically defines people’s differentiated access to public services like higher education and health. Students holding Hukou in big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai enjoy more educational resources, because there are larger numbers of high-status universities. In contrast, students from other regions especially rural areas have to compete more fiercely for spots at a smaller number of local universities and for a limited quota that are assigned to them by the government if they want to go to universities in other regions. That is partially why Gaokao has regulated that students must write the university entrance tests in whatever residential regions their Hukous indicate. Gaokao is competitive, but it is not as competitive and cruel for the secondary school students in big cities due to richer and better educational resources and a bigger quota in tertiary education.

At the beginning, Jean-Qin thought that attending SCS was just an expedient alternative because of her Hukou. Later on, she realized that it turned out to be emancipation from Gaokao, from test-oriented education, and from limited education options. Jean-Qin talked about Gaokao’s decisive role in most students’ destiny in China and how SCS actually opened up students’ education choices. She said,

... even now [at Grade 11], we’ve started thinking about selecting university programs and career options for our future development. SCS is more geared to things like these for the students. However, in the public high schools, the mere goal is Gaokao.

Jean-Qin and other students (Coco-Ling, Dave-Yue, and Mark-Ji) accented the different social interaction and mediation patterns at SCS. Specifically, students were given more opportunities to weave their funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005) and local literacy practices into the fabric of extracurricular activities. These extracurricular activities, such as Halloween/Christmas parties, embraced students' input and investment and boosted students' confidence and creativity, which was rare in the Chinese public education system according to the students. Such events as Fundraising for the Terry Fox Run offered students interaction and mediation opportunities with Canadian cultures and values such as commitment, compassion, perseverance, and collective decision-making. Figure 32 is a T-shirt that all Grade 11 students at SCS collaboratively designed and approved via democratic voting (the school name is blurred with mosaic effect).



**Figure 32: Terry Fox Run T-Shirt.**

For Jean-Qin and other students from Class C, SCS was nurturing a different kind of learners than the public schools. She said that life for Grade 11 students at the public schools was intense and stressful; everything they did was for Gaokao. In contrast, she perceived SCS students as happy learners,

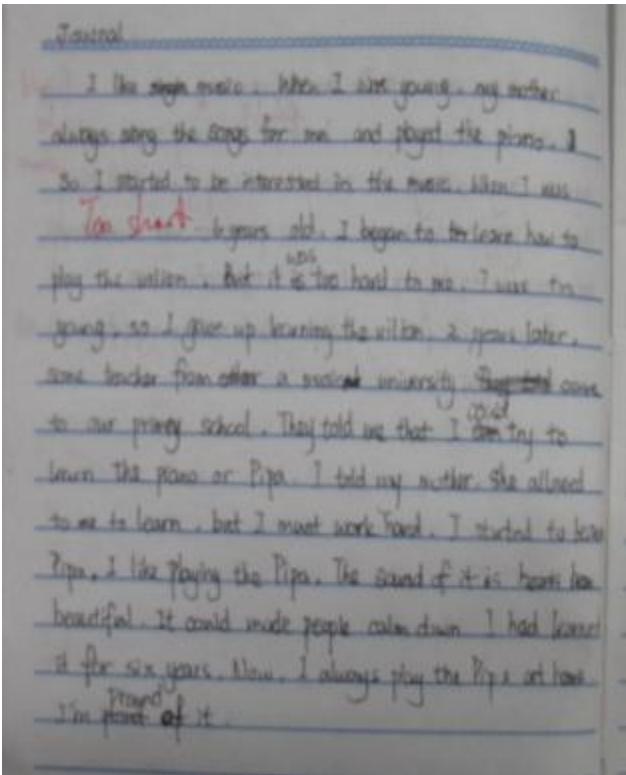
You know as students, we just like playing. Such a relaxing and comfortable learning environment is for us to learn better. Sometimes, I think this way may help us better achieve our learning goals.

Besides the less stressful milieu, Jean-Qin liked the content areas that bore close relevance to students' life, such as Career Education and Politics. She appreciated that

some Canadian teachers saw students as autonomous writers and gave them freedom to choose what they wanted to write. Nonetheless, she disliked fixed writing tasks in Mandarin exams and assignments that seemed to assess a different kind of “literate being” (Murphy, 2012, p. 6)

Like in all the final exams of the Mandarin Language Arts, we are often asked to write about fixed topics. I remember once we had a Spring outing. After that, we were asked to write about that experience in the exam. After the exam, lots of my classmates complained that they didn’t actually like that outing. But we had to write about it. In contrast, Canadian teachers never ask us to write about fixed topics. It’s better to have that freedom.

In contrast, in Jean-Qin’s English assignments, she wrote about things that interested her and events that altered her life trajectory. She described memorable learning moments at school as a social community. She depicted her father as her role model. She also wrote about her journey to music (Figure 33).

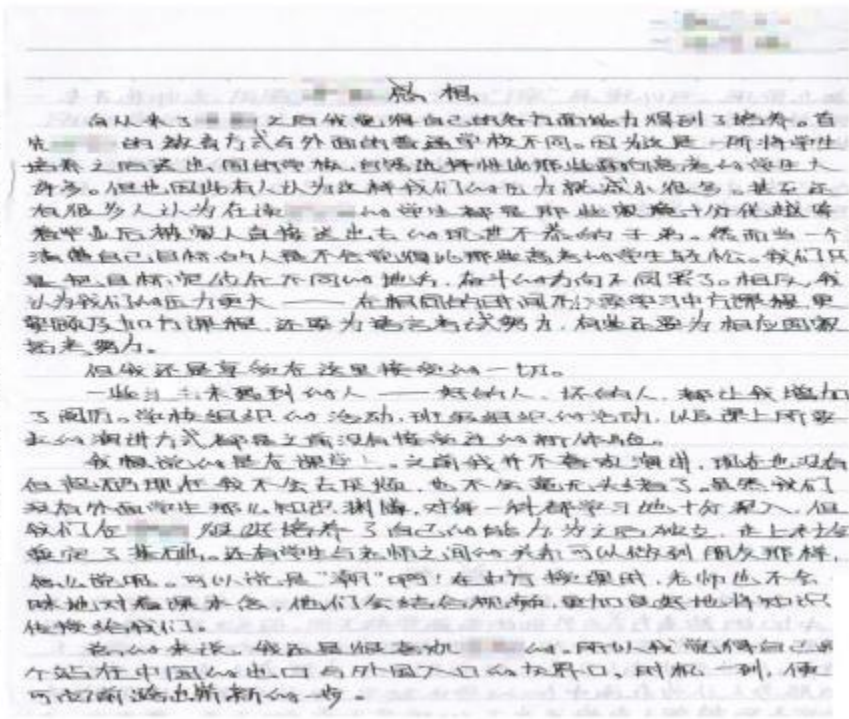
	<b>Transcription</b>
 <p>The image shows a handwritten journal entry in Chinese on lined paper. The text is written in blue ink. At the top, the word 'Journal' is written in English. The entry describes the author's love for music, starting from childhood when their mother sang and played the piano. They became interested in music and started learning the violin at 10 years old, but found it too hard and gave up after two years. A teacher from a music university came to their primary school, suggesting they learn the piano or Pipa. They chose the Pipa and learned it for six years, now playing it at home and being proud of it.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Journal</b></p> <p>I like music. When I was young, my mother always sang the [delete “the”] songs for me and played the piano. So I started to be interested in the [delete “the”] music. When I was 10 years old, I began to learn how to play the violin. But it is too hard to me. I was too young, so I give up learning the violin 2 years later. Some teacher[s] from a music university came to our primary school. They told me that I can try to learn the piano or Pipa. I told my mother. She allowed to me to learn, but I must work hard. I started to learn Pipa. I like playing the Pipa. The sound of it is beautiful. It could made people calm down. I had [have] learned it for six years. Now, I always play the Pipa at home. I’m proud of it.</p>

**Figure 33: Jean-Qin’s Journal about Music.**

Jean-Qin explained in the interview the reason why she eventually chose to focus on Pipa instead of other musical instruments. She said Pipa is a symbol of the traditional Chinese culture. Strongly valuing her roots as a Chinese, she disagreed with some of her classmates and viewed Mandarin language arts as a must to learn at SCS. Living in a contact zone where different local and global currents met, Jean-Qin saw it crucial to construct a self-knowledge of her linguistic and cultural heritages in order to succeed as a world citizen.

## 7.6 Snapshot #6: Coco-Ling

Instead of creating a multimodal artifact, Coco-Ling provided a pure compositional text written on a thin piece of paper carefully cut from her exercise book (See Figure 34).

	 <p>感想</p> <p>自从来了 SCS 之后我觉得自己的各方面能力得到了培养。首先我的教育方式与外面的普通学校不同。因为这是一所将学生培养之后送出国外的学校，自然选择性地那些好的优秀的学生比较多。但也因此有人认为这样我们的压力就减小很多。甚至还有很多人都认为在 SCS 的学生都是那些家境十分优越等毕业后被家人直接送出去的玩世不恭的子弟。然而当一个没有自己目标的人是不会觉得比那些考上的学生轻松。我们只是把目标定在不同的地方，奋斗的方向不同罢了。相反，我认为我们的压力更大——在相同的时间内不仅要学习中方课程，更要跟紧加方课程，还要为英语考试努力，有些还要为相应国家的老努力。</p> <p>但我还是享受在这里接受的一切。</p> <p>一些过去未遇到的人——好的人，坏的人，都让我增加了阅历。学校组织的活动，班级组织的活动，从课堂上所学到的演讲方式都是我之前没有接触过的新体验。</p> <p>我想说心是在学习上。之前我并不喜欢演讲，现在也没有但课程老师在教不会去琢磨，也不会毫无头绪了。虽然我们只有外面学生那么知识渊博，对每一科都学习地十分投入，但我们也在一点点地培养了自己的能力为之后独立。走上社会奠定了基石。还有学生与老师之间的关系可以做到朋友那样，如此说呢。可以说是“朝”吧！在中文课堂上，老师也不会一味地对老师负责，他们会结合视频，更加轻松地传授知识给我们。</p> <p>总的来说，我还是很喜欢的。所以我觉得自己是个站在中国与外国入口的交界口，对朝一到，便可向前踏出崭新的一步。</p>
<b>Description</b>	<b>Row 1: Lived curriculum:</b> developing all round abilities.
	<b>Rows 2-4: Lived curriculum:</b> different educational approaches and more freedom and choices in terms of university applications.
	<b>Rows 4-6: Identity:</b> fighting against the stereotypical biases of transnational education students as “cynical gilded youths” from rich families.
	<b>Rows 6-11: Lived curriculum: more academic pressure:</b> learning both Chinese and Canadian curricula within the same time frame as the public school students learning only Chinese curriculum; preparing for the international English tests.
	<b>Rows 12-17: Lived curriculum:</b> enjoying the learning experience at SCS: extracurricular activities and new learning experiences of giving presentations to the class.
	<b>Rows 17-18: Lived curriculum:</b> different from the public schools: knowledge system not as thorough.
	<b>Rows 19-20: Lived curriculum:</b> cultivating all round abilities to be more adaptable to changes after graduation.
	<b>Rows 20-23: Lived curriculum:</b> teachers and students are like friends; no transmission model of teaching; teachers’ use of videos.
	<b>Rows 24-26: Temporary space &amp; imagined community:</b> looking forward to transformation at the cross road.

**Figure 34: Coco-Ling’s Written Artifact: “Thoughts on My Experience at SCS”.**

Coco-Ling inscribed Mandarin characters in a very neat manner and showed her due respect to this “artifact”. Punctuation marks, paragraphs, and cohesive devices were used

as framing devices to underscore different ideas/themes. The following interview excerpt indicates how this isolated written mode mirrors the affordance of writing and its ruling role in the student's literacy experience:

**Zheng:** Could you please tell me why you chose writing as the mode to represent your identity and your learning experience at SCS?

**Coco-Ling:** I think I'm good at writing. There are things that I cannot express orally. But if I start writing, they just flow naturally.

**Zheng:** Other students chose painting or music to represent their ideas. Do you think writing is the best way to represent yourself?

**Coco-Ling:** I use writing more often [than other modes]. Painting is not what I am good at.

**Zheng:** I see that you write a lot for the assignments.

**Coco-Ling:** Yes.

**Zheng:** So you like writing?

**Coco-Ling:** I can't say I actually like it. Ever since I was a child, I've been forced to write a lot.

**Zheng:** So do you think you get used to writing?

**Coco-Ling:** Yes, I'm used to it.

Writing, for Coco-Ling, stood for her strength and was an easy and ready mode for meaning making. Ever since she was little, her dominant mode of expression has been print literacy: writing or inscribing. Her modal choice was based on this dominant, high status literacy practice that has a powerful affordance for Chinese students like Coco-Ling.

Coco-Ling's artifact is mono-modal, but she enjoyed the multimodal learning experiences that teachers provided at SCS, such as giving presentations to the class, creating PowerPoint slides and posters, and playing dramas. She also gave credit to her Chinese teachers' teaching approaches. She said that her Chinese teachers were not teaching from books as the public school teachers might do. They used media and different communicative channels to engage students. Echoing what she showed in the artifact, Coco-Ling shared in the interview that she did feel that SCS students' knowledge systems were more comprehensive than the public school students, even though SCS students did not probe as deeply as their public school counterparts. Coco-Ling found that she had developed her abilities in almost every respect because she did not have to study for Gaokao and had been given more opportunities at SCS to showcase her strengths. She said that the diverse extracurricular activities bridged cultures and helped broaden her

vision and hone her leadership skills. She thought that these advantages had brought her one step closer to her future education goal---to study business administration in the United States.

Coco-Ling has enjoyed her learning experience at SCS. Teachers at SCS recruited real-world connections from outside of school (e.g., Ms. Gu's Politics and Mr. Gosnell's Career Education) whereas her writing experience at the public schools was too structured and detached from students' everyday life. She recalled that the writing topic for Zhongkao (High School Entrance Exams) was "Rainy Days are Great". She said, "Some of us don't like rainy days at all. But we had to say all the good things about rainy days. We had to write against our conscience. I find it very annoying". In contrast, Coco-Ling enjoyed investing her identities in the creation of texts. A typical example we discussed in the interview was a journal about her grandfather digging into several Mandarin dictionaries to find good Chinese characters for her name when she was born. Her written and verbal words suggested heart-felt appreciation.

Like Jean-Qin, Coco-Ling thought Ms. Jiang's and Mr. Abrams's test-oriented English classes were pretty dry, especially when Ms. Jiang heavily focused on memorizing vocabulary and Mr. Abrams on test essay conventions. Coco-Ling told me that students were almost bored about Mr. Abrams's lecturing on test writing; then one day some bold students talked to Mr. Abrams. Coco-Ling said that from then on Mr. Abrams started to include debates, oral presentations, and poster projects in the test-oriented writing class. In a poster project, Coco-Ling and Joe-Hui were excited that Mr. Abrams encouraged them to bring in their favourite out-of-school topics into the news story writing for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. Together, they created a news story about *Harry Potter* (Figure 35) and clearly displayed the Harry Potter fever among teenagers in Southern China.



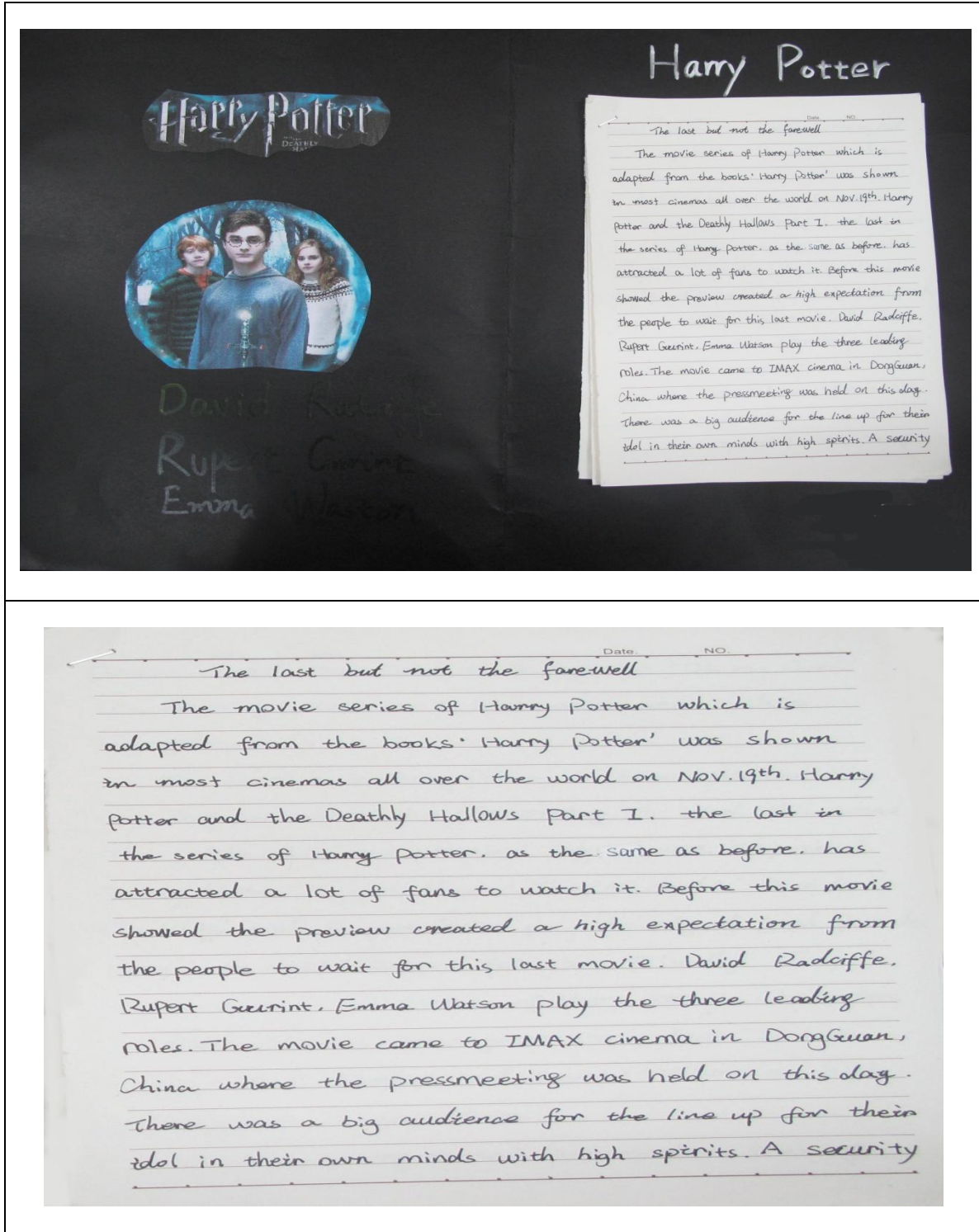


Figure 35: Coco-Ling and Joe-Hui's News Story for Mr. Abrams's Class (Cover & Page 1).

In the poster, Coco-Ling and Joe-Hui incorporated almost all the writing conventions of news stories taught by Mr. Abrams, namely, being objective (the use of third person), using facts, statistics, and eye witness accounts, and including information about who, what, when, where, why, and how. They searched for facts, data, and quotes using Wi-Fi on the cell phone. Coco-Ling was happy with creative literacy practices as such. For instance, from time to time, Mr. Abrams asked students to create stories out of his IELTS vocabulary lists (See Figure 36).

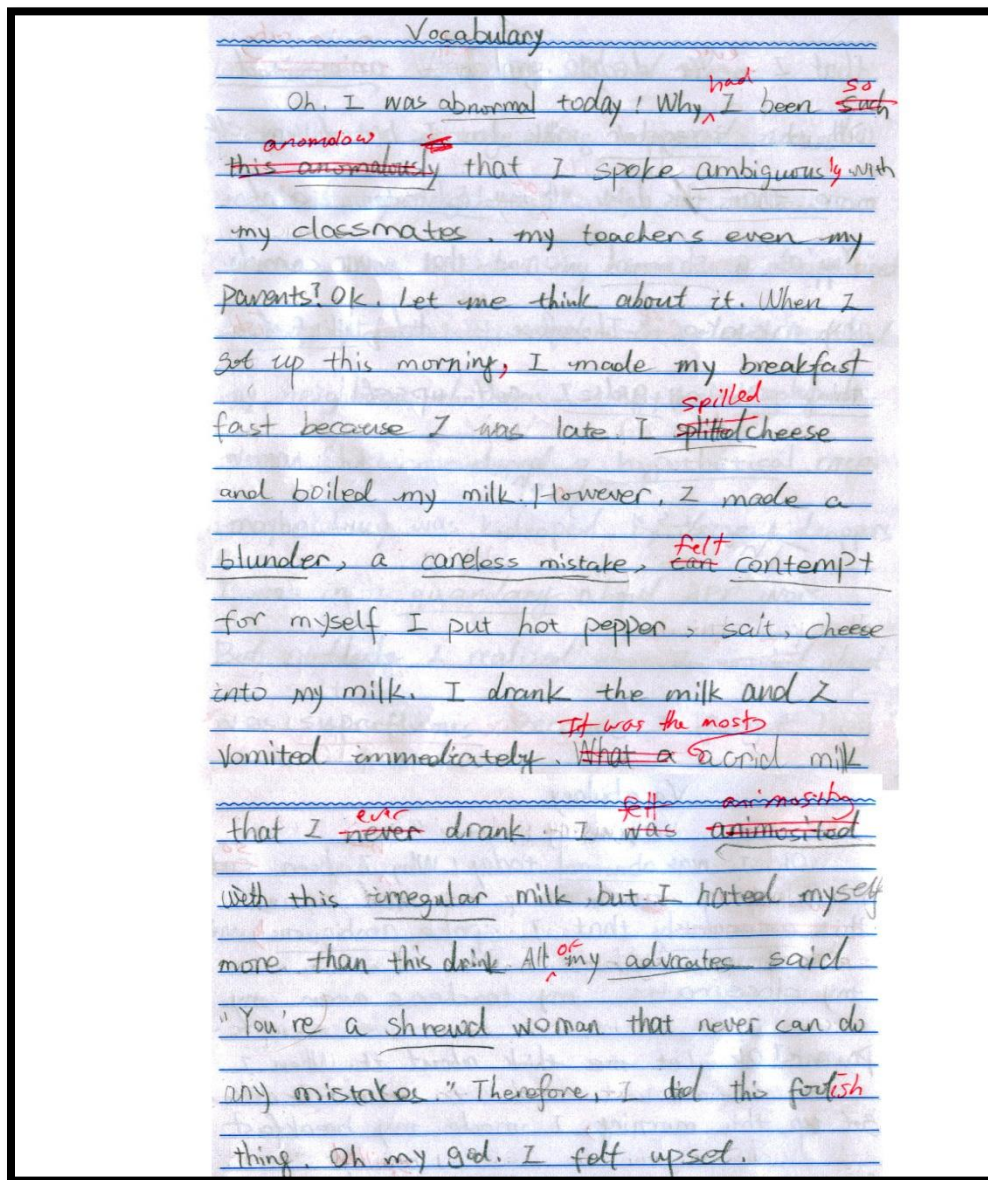


Figure 36: Coco-Ling's Creative Writing out of Mr. Abrams's Vocabulary List.

In order to incorporate all the underlined IELTS vocabulary into writing, she coined a story about an “abnormal” self: She talked ambiguously with people; she put hot pepper, salt, and cheese into her milk and drank the odd mixture. Out of a list of dry and uncommon vocabulary such as *anomalously*, *ambiguous*, *blunder*, *animosity*, *irregular*, and *shrewd*, Coco-Ling was able to make up an engaging narrative. Coco-Ling enjoyed creating stories like this. As she said, exercises as such brought her creativity into full play.

Coco-Ling had been fighting against a common bias toward the students in transnational education programs. She said “outsiders” saw students at SCS as a group of “cynical gilded youths”. Reflective of the unique social location of SCS students, Coco-Ling said in her artifact (Rows 6-11),

Our life is not slightly easier than students who are preparing for Gaokao. The only difference is that our future educational destinations are located differently. Students at SCS and public schools are working on different things. We even think we face more pressure---within the same time frame [of 3 years], we need to finish courses in both Chinese and Canadian curricula. Plus, we need to work hard and prepare for the international English tests.

Being aware of the contested nature of SCS students’ identities, Coco-Ling resisted the label of foppish “New Rich” (Fu Er Dai “富二代”) and hoped that outsiders would reconfigure them as a group of youth with ambitions and specific life goals. She wished that there were more schools like SCS. However, she disliked the fact that more parents sent their children to transnational education schools with the hope that these schools could have “recycling station’s” magic and turn their low achieving children into qualified talents for overseas education.

For Coco-Ling, SCS was a unique education space that recruited differences and bridged the local and global. She believed that SCS had validated positive changes in her and facilitated her transformation, “All in all, I like SCS. I’ve found myself standing at the borderline between China and foreign countries. When time is right, I’ll be able to take the next step forward”.

## 7.7 Snapshot #7: Dave-Yue

Dave-Yue was the only Class B student participant in the study. He and several other Class B students were mingled with Class C students in Mr. Wilson’s ENG2D class.

Dave-Yue’s modal choice of hip-hop music (Figure 37 and Audio Recording 7.7.1<sup>61</sup>) was well connected to his personal interest and strength. As he sang in his song, “In Senior 1 or 2, he started to be fascinated with hip-hop culture” (Rows 15-16).

	Description
1 HIP HOP 5系净系 Yo Yo 声	<b>Row 1: Bias against hip-hop:</b> “Hip Hop is not just about Yo Yo sound.”
2 你想知道点等我话被你听	<b>Rows 1-2: Hip-hop literacy:</b> rhythms in Cantonese /ing/: “sing1” (“声”) & “ting1” (“听”).
3 2009年	<b>Row 7: Identity:</b> not having too much money.
4 有个后生仔系 搏出位	<b>Rows 8-10: Identity:</b> confidence in basketball playing. Lyrics: “his basketball playing is very ok; To beat you, he only needs to fade away”.
5 Yo 距个佬系叫	<b>Rows 9-10: hip-hop literacy:</b> rhythms in English /ei/: “OK” & “away”.
6	<b>Rows 12-14: hip-hop literacy:</b> rhythms in English /ɒp/: “Hip Hop” & “stop”.
7 虽然距5系好有米	<b>Rows 15-16: hip-hop literacy:</b> rhythms in Cantonese /aa/: “gwaa2” (“呱”) & “faa3” (“化”).
8 但我有心所以5会吃瑟米	<b>Rows 17-18: hip-hop literacy:</b> rhythms in English & Cantonese /i/: “G” & “D” (“D” is homophonic to Cantonese “滴” [sounds “dik1” in Cantonese]. “多 D” here means more).
9 距打篮球者好OK	<b>Rows 15-18: Identity:</b> “obsession” with the hip-hop culture: “In Senior 1 or 2, I started to be obsessed with hip-hop culture. After ABC, it is EFG. If you are interested, I’ll rap more”.
10 想搞掂你只需要 fade away	<b>Rows 19-21: Bias against hip-hop dressing style:</b> “When my friends and relatives talk to me, they would say, ‘When did Dave-Yue become a black ghost <sup>62</sup> , I don’t understand why he wears his jeans low to bottoms.”
11 Yo Yo Yo	<b>Row: 21: Resistance to the bias.</b> Lyrics: Every time when they ask me to pull my pants up, I say “No”.
12 It’s HIP HOP	
13 CHECK CHECK YO	
14 It’s HIP HOP. It will not stop	
15 系中一定系中二呱	
16 我就迷入左呢个HIP HOP文化	
17 ABC之后就 EFG	
18 算啦,距想听我就多D	
19 同学或朋友倾计都会话话	
20 牛仔裤穿到衫友着5知做么	
21 距每次叫我穿好我都系话你	
22 Yo Yo Yo It’s HIP HOP	
23 CHECK CHECK YO	
24 It’s HIP HOP	
25 It will not stop.	

Figure 37: Dave-Yue’s Written Lyrics for His Identity Song.

<sup>61</sup> Student’s name and school’s name were blurred in the audio.

<sup>62</sup> Cantonese people call all foreigners “ghosts”.





### Audio Recording 7.7.1: Dave-Yue's Identity Song.

Dave-Yue's self-written hip-hop song (with adapted rhythm) bears traces of hybridity and merges hip-hop features across cultures. Code-switching is a key attribute that carries “semantic and grammatic information” when hip-hop is borrowed inter-culturally (Richardson, 2006, p. 77). Code-switching between Cantonese and English is evident in Dave-Yue's hip-hop song. Code-switching also occasionally happens between numbers and languages, for example, number “5” phonetically sounds like “ng5” (Cantonese pronunciation) which means “No” in Cantonese. Content morphemes such as “rap”, “Hip Hop”, “yo”, and “check” do not exist in the recipient language Cantonese and are salient marks of cultural borrowing (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Richardson, 2006). This reflects rapper's “conscious incorporation of lexical/cultural items, which may fill lexical cultural gaps in the recipient language” (Richardson, 2006, p. 78). Eight pairs of rhythms (e.g., /ing/, /i/, /ei/, /ɔp/, /aa/ /i/) demonstrate Dave-Yue's ability to deliver the song rhythmically as other hip-hop do. In the interview, I asked him whether he purposefully blended two languages because it was trendy. He said, “I blend the two languages whenever I feel it helps the song rap smoothly.... I write in whatever way I prefer. I do not like to follow suit”. In that sense, code-switching and cultural borrowing in hip-hop music have potentially opened up more spaces for Dave-Yue's meaning making.

Like hip-hop's standard self-referential lyrics (Hess, 2007), Dave-Yue also used first- and third-person singulars to introduce himself. For example, in Row 7 and 9, he said, “虽然距 5 系好有米” (“He does not have too much money.”) and “距打篮球都好 ok” (“His basketball playing is very ok.”). In Row 16, he wrote, “我就迷入左呢个 Hip Hop 文化” (“I started to be obsessed with Hip Hop culture”). He also used figurative language---a key characteristic of the linguistic and social stereotype of hip-hop (Richardson, 2006). In Rows 7 and 8, Dave-Yue sang:

Though he does not have too much money,  
He is confident that he doesn't have to eat corn.

“Not have to eat corn” means “not totally fail”. In Cantonese, if a person does not have money, the cheapest food to buy is corn. It is worth noting, as a Mandarin speaker who has a limited exposure to Cantonese, I can recognize every single simplified Chinese character in Dave-Yue's lyrics. However, the first time I heard the song and read the lyrics, I could only catch 40% of its meaning. In Mainland China, the same set of Chinese characters is used to represent the sounds of almost all spoken Chinese languages (see Kenner, 2004). I had to rely on Dave-Yue and one of my Hong Kong friends to “translate” the colloquial expressions for me such as “搏出位 (draw people's attention)” in Row 4, “吃瑟米 (eat corn)” in Row 8, and “掉到裸友 (low to bottoms)” in Row 20.

Unlike the stereotypical hip-hoppa in the United States who live in ghettos or experience violence, Dave-Yue came from a financially wealthy family. People might say that the inherited hip-hop discourses (i.e., reflecting the tension between the dominant and marginalized and of wreaking “lexical havoc against the establishment” [Richardson, 2006, p. 19]) are missing in Dave-Yue's case. Ostensibly, Dave-Yue did not belong to the “crew”, namely, “the global ranks of the dispossessed” who are using rap music as symbols of freedom (Richardson, 2006, p. 19). The struggles with “interlocking systems of racism, patriarchy, and capitalism” (Richardson, 2006, p. 17) and anger thus incurred are also missing. However, I notice Dave-Yue's criticism of the mainstream culture's bias toward hip-hop in his song:

When my friends and relatives talk to me, they would say, “When did Dave-Yue become a black ghost? I don't understand why he wears his jeans low to bottoms.” Every time when they ask me to pull my pants up, I say “No”.  
(Rows 19-21)

Trying to “draw people's attention” (“搏出位” in Row 4), Dave-Yue chose hip-hop music and basketball to underscore his resistance to conformity and celebrate his individuality. Dave-Yue's cross-cultural variation of hip-hop is suggestive of an imagined space in which he recruited hip-hop as a “global mode” (Haaken, Wallin-Ruschman, & Patange, 2012, p. 64) of conversation and negotiation. Dave-Yue was

inclined to the black hip-hop identity regardless of the biases from the dominant Discourses (Gee, 2008) in southern China. He explained in the interview that people around him took stratified views of black culture. First, they assumed only under-educated youngsters would like hip-hop music. Second, they thought “rap was created by Black People. So they don’t understand why Yellow People don’t listen to Yellow People’s own music but are fond of Black People’s music”. When asked about the stress to resist the prevailing bias against black culture, he said, “I don’t feel any pressure because these are my interests”. This young fellow’s affective investment in this aesthetic mode of expression suggests his unbiased imagining of the other.

In this hip-hop song, Dave-Yue exhibited his passion for creative out-of-school activities. The following rhyming poem gives us a glance of his creative literacy practices at school:

Swimming in the sea  
 A shark gives me a “kiss”  
 Go back home forget the key  
 My friend gives me [a] jeans

Later, he explained that he was capable of writing rhyming poems in English with relative ease: “He [Mr. Wilson] wanted rhymes. So I just put down a couple”. Writing poems was one of his favourite literacy practices because it sharpened his creative thinking. Dave-Yue also liked to read novels and watch movies that bore relevance to adolescents’ life. He appraised the freedom both Canadian and Chinese English teachers gave him to write about what he read and to write whatever he wanted to express. He shared his puppet love in one of the poems for Mr. Wilson’s class (Figure 38).

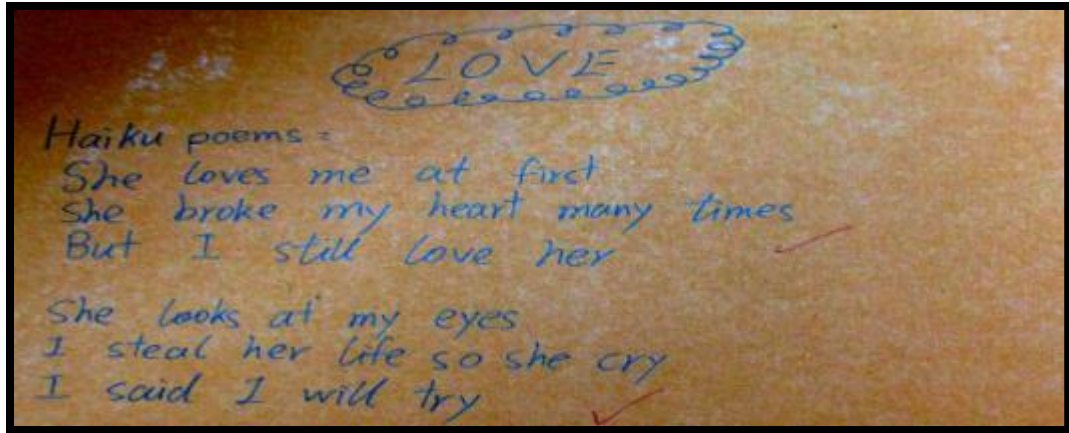


Figure 38: Dave-Yue's Poem "Love" for ENG2D.

He said in the interview, he would not write the same thing for public school teachers: "Public schools are targeting Gaokao. Just think about the pressure. Teachers would interfere [if we have 'love affairs'] because they want all of their students to be admitted to universities".

His passion for basketball was a frequently chosen topic in his writings (Figure 39).

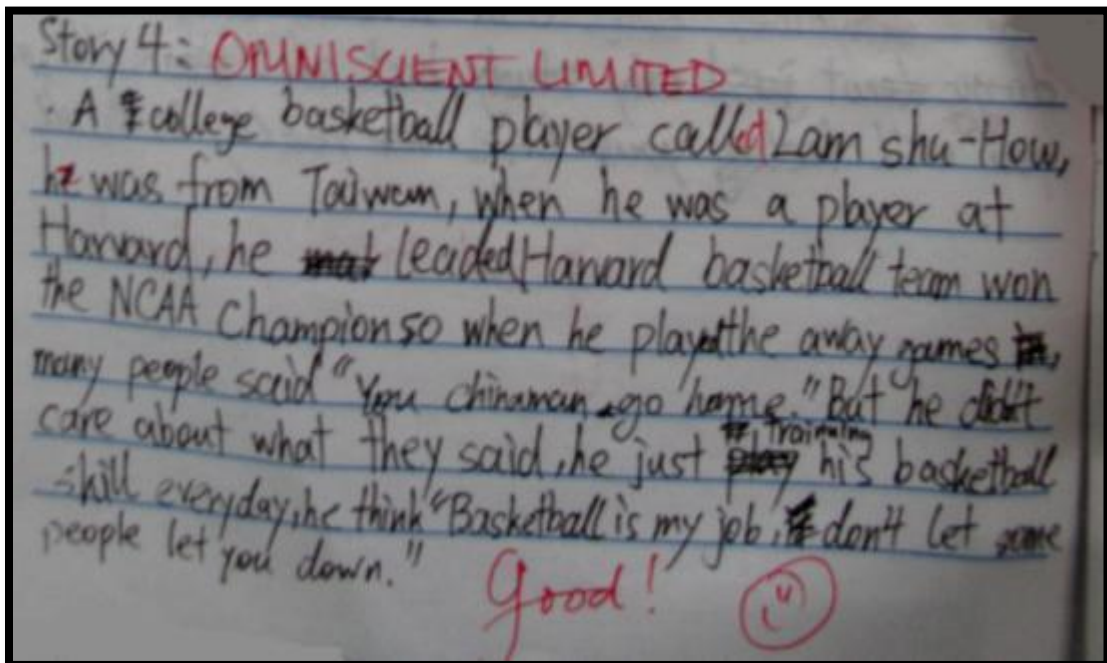


Figure 39: Dave-Yue's Story of Omnisciant Limited Perspective for ENG2D.



In this story, Dave-Yue wrote about Lam, Shu-How's persistence in basketball despite some Americans' bias against him as a Chinese. He said that stories about successful people, including Chinese, in developed countries always made him ponder why education in those countries could nurture more talents than Chinese education. He went to an international school from K-6, switched to a public school for Grades 7-9, and then to SCS for the secondary school. He said his education trajectory in different education systems, along with those stories, made him believe that education milieus that value learners' talents and interests, instead of academic achievement, will do good to individual learners and further to the society. Learning two curricula at SCS was a bit stressful for him. But he celebrated the fact that he did not have to write Gaokao. He said, "Gaokao just sounds dreadful for me". He also spoke highly of the ample opportunities to interact with foreign teachers and to know from them the sports cultures in Canada. In quite a few extracurricular activities at SCS, he found stages to showcase his talent in hip-hop and felt encouraged by these opportunities to present his strengths to a larger audience.

## 7.8 Snapshot #8: Rich-Zhi


The beginning of Rich-Zhi's artifact (Figure 40) bears traces of frustration (Rows 1-2):

I tried but still failed to keep up with the pace of test-oriented education. Neither do I have the strengths to compete with others. In this city, even in the whole country, there are too many people who are good at exams.


As a student from Class A, Rich-Zhi told me a different story of his lived curriculum at SCS. Students who were streamed to Class A had lower English proficiency levels, but higher academic achievement in science.

In his multimodal artifact, Rich-Zhi used *Microsoft Word* to create two cartoon images with Mandarin composition. The computer application validates the representational and communicational affordances of both images and words (Jewitt, 2005). As Jewitt points out, the cartoon images serve the function of reinforcing what is written and producing the unity of the whole text.

1 我最终还是跟不上应试教育的步伐，也无法具有优势地与其他人去竞争，因为[ ]乃至整个中国很会考试的  
2 人太多了。



3 或许是我觉得这种教育不适合我，也可能是一种逃避。但是这种教育是一个非常残酷的筛选，成绩好的是有  
4 前途的将来一定是有出息的；成绩不好的，你的人生已经否定了一大半。我觉得这从一定程度上限制和扼杀  
5 了很多人应有的童年快乐，和心灵应有的健康发展态势，还有潜能。



6 我在这种万般无奈的情况下必须寻找一条适合自己的绝处逢生的一条道路，就这样我选择了出国，也很自然  
7 而然地选择[ ]高中。一开始对它这种教育模式很好奇，也很期待。我的英语不是很好，也很自然  
8 地被分到[ ]班，是[ ]新开设的英语实验班，其实就是按英语水平分等级。我们就这样地分在了一个班，  
9 这样分的好处是让我们放缓速度来打好英语基础，然后把我们的理科强班的特点突显出来。但是这样做也很多  
10 坏处，因而我们班就出现了“要走”的浪潮。一开始我们满怀激情和信心去为我们的目标理想去学习，但后  
11 来我们发现收效甚微，而且每个人的英语成绩都差不多，不会的基本都不会，而老师也不可能时刻在我们身  
12 边，我们大多数同学也不会这样主动去问老师，就这样恶性循环。然而[ ]是中西教育的结合，重点是英语，  
13 其次是数学，其他的可以说不那么重要的，我们把相当多的时间精力去学英语，其它科目也很自然地受到  
14 不同程度的影响，这样的我们在这种氛围下也很自然的为自己的前途开始深思熟虑。我们该怎么走？英语成  
15 绩没有预期的理想，而原来有优势的理科也渐失光芒。走，也许是唯一一个好办法，不管是提前出国，还是  
16 转到普通高中读，对于那时的我们来说总比在[ ]读下去要好。因为我们对[ ]的“实验”已经彻底失望了，  
17 觉得我们中不中西不西，没有保留好我们原有的教育优势，也没有学好西方的教育模式。就这样我们相当一  
18 部份的人动摇了当初的热情，信心和激情，选择了离开，继续寻找适合自己的道路。对了，还是错了。那就  
19 见仁见智因人而异了。因为毕竟这样下去离我们雅思的最低标准 6.0 还有不少距离，离我们好的大学梦相差甚  
20 远。希望我们都为自己选择的道路感到骄傲和兴奋，不感到后悔。 [ ] .....

Description	<b>Rows 1-5: Lived curriculum:</b> challenges of test-oriented education.
	<b>Rows 6-7: Educational choice:</b> studying abroad; not studying for Gaokao; choosing SCS.
	<b>Rows 7-10: Identity:</b> weak in English and strong in science; being streamed to Class A---an English experiment class.
	<b>Rows 11-12: Lived curriculum: more academic pressure:</b> classmates all weak in English; lack of peer scaffolding; limited teacher scaffolding.
	<b>Rows 12-14: Lived curriculum:</b> in the integrated Chinese and Canadian curriculum, focus is given to English and then math. Other subjects were not seen as that important.
	<b>Rows 14-18: Lived curriculum:</b> a failed “experiment”; classmates chose to leave SCS
	<b>Rows 17-18: Reasons for the failure:</b> SCS not retaining the strengths of Chinese education, neither well adopting the Canadian education model.
	<b>Rows 15 &amp; 19: Reason for leaving:</b> losing strengths in science and not gaining strength in English; no hope to get 6.0 in IELTS; therefore, no hope to get into good universities.

Figure 40: Rich-Zhi's Multimodal Artifact.

Rich-Zhi downloaded Cartoon #1 from the Internet. The teacher in the cartoon hands over a notice to the student. The notice says “Bring your parents to school”. The cartoon depicts a common teacher-student interaction scenario in China---once students fail to do well at school, particularly as test results signal, teachers will ask students to bring in their parents.

In Cartoon #2 (See Figure 41), a teenager is fettered by a heavy iron chain to a thick book titled “Test-Oriented Education”. This illustration was created by Rich-Zhi’s close friend. Both of them saw this cartoon as a powerful way to problematize the mainstream test-oriented education in China.



**Figure 41: Cartoon #2 in Rich-Zhi’s Multimodal Artifact.**

Rich-Zhi’s critical reflection of the test-oriented education continues in the written part (Rows 3-5):

It [my search for educational alternatives] is probably because this type of [test-oriented] education does not fit me. Or it’s a kind of escapism on my part. However, test-oriented education is a cruel filtering process. High achievers in exams are promising; for lower achievers, they are denied and doomed to be losers for the rest of their life. To a certain extent, such education has constrained and smothered a lot of Chinese children’s childhood happiness and potential and has been detrimental to their mental development.

This written text further supports the visual sarcasm of Cartoon #2, that is, test-oriented education is not a form of transformation and emancipation, but a confinement and

suppression of students' non-academic strengths and talents. With the cartoon's sarcastic effects and "visual analogies" (Werner, 2004, n.p.), the iron chain metaphorically represents torments that students have suffered under "confinement". It also reflects Rich-Zhi's eager pursuit of new educational alternatives that could help him shake off the shackles and set him free. Then Rich-Zhi started to talk about his journey of seeking the right educational models for himself (Rows 6-7):

Feeling helpless, I had to find a way out for myself in the hope that I could be rescued from this desperate situation. Then I decided to leave this country and, naturally, SCS became the first step.

Rich-Zhi's journey at SCS started with his strong desire to improve his English. Based on SCS's experimental attempts, Rich-Zhi was streamed to Class A where students had low English proficiency levels but strengths in science. The rationale of this educational "experiment" was to improve these students' English while highlighting their strengths in science. After one year or so, students in Class A realized that both peer- and teacher-scaffolding were failing to enhance their English improvement. Rich-Zhi said

Honestly, I do want to improve my English. However, given our current English levels, we (Class A students) would not be able to understand the English courses that are currently offered. In contrast, teachers have to have their own pace of teaching because they need to accomplish the required teaching tasks and aims, which makes it very hard for us whose English is poor.

For Rich-Zhi, the major purpose of English teachers' implemented curriculum did not provide sufficient scaffolding to meet students' needs and interests. The intended curriculum at SCS assigned an IELTS-oriented English vocabulary class to Grade 11 students. But for Rich-Zhi, decontextualized skill training and vocabulary memorization in that class did not seem to be helpful for the Class A students. Plus, in a learning community consisting of classmates with low English literacy levels and limited motivation, his eagerness to learn ended up in weak motivation and frustration. In contrast with the Class C students' appraisal of their motivating learning community, Class A students were reluctant to learn, to finish homework, or to seek help from teachers. They eventually chose to leave SCS (Rows 14-18):

What shall we do? English has not improved as expected, while previous strengths in science are losing their halo. To leave---this might be the only way

out. For us, to go abroad earlier or switch back to public schools are better choices than staying at SCS because we are totally disappointed with SCS's "[educational] experiment". I feel we [SCS] become neither Chinese nor Western. [SCS] does not retain the strengths of Chinese education. Neither does it well adopt the Western education model. Thus, a fair number of us chose to leave SCS with faded enthusiasm and confidence and continued to look for paths that fit us.

For Rich-Zhi, SCS was another vanished hope. Continuing his search for educational models that might fit him, Rich-Zhi ended his story with uncertainty (Rows 18-20):

Right choices wrong choices---different people different views. Continuing at SCS, we will still be far way from reaching the IELTS requirement of 6.0, thus far away from our university dreams. I hope all of us will be proud and excited about the paths that we choose for ourselves and never feel regret.

Images in Rich-Zhi's artifact are sites of critical meaning making. Class C students' (e.g., Joe-Hui, Tina-Qin, Jean-Qin, and Coco-Ling) interrogation of the standardized testing agenda at the local level was restrained. In contrast, Rich-Zhi's multimodal artifact stridently problematized the constraining social structures that privileged English-related and print-based literacies. Plus, in Rich-Zhi's view, a hybrid Sino-Canada curriculum without Gaokao's shadow would not necessarily emancipate students. For him, this hybrid education model added on a globalized English standardized test that put him at a significant disadvantage and further constrained the space for his future education. His artifact is an implicit call for systemic changes in education and assessment at the local and global levels to validate adolescent's literacy interests and practices. In my view, Rich-Zhi's cartoons are "visual abstractions" (Edwards & Winkler, 2008, p. 127) of students' lived experience in the public education system in China and also at SCS. The images and the written texts work interactively to challenge the detrimental outcomes of test-oriented education (e.g., IELTS test) and the demerits of streaming and curriculum hybridity at SCS. The hybrid curriculum at SCS might be enrichment for academically elite students in Class C. Given their higher English levels, they can handle the pressure and challenges. Nevertheless, the hybrid curriculum with an ambitious goal to have students fulfil the academic requirements of two systems within 3 years did not seem like a good fit for Class A students like Rich-Zhi who needed substantial support in English. The dilemma between efficiency (finishing curriculum requirements of both systems in time to get dual diplomas) and providing sufficient scaffolding remains unresolved.

## 7.9 Snapshot #9: Mark-Ji

Mark-Ji was a Class A student who enjoyed the extracurricular activities and the Canadian ways of teaching at SCS. He liked the hybrid education at SCS and used a neat analogy, "...such Sino-Western education is creative. It's like marrying two people of distinct characters: one is square-toed; another is outgoing and fond of innovation. A very novel marriage". He enjoyed the autonomy that SCS gave students to explore in extracurricular activities like leading class meetings. Among Class A students, Mark-Ji was also known for his passion for competitive online games. He used *Fraps* to video-record himself playing *Warcraft III Frozen Throne*---a real time strategy computer game. The video recording (Video 7.9.1<sup>63</sup>) showcases a multiplayer game with Mark-Ji (player of "Orc") joining his "Undead" alliance to fight against their opponents "Human" and "Night Elf".



**Video Recording 7.9.1: Mark-Ji's Recording of Playing Warcraft and Talking about Learning from Online Games.**

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<sup>63</sup> The video file is too big, so here I only provide a snapshot of it.

Mark-Ji's six-minute video displays his skills of multiple tasking as required by *Warcraft III Frozen Throne*, for example, commanding peons to gather resources (i.e., gold and wood) in the mines, building barracks, and commanding warriors for battles. For Mark-Ji, learning to play video games was similar to learning "a new literacy" especially if *literacy* is more broadly defined beyond reading and writing (Gee, 2003, p. 13). Various types of "visual literacy" (Gee, 2003, p. 13) were juxtaposed in Mark-Ji's video: images, maps, movements, words, and graphs showing hit points, armor, and damage totals.

Similar to the social aspects of Jean-Qin's use of technology, Mark-Ji's practice in the online gaming community also predominated with communication and collaboration. "I want to use this video to show my dream since my childhood and to show my inner world and the other world of mine". Mark-Ji's identity in the virtual world was reflected in his social practices of cooperating and interacting with the other players---"members of the social groups" in the virtual world (Gee, 2003, p. 2). Displaying another side of his world, Mark-Ji showed that succeeding in multiplayer involved knowing all the social practices of the virtual community, for instance, ways of networking with alliances and interacting various tools and technologies. Being a member of a video gaming community had consequences for Mark-Ji's identity formation. "I have learned how to make the best decision on the fly and how to cooperate with others". The video showed how his alliance and real-world friend "Love Khamn" gave him gold while he was in danger and fought side by side with him against their opponents. Through that collaboration, his virtual identity and real-world identities were enabled to interplay with each other when his communication moved in and out of the virtual world.

In his real life, Mark-Ji had to continually fight against the biases toward his virtual identity. He said that conversations with his alliances often happened in Internet Cafés. However, going to Internet Cafés was normally forbidden by parents and schools. Celebrating this identity, Mark-Ji had to resist a prevailing prejudice in the adults' world: "I am aware of parents' and schools' objection to students' playing online games. They are afraid that game obsession will hinder our academic study. However, I see online games as a double-edged sword". Mark-Ji made it clear in his video that parents and schools had privileged certain forms of literacy (i.e., school literacy and English-related

literacy) over literacy learning practices that adolescents like. Video game literacy (Gee, 2003) is barely a legitimate form of learning in China. Even at SCS, with a globalized education discourse, Mark-Ji did not find his passion for online game design being well supported and guided.

In our ensuing interview talk about his video, Mark-Ji shared the reason why he did not study hard at SCS: “I finally realize that there are lots of things that schools cannot teach us. Only when learning what I am passionate about am I willing to make 120% efforts”. At the time, he had just left SCS and joined a top-end IT training program. We went on to talk about his changed learning experience at the current program:

**Zheng:** Are your peers as passionate as you are?

**Mark-Ji:** Yes, they are at their twenties. They’ve worked for years and came back for education after knowing the cruelty of the real world. They are very serious learners.

**Zheng:** Oh, this is good for you.

**Mark-Ji:** Yes, a good learning environment makes difference. Several other classmates from Class A just left SCS. I couldn’t learn anything when I was there. ... I can’t say about other classes, but in our class, there were few who could really learn something there. [Regarding the streaming strategy at SCS], we had no choice.

Rich-Zhi and Mark-Ji are two examples of how limited English proficiency levels might hinder students’ appreciation of the benefits of integrating two educational systems.

Unlike other student participants, Mark-Ji did not see SCS as the springboard for overseas study. He selected SCS simply because his parents wanted him to study abroad and he could not go to good public high schools based on his Zhongkao results:

Honestly, I think parents and teachers should know more about what we need. The paths that they have arranged for us are not always the best for us.... They always impose on us what they think is right.... They think going abroad is good. However, how many people who went abroad have a promising future? And how many of them become a man of men? I know many people who went abroad and now they are fooling around. Why did they go abroad? Simply because their parents assume that education in the developed countries is better. Admittedly, they did all these because they assumed this would only do good for their children. However, how many parents have listened to children’s own choices?

Mark-Ji thought getting a university education or studying abroad should not be the only choices for young people. When asked about whether students had a say in SCS’s



curriculum, he said, since students at SCS were paying tuition fees, they should have the right to request what to learn. However, he was aware how unrealistic it was for students to air their opinions in curriculum design because the intended Chinese curricula, such as Mandarin Language Arts and math curricula, have rigidly prescribed what should be taught. As he said, “They [curricula and teachers] are like antiques. It is not realistic to expect changes”. His ideal educational model for high school students was market-oriented vocational education---an education that was geared to students’ free choices based on their understanding of what skills were needed on the market. He did not like the imposition of complicated concepts in secondary schools because “for example a lot of things we’ve learned from Physics are useless in everyday life unless we want to be physicists”.

Showing a gamer disposition, Mark-Ji saw learning as fun and creative on the “edge” (Brown & Thomas, 2008). “I love things that require creativity”. Resisting the “old-fashioned” transmission model of teaching and learning, Mark-Ji talked about his dreams of transforming “boring” subject matters into interesting online games. He said in the video that “Creating a game based on the Chinese history of 5,000 years will be way more effective than giving a history book to children for them to learn the Chinese history. If you don’t believe it, just wait and see”. After Mark-Ji left SCS, he worked hard to realize his long-standing dream of creating an online game that can be proudly claimed as “Made in China”. He said in the video: “We need to show foreigners that Chinese are not that weak. Our technology might be lagging behind, but we do have [good] ideas”. Contesting a prevailing preconception of video gamers as escapers from reality, Jane McGonigal sees them as returnists who go back to everyday life with more gains than before they started the games, for instance, positive emotions, stronger relationship, a sense of accomplishment, and the desire to be part of something bigger (SXSW 2011, 2011; TED, 2010). Brown and Thomas (2008) emphasize that one key attribute that gamers acquire: their insatiable desire for “radical alternatives and innovative strategies” (n.p.). Experiencing dullness in test-oriented education, Mark-Ji had been seriously thinking about radical alternatives for the current education system where standardized exams decided what and how teachers taught and what and how students learned. For him, creative approaches of learning and teaching were needed to cater to adolescents’

changed landscape of literacy practices. A strong believer in collaboration and “affinity group” like the other online gamers (Gee, 2003, p. 212), Mark-Ji accentuated that without collective and shared endeavors, his dream cannot be realized.

## 7.10 Summary

In this chapter, the juxtaposition of students’ interview accounts and multimodal narratives of their lived experience at SCS provides insights into how literacy was conceived, presented, practiced, or even negotiated at the level of lived curriculum. These juxtaposed chains also present a fuller picture of the implications for learners’ identity options. Students’ multimodal artifacts and writing samples show the nuances of these adolescents’ self-reflection upon a hybrid education model that confronts local and global flows of knowledge and ideologies. They also foreground the print-based and English-related literacies privileged by schooling and the local- and global-level standardized assessments. In the next chapter, I discuss the key findings pertaining to the nature and function of the literacy-related curricula in the transnational education program.

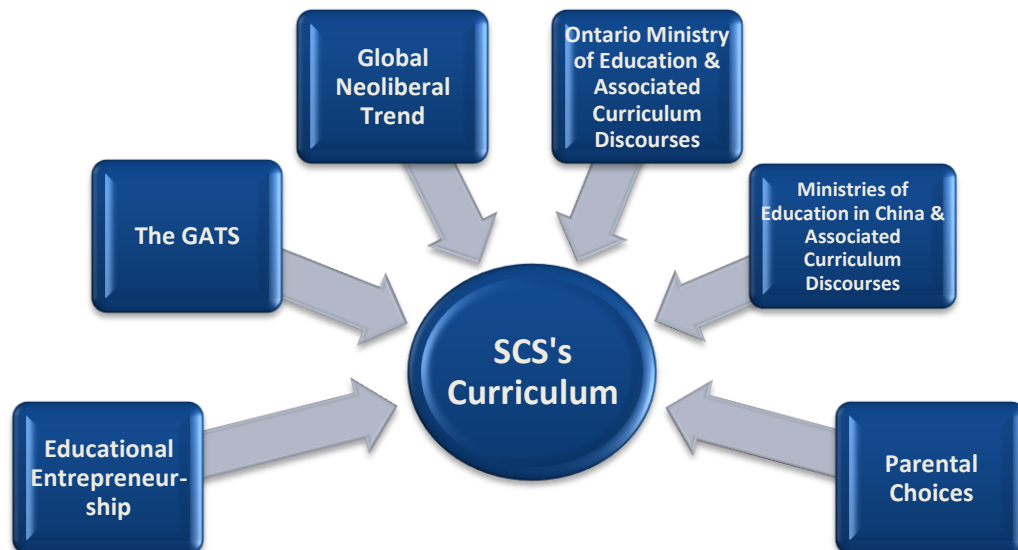
## Chapter 8

### 8 Discussion & Recommendations

In this chapter, I discuss the findings pertinent to the nature and function of literacy-related curricula at SCS. The discussions respond to the research questions about various levels of curriculum and the ensuing implications for students' learning opportunities and identity formation. I highlight the clashes and interplay of local and global curriculum discourses that were affecting SCS students' identity options and the literacy curricula at various levels. This chapter also seeks to expand the imaginable spaces of literacy curriculum and instruction in transnational education programs. It makes recommendations for literacy education in cross-border contexts.

#### 8.1 Interacting and Competing Local and Global Curriculum Discourses

One overarching finding of this study is that various local and global curriculum discourses interacted and competed with one another to shape SCS's literacy-related curricula and students' literacy and identity options.



**Figure 42: Interacting and Competing Local and Global Curriculum Discourses.**

The differing curriculum discourses shown in Figure 42 seemed to hold onto “their own singular logic” (Smith, 2006, p. 23) to shape SCS’s curricular landscape in their respective ways. For instance, educational entrepreneurship in Canada and China facilitated the advent of SCS and its hybrid curriculum. The GATS (The General Agreement on Trade in Services) enabled the appearance and development of Canadian offshore programs like SCS by liberalizing trade in education and granting developed countries free market access to less developed countries. Moreover, the global trend of neoliberalism (i.e., the global free market ideology) facilitated globalization of education as a commodity and set up ideal conditions for the marketization of SCS’s curriculum. The Ontario Ministry of Education, different levels of ministries of education in China, and their inherited yet differing curriculum discourses created a unique social space at SCS and affected its curriculum, instruction, and students’ lived experience. Policy makers, teachers, and students in the study also reported that parents were key players in shaping SCS’s curriculum and students’ identity formation. To use Fenwick’s (2009) language of Actor Network Theory, these various human and non-human actors exist in “fluid spaces and ambivalent belongings that create actor-network(s) but also escape them” (p. 1). In the following, I will discuss in detail the impacts of some major curriculum actors and discourses.

### 8.1.1 The Universal Business Discourse & SCS’s Curriculum

One major finding refers to a major curriculum discourse of “universal business culture” (Marginson, 2001, p. 6) that nurtures individuals who feature hybrid identities, abilities to communicate and work across borders, and varying competences in handling ever-changing information and technology in international business.

When asked about the impacts of neoliberalism and privatization of education upon SCS’s curriculum, all the Ontario policy makers said that they did not see such impact on the Ontario side. They concurred that there was little actual revenue coming from overseas schools to the coffers of the Ontario government, hence, little impact of neoliberalism upon Ontario’s education.

By contrast, the participating Canadian and Chinese policy makers shared that such impacts were more evident on the Chinese side. For example, the Chinese principal Mr. Guo concurred that China encouraged Chinese-foreign educational cooperation efforts that could introduce internationally advanced curricula and pedagogies to modernize its school system. Quite a few Chinese policy makers and Chinese teachers appraised the role of transnational education programs in diversifying educational options in China and increasing educational exchanges that could benefit China's education system. The Ontario policy maker, Mr. Sedley, also shared that it was largely the Asian or Asian Canadian entrepreneurs who drove the advent and growth of the Ontario offshore programs. Additionally, in the wake of the commodification of education at the local and global levels, the concept of freedom of choice in education was positively accepted by Chinese students and parents. Based on interview data with policy makers, teachers, and students, Chinese parents from high socioeconomic families sent their children to transnational education programs like SCS with the hope that they would become bilingual, bicultural, and more internationally mobile.

Parental choices, neoliberal ideology, and China's ambition to modernize its education system worked together and set up ideal conditions for SCS's intended curriculum to be more market-oriented.

The "dual diploma" program at SCS was promoted as an educational product. The earlier Ontario coordinator of transnational education Mr. Sedley said that "dual diploma" did sound like a terrific product to sell. The idea of dual diploma attracted the Canadian and Chinese entrepreneurs to set up SCS and "create" their hybrid curriculum model. During the interviews, SCS's Chinese policy makers expressed their hope that the curriculum of the program would connect the East and the West and bring together "best" practices from both. However, SCS did little to develop their own curriculum documents and materials to instantiate this desire. SCS only put together the two public school curricula from China and Ontario that embodied differing values and curriculum ideologies. Hence, as is evident in the teachers' interviews and my classroom observations, there were tensions and challenges when Canadian and Chinese teachers implemented the two public school curricula in their transnational education classrooms.

It also seems to me that there were not a large number of spaces for agency in the routines of the school because of the macro-level constraints related to the universal business culture. First of all, SCS had to alter its curriculum to tailor to customers' demands. SCS had to shorten its original plan of a four-year program to 3 years because the majority of Chinese parents assumed that secondary school should not take more than 3 years. At the same time, data relate that it was the administrations' perception that most parents insisted that their children were not going to colleges and needed the 4U courses to apply to overseas universities. On the one hand, SCS's educators had the ideals of promoting bilingualism and biculturalism. On the other, they had to succumb to the market logic in order to survive. For instance, SCS had to compress Mandarin literacy-related courses to spare more time for the 4U courses and Canadian English literacy-related courses.

When local and global flows of knowledge meet, one basic curricular question emerges-- "what knowledge is of most worth" (Pinar, 2009, p. vii)? Findings show that the hidden expectations of the global knowledge economy were inherent in SCS's transnational education curriculum. Concurring with McBurnie and Ziguras's (2007) comments on knowledge production in transnational education contexts, I also found that the "ideological and subliminal message" (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 27) of knowledge economy that features a global market presented within SCS's curriculum. This hidden curriculum at SCS privileged certain types of knowledge which are endorsed by the global business culture. SCS's institutional curriculum stressed that students' literacy skills in two languages would facilitate their inter-cultural communication and their future international mobility. Most Chinese policy maker participants admitted that SCS intended to connect their curriculum with the competencies favoured by the globalized labor market, for instance, the "internationally standardized capabilities" that allowed people to "participate in global business, communication and cultural production." (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007, p. 62).

As Gee et al. (1996) note, schools adopt the global workplace literacy to cater to the changed landscape of global technology and global economic order. The global business discourse buttresses the training of talents who have the abilities to communicate across

borders and handle ever-changing information and technology in global workplaces. For instance, both Chinese and Ontario secondary school curricula adopt a broadly defined concept of literacy and expect teachers to engage students' local literacy practices in different languages and diverse modes. Both Chinese and Canadian teachers also incorporated multiple modes and media in their Mandarin and English literacy-related classes. Nonetheless, global workplaces also played an implicit role in privileging certain forms of literacy and constraining students' literacy options. For SCS students who were determined to be global in their future study and career, the demands of global workplaces fueled the dominance of English-related literacy and Western-centric knowledge systems at SCS. As most of the Chinese policy makers in this study shared, based on the market demands and parental requests, SCS had to prioritize business literacy in English and attempted to equip students with knowledge and skills required by the new business and management discourses. Adopting a post-colonial perspective, Bacchus (2006) conceives of such a curricular alignment with the global economy as an extended form of Western hegemonic control. Most Canadian and Chinese teachers expressed concerns about SCS's core governance model as a for-profit private education institution. However, only one teacher, Mr. Gosnell, pointed out the trend of commodification of education back in Canada. The hidden trends of westernization and commercialization from Canada and the global largely remain uncommented on among the participants. The findings suggest that the globalization processes of English-related literacies worked as an implicit agenda in marginalizing the Mandarin-related literacies and the Chinese ways of teaching at SCS. The Mandarin-related language socializations succumbed to SCS's global schooling practices that favoured English-related literacies. Plus, in the interviews, the student participants compared the Chinese ways of literacy teaching to English-related literacy education and intuitively found the latter more engaging because of its emphasis on "individualism, personal autonomy and self-interest" (Smith, 2006, p. 15). In the contact zone of transnational education, local and global flows of politics, cultures, and ideologies intersect and compromise. Its unique social location calls for a collective critical reflection and interrogation of globalization's "contradictory potentials" (Silverstone, 2006, p. 8) in shaping students' literacy practices and identity formation. Transnational education recipient countries' local "linguistic and

culture-historical repertoires” (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 22) have great potential to engage local students’ meaning making and enhance the quality of their learning experience; hence, they should be brought to the core of transnational education curriculum and instruction. Efforts shall also be made to celebrate the wisdom of Mandarin literacy education that stresses the maintenance of associated cultural heritages such as the emotional and aesthetic experience of practicing calligraphy and rote learning Classical Chinese.

Neuman (2005) differentiates exogenous and endogenous governance. Exogenous governance focuses on the changing structure of government as resulting from “global economic pressures, the work of supranational institutions..., and increased transnational policy diffusion and exchange” (p. 131). In contrast, endogenous governing process is influenced by internal changes, such as more independent actors in the policy-making process, educational decentralisation, and private actors’ involvement in decision-making. SCS was licensed as a private corporate enterprise and its curricular making was driven both directly by the demands of the domestic market and indirectly by the demands of the global workplace. Endogenously, as an institution of formal education, SCS had attempted to build and enforce its core governance and cultural patterns such as its corporate governance model and its efforts to make East-West connections and buttress bilingual and bicultural education. Concurring with Heath and Street (2008), I also found that the cultural identities of SCS had gone through constant changes due to exogenous factors such as the global trend of privatizing education, the increasing demand of supranational education cooperation and the strategic changes in transnational education policy on the Ontario side. On the one hand, the ministries of education of both the Chinese and Ontario sides delegated considerable autonomy to SCS as a private entity to construct its institutional and programmatic curricula. Given that SCS incorporated both Chinese and Ontario public school programmatic curricula, the two ministries of education conducted annual inspections to make sure that SCS followed their respective curricular expectations. When the Ontario Ministry of Education was involved, SCS’s governance model fit the category of “hybrid” operations which combined both public service and private enterprise. On the other hand, such an awkward hybridity, in part, sparked heated debates in Ontario and fueled the Ontario government’s accreditation



moratorium in 2005. As the Ontario policy makers shared, Ontario decided not to use tax payers' money to support overseas private enterprises any more. Besides online curricular resources and annual inspections into curriculum implementation at existent Ontario offshore programs, now the Ontario government is not providing any other types of curriculum support.

At SCS, its growing tendency toward corporate governance and “managerialism” (Schapper & Mayson, 2005) was also evident. Most teacher participants teaching Mandarin-related courses noted SCS's corporate governance model. Based on my observations and interviews with teachers, I found that the features of “managerialism” at SCS had been impacting Chinese teachers' professionalism and teaching autonomy. These features were: limited teacher resources, increased workloads, fragmented work tasks, and diminished professional autonomy (Schapper & Mayson, 2005). In the open lesson evaluation meetings, the Chinese principal Mr. Guo's role was overall authoritative, but the collective reflection process was fairly democratic. It is worth noting that in those meetings, teachers' discussions were more about the technical aspects of curriculum and instruction. I rarely heard teachers bring up the governance issues such as heavy work load and diminished professional autonomy that they interrogated in our one-on-one interviews.

At SCS, the cult of efficiency (Stein, 2001) was evident. According to Ponte (2009), in a management approach to curriculum construction, educational quality would equal effectiveness and efficiency as measured by observable outcomes. First of all, at SCS, efficiency was reduced to the number of students studying abroad after graduation. As the Chinese policy maker Mr. Zhou shared, this was the statistic that parents and potential consumers wanted to see. Plus, almost all the teachers teaching Mandarin literacy-related courses felt the pressure to cover knowledge modules required by the Chinese curricula within limited session hours. Except for open lessons where they used “low-efficient” progressive approaches, most teachers chose a “fleet-footed pace” (Mr. Chen's expression) to transmit content in their regular classes. Chinese teachers such as Mr. Chen, Ms Ge, and Ms. Feng were aware that students were less engaged in such classes. However, with the Chinese side's annual inspection in place, they felt that accomplishing

curricular requirements sometimes had to override students' engagement. When asked about what they meant by "accomplishing curricular requirements", these teachers said that this was about covering content required by the Mandarin literacy-related curricula. The progressive approaches, as prescribed in these curricula, seemed like an ill-fitting bedfellow with the commodified education model at SCS. On one hand, the Chinese teacher participants noted the different pressures they had to face at a for-profit school. On the other hand, some of these Chinese teachers felt unsure about commercialized education. They concurred that quality of education should override profit seeking. However, these teachers had seen and experienced the control of centralized education in China before the education reforms started in 1985. Therefore, while they questioned the commodified education models, they also found themselves embracing the globalized neoliberal trend in education. To quote Mr. Chen, "at least it enriches educational alternatives in China and offers opportunities for China to engage with the Western countries, which was not possible [before the reforms]".

Regarding the impacts of universal business discourse on the Canadian teacher participants' implemented curriculum, almost all the Canadian teachers cherished their "Canadian philosophy" that education was a public good. They had concerns that SCS was more driven by profit than providing sufficient teaching resources to meet students' needs. Several Canadian teachers teaching literacy-related courses reported that SCS needed to recruit more individualized in-class and after-class ESL support for a large portion of SCS students. Without it, these students would not be able to understand the Canadian teachers' instructions, finish their assignments, or participate in class activities. Some of the Canadian teacher participants (e.g., Mr. Wilson, Mr. Gosnell, and Ms. Wyatt) felt that what they experienced at the for-profit private school context seemed to alienate them from their valued virtue of education as a common good. Drawing on both Chinese and Ontario policy maker and teacher interviews, it is fair to suggest that SCS's intended and implemented curricula reflected "a fundamental clash of values" that see transnational education differently as a commercial venture or "a public good" (Education International, 2004, p. 5).

### 8.1.2 Educational Accountability & SCS's Curriculum

SCS implemented a plethora of literacy assessments, namely, the district-level standardized tests on the Chinese side and international English language tests (IELTS or TOEFL, and OSSLT<sup>64</sup>) on the Canadian side, the Canadian teachers' portfolio assessments, the Canadian and Chinese teachers' intermittent assessments of speech and oral presentations, and structured mid-term and final exams for Mandarin-related courses. The complicated designs of literacy-related evaluations seemed to assess different "literate being[s]" (Murphy, 2012, p. 6) at SCS. The mixed accountability models at the local and global levels tended to realign the relationship among the intended, implemented, and lived curriculum at SCS.

All the Chinese policy makers concurred that breaking the tether from Gaokao created new spaces for students to appreciate the joy of learning different cultures and different knowledge systems incorporated at SCS. However, despite the absence of Gaokao, different curricular players (e.g., the district school board on the Chinese side, parents, the Ontario Ministry of Education, and postsecondary institutions in English-speaking countries) unintentionally combined their forces to put in place a series of standardized exams at SCS. Most Chinese teachers agreed that the standardized tests on the Chinese side served (a) as an external motivation and a mechanism to hold students accountable for their study and (b) as a benchmark to show current and future parental "clients" that business-oriented private schools were academically competitive as regular public schools.

Most Chinese teachers felt that these tests were a means of remote control of their teaching as well (e.g., Doyle, 1992). In their views, SCS's advocating of advanced teaching ideas and its incorporation of standardized tests were contradictory and posed substantial challenges for the Chinese teacher participants when they taught Grade 10 transnational education students. Some Chinese educators, such as Ms. Ge and Ms. Lin, even felt that external exams embodied the school's distrust in teachers' professionalism.

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<sup>64</sup> IELTS: International English Language Testing System; TOEFL: The Test of English as a Foreign Language; OSSLT: the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

These outcomes-oriented external tests to a certain extent “circumscribe the professional role of teachers” (Pinar et al. 2008, p. 798).

On the Canadian side, most Ontario teachers taught Ontario literacy-related courses that were not directly bounded by standardized language tests at the local and global levels. These teachers appreciated the autonomy they had in tweaking the Ontario curricula. They said, as long as they were meeting the Ontario curricular expectations, they had the freedom to be creative in their teaching and assessment practices based on the needs of these transnational education students. Heydon and Wang (2006) describe such a curricular paradigm as “adaptable paradigm” where there is a “moderate climate of flexibility” for teachers to interact with learners and respond to their needs (p. 34). Heydon (2012) contends that such an outcomes-based adaptable paradigm only assigns teachers the responsibilities to answer the curricular question of how to teach but not what to teach since the curricular ends are prescribed in the form of expectations in the documents.

Besides the local standardized tests on the Chinese side, for Ms. Jiang and Mr. Abrams who taught English classes that were geared to test preparations for IELTS and OSSLT, they also found that their teaching practices and students’ literacy practices were fairly bounded by the expectations of these international-level English tests. Data relate that the local and global standardized exams incorporated within SCS’s curriculum determined much of what to teach and what not to teach, which illuminates the null curriculum at SCS. Luke (2011) refers to such a global trend of neoliberal accountability as a “new common sense” (p. 368) that is being generalized across borders. Such a common sense narrowly attends to “the measurable, the countable, and what can be said to be cost efficient and quality assured” (Luke, 2011, p. 368). It is worth noting that when commenting on the educational juxtaposition at SCS, most of the student participants had the inclination to stereotype Chinese education as rigid lecturing and test-oriented. They tended to pit the local education against the more globalized Western education systems. Such inclinations could be read in terms of students’ “critical, inward-looking self-reflection” (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010, p. 92) of the local Chinese education. They also signal a missing interrogation of the constraints of the global language tests upon

students' learning experience. Students tended to see these international language tests as mechanisms that reached out to the local settings and validated their global mobility. Few student participants in the study were able to see that the "narrow metrics" at the global level did not "always do justice to what is [was] educationally and culturally meaningful" to students in transnational education contexts (Luke, 2011, p. 368). That said, SCS students did not have the autonomy to join the process of formulating educational objectives and teaching methods to achieve the goals based on their individual needs, interests, and strengths. For instance, most student participants gave credit to SCS teachers' diverse modal choices in their literacy-related classes. Students felt that these modal choices responded to their outside-of-school literacies and made learning more engaging. However, print literacy was still the prevailing form of literacy that was assessed and reinforced in the international-level English tests. It is fair to suggest that the implicit curriculum of these international-level English tests situate these transnational education students in an externally and even globally directed mechanism which expected these learners, situated in a culturally and linguistically different host country, to "adapt to fit in with procedures" (Ponte, 2009, p. 72) and achieve goals that were laid down by the global others. Moreover, IELTS and TOEFL tests privilege the "dominant culture's literacy" (MacKinnon & Manathunga, 2003, p. 131) and expand the globalizing trend of Anglo-European literacy assessment. "Ethically based literacy assessment" (Murphy, 2012, n.p.) that stresses assessment designers' mindfulness of particular contexts is in need in transnational education contexts to take account of local and underprivileged literacy forms and skills. To quote MacKinnon and Manathunga (2003), "If our assessment continues to be based upon a Western template of knowledge that only values Western ways of knowing and learning, all our lip service to developing inter-culturally competent students is meaningless" (p. 132).

Almost all the student participants in the study depicted their public school peers as working hard on knowledge systems that were tailored for the local standardized testing regimes and having limited opportunities to develop their individual strengths. In contrast, they configured their own learning experience at the Canadian offshore program and their imagined future learning experience at English-speaking countries as more emancipating. Almost all of the students assumed that transnationality was liberatory

without mentioning the structural constraints entrenched in transnational mobility, such as the standardized English tests and the socio-economic status. Joe-Hui was the only student participant that pointed out the crucial role of financial resources in enabling SCS students' new identities in the world. This echoes Ong's (1999) noted link between the "class stratification" and globalization (p. 11). She states that the global "out-of-placement" is mostly enjoyed by the wealthy and privileged Asians (p. 10). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to critically analyze whether transnational education programs like SCS have tacitly legitimated and maintained the "existing social order" at the global level (Apple, 1971, p. 33). However, it is fair to suggest that SCS's transnational education students' global mobility, literacy options, and fluid identities were endorsed by global capital mobility, which actually "induces a parallel sense of displacement" among others "who have not benefited from globalization" (Ong, 1999, p. 10). Scholars following the line of democratic curriculum inquiry disrupt how neoliberal forces buttress curriculum that serves elite instead of democratic interests (e.g., Kenway & Bullen, 2005; Molnar, 2005). For these "elite" students from families with higher socioeconomic status, there were no efforts at SCS that encouraged them to unlearn their privileges and the "freedom" they had in literacy options and identity-makings.

Despite the privileged status of SCS students, some Ontario policy makers' tacit assumption about these offshore students' legitimacy remained intact and unnoticed. When asked about whether students in Ontario offshore programs would be treated as the same as local Ontario students, Mr. Allington commented:

Yes, you're going to graduate with an Ontario diploma, but if you should really want to use that diploma and come to Ontario, you're not going to be seen in the same level or under the same standard as a student who has graduated from the school within the public education system in Ontario.

Mr. Allington disclosed the hidden assumption of the Ontario Ministry of Education and Ontario universities, namely, students enrolled in the overseas Ontario programs were not and would not be treated as equally as local Ontario students. First of all, Mr. Allington shared that as long as overseas Ontario schools were meeting the Ontario curricular expectations, the Ontario government did not regulate how the Ontario curriculum is taught, what is taught, and ultimately how these students fare once they come to Canada.

Second, he noted that the Ontario government stated publicly, for students enrolled in local or overseas private schools, it was all parental choices. To quote him, “It’s you invested your money; this is your return”. The accountability issue was thus shifted to parents who were consumers of Ontario’s curricula and educational products. However, regular Class A students’ difficulties in adapting to the Ontario’s English literacy-related curricula and pedagogies accentuate the complexity of students’ lived experience of the Ontario curricula that were “developed and implemented by others” (Chan, 2007, p. 192). The Ontario curricula are educational “products” that are culturally and historically constructed. Viewed otherwise, it is the Ontario Ministry of Education and its transnational education programs that should be held accountable when these “products” are exported cross borders. I hence concur with Luke (2011) that a quality programming of transnational education should be re-calibrated based on (a) a global commitment to transnational education students’ well-being instead of a focus on quality assurance and (b) a rich understanding of host- and home-countries’ cultural and historical contexts that have informed their respective curricula that are incorporated in transnational education programs.

### 8.1.3 Contradictory Social Spaces at SCS: Multiliteracies or Mere Literacy?

Various local and global curriculum discourses, including those inherited in the Chinese and Ontario public school curricula, interplayed and created unique social spaces at SCS. These social spaces contradicted one another and further shaped the perceptions and practices of literacy at SCS.

First of all, the more recent Ontario coordinator, Mr. Allington, did not expect to see integrated Sino-Canada programs. Being more focused on the credibility of the existing offshore programs, Mr. Allington did not expect curricular modifications to be made for the offshore Ontario programs when the Ontario curricula were internationalized to different sociocultural and linguistic contexts. For him, Ontario inspectors’ foci should always be placed on whether offshore programs met the Ontario curricular expectations. That said, there was a salient insistence on a unidirectional educational mobility of Anglo-European literacy practices and knowledge systems from Canada to countries

importing Canadian education products. Such a strategy of “generalising” (Luke, 2011, p. 369) education to differing contexts often receives critiques for its explicit or implicit educational and cultural imperialism especially when curriculum is transported from developed to less developed countries. In my view, this is a fairly narrow view of internationalizing education with a salient mentality of neoliberal accountability that focuses on what is measurable and how to be quality assured. For me, a vision of international education should not be narrowly focused on mobilizing Canadian programs overseas, but developing policy makers’ “genuine openness to the Other” (Smith, 2006, p. xxiv) with due consideration of students’ well-being in different receiving contexts. It is worth noting that the Chinese policy makers at SCS were making salient efforts to juxtapose both systems and engage educators from both sides. However, there was little evidence that SCS intended to address the competing discourses and mediate differing visions of literate citizens to be “produced”.

All the examined Ontario literacy-related curricula accentuate students’ healthy perceptions of their identities in terms of students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds. For example, the Ontario ESL curriculum encourages ESL students to maintain their first languages (L1s) with the belief that the stronger students’ L1s are, the more likely they will succeed in a second language (L2). In reality, the more recent Ontario coordinator Mr. Allington did not see the value of integrating L1 and L2 teaching in one program. The concern on the Ontario side was more about the students’ facility with English. To help students make successful transitions to overseas undergraduate programs, Mr. Allington and the Canadian Principal Mr. Collins insisted that these offshore programs should preferably enrol students earlier into English immersion programs. Mr. Collins required the Canadian teachers to implement the English-only policy in their classrooms, though almost all the Canadian teachers found it unrealistic to implement this policy and left spaces for students to practice their L1s. In contrast, at the level of students’ lived curriculum, examples of multiliteracies involving communication practices in different cultures and languages are evident in students’ multimodal artifacts. Seven students in the study spoke more than three languages (e.g., their mother tongue, Mandarin, English, and other Chinese dialects). Similar to Byrd Clark’s (2009) argument, these SCS students’ multilingualism had impacts upon their lives, conditions, and identities and thus created



more spaces for their voices to be heard in their multimodal artifacts. Joe-Hui's, Tina-Qin's, and Dave-Yue's incorporation of two different writing systems reveal the myth of these biliterate students' abilities to code-switch or combine two semiotic systems in communication. As is exemplified in their bilingual artifacts, the "multisemiotic resources" that these biliterate students had also seemed to enhance their communicative repertoires and give them "alternative ways to construct their knowledge and identities" (Kenner, 2004, p. xi).

Students' multimodal artifacts can be read as expressing their understandings of how different modes represent meanings (Kenner & Kress, 2003). For instance, talking about the demerits of test-oriented education, Rich-Zhi was aware of the sensory effects a student-created cartoon could arouse. To show the importance of online gaming community to his life, Mark-Ji intentionally chose a recording of him collaborating with his friend "Love Khamn" who "saved" his life by giving resources to him. He also attended to "evocative details" (Rowell, 2011, p. 332) to showcase his sensitivity to interrelations within and across multiple sign systems, which was core to his learning experience as a gamer (Gee, 2003). Similar to Kress's (1997) assertion, shifts between modes on paper or screen do seem to have the potential to showcase students' transduction across modes. The epistemological effects of transductions lie in how knowledge re-configures when it is moved from one mode to another in an ensemble of modes. In Kress's eye, the transduction between modes has the potential to encourage meaning makers' "synaesthetic potentials" in their "transformative, creative actions" (Kress, 1997, p. 27). Artifacts created in more than one mode also illuminate the inextricable links between students' engagement as "active members" (Gregory, 2008, p. 24) in out-of-school literacy practices and their complex cognitive understanding of orchestrating symbols. However, at SCS, there was no obvious scaffolding or active teaching of "transfer across languages" (Cummins, 2005, p. 8) that guided the students to harness the wealth of their tacit conceptual and metalinguistic knowledge in L1s and in orchestrating various modes.

Cummins (2005) problematizes such a predominant "monolingual instructional orientation" in bilingual and immersion programs (p. 9). He suggests that educators and

schools move away from its underlying assumptions that are not empirically supported: (a) Target language should be the only medium of instruction. L1 use should be discouraged, (b) Translation between L1 and L2 is seen as “a regression to the discredited grammar/translation method” (Cummins, 2005, p. 9), and (c) Teachers and schools should keep L1 and L2 rigidly separate. Considering the unique cultural and linguistic milieu of transnational education programs, I concur with Cummins that bilingual instructional strategies such as bilingual identity texts and sister class exchanges have the potential to buttress students’ cross-language transfer and support the development of their metalinguistic awareness and literacy engagement in both languages. Plus, transnational education programs have the innate advantage to enable Sino-Canada teachers’ alliance in order to provide interactive and guided instruction (a) to recognize the “intricate and intimate link between culture and cognition in the learning endeavour” (Gregory, 2008, p. 24); (b) to capitalize on students’ funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005) in their L1s and the associated cultures; and (c) to cultivate students’ abilities to utilize the available linguistic, cultural, and semiotic resources and take these meanings and subjectivities into productive future domains.

Most of the student participants shared that they were impressed with the wide spectrum of extracurricular activities at SCS that celebrated their individual interests and strengths. The students with higher English proficiency levels rejoiced at their new English literacy practices that let in adolescents’ preferred modes of expressions and encouraged investment of their diverse local experiences. However, it is worth noting that students’ modal choices in their multimodal artifacts do not reflect their social class. As students shared in their interviews, all of them were from middle or upper-middle class families. All of them had desktops and laptops at home. However, half of the student participants (i.e., Coco-Ling, Tina-Qin, Steve-Jian, and Joe-Hui) chose the readily accessible semiotic forms at the boarding school, that is, non-digital modes such as hand drawing, writing, and cutting and pasting. Students’ modal choices in their artifacts reflect their limited access to computers at SCS. SCS endured contradictory social spaces when it comes to the incorporation of new literacies in education. The school’s institutional curriculum embraces the global trend of new literacies such as business literacy and information & technological literacy. However, in practice, the school yielded to the dominant practices

of educational governance (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2004) in China---a discourse that is overall more controlling than enabling. The Chinese administrators at SCS tended to see students' "unguided" access to the Internet and their personal use of digital technologies within the school context as opening "Pandora's box". On one hand, the school encouraged both Chinese and Canadian teachers to incorporate new media literacy components into their teaching. On the other, for controlling purposes, students' access to computer and the Internet was limited. The Internet search was censored at the school level and the national level. Before they became registered Ontario students, Grade 10 and Grade 11 students were governed by the Chinese administrators who prohibited students' in-school use of Micro-blogs (Wei Bo "微博": the Chinese equivalent of twitter), cell phones, online games, and iPod. The hidden curriculum of compliant behaviour at SCS functioned as codes of social control and legitimated one type of null curriculum at SCS, that is, the omissions of certain forms of new literacies through media censorship and limited use of digital technologies. Such a type of null curriculum constrained students' active participation in virtual social networks and their interaction with a larger body of audience. SCS students' limited access to new communication channels as new conditions of the world might potentially constrain their different subjectivities associated with their attendant languages, discourses, and registers. The limited use of new forms of literacy might further inhibit students' capacity to speak up and negotiate their identities and meaning making.

This study finds that SCS emerged and developed in a cross-border discourse and had to abide by both Canadian provincial and Chinese national education regulations. When most developed countries competed for transnational education spaces in China, Chinese authorities put in place a series of transnational education regulations. The regulations communicated that Sino-foreign education cooperation should serve the purpose of training talents for China's socialist construction. Also, no cooperative education institutions should be established to provide services of political, military, and religious education. Introducing foreign education for the local use, the Chinese government also accentuates its discourse of "saying no to the west" (Ong, 1999, p. 7) and reveals a type of protectionism that emphasizes its national identity as a socialist country in cooperative

education governance. Such protective education policies, along with the “nationalist and patriotic discourses” (Harper et al., 2010, p. 3) inherent in the examined Mandarin literacy-related curricula, can be interpreted as embodiments of the ruling government’s ideological control or as policy makers’ “traditional fears of foreign cultures and ideologies” (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 803). But when I take a more situated look at China’s over one-hundred-year struggles with Western invaders in the semi-feudal and semi-colonial society, I feel that these policies can also be interpreted as a localization or “disintegration” trend of globalization (Smith, 2006, p. 22). In my view, such a disintegration tendency can be a double-edged sword. It could serve the ruling government’s hidden curriculum of political socialization. It also has the potential to create opportunities for the emergence of new patterns of resistance that seek to “recover local control over local life” (Smith, 2006, p. 22). Chinese authorities’ transnational education regulations provide a glimpse of how Chinese authorities have been handling the rapid social, cultural, and economic changes stemming from the “combined forces of modernization, westernization, and commercialization” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 225) in globalized education. There are salient tensions between globalization of Western-centric education and China’s, as a less developed and a socialist country, strengthened efforts to secure its local diversity and national/ethnic identities that “had been formerly subsumed” (Smith, 2006, p. 22).

British Columbia principals viewed that China’s above-mentioned transnational education regulations are “anti-democratic” (The Vancouver Sun, 2007, para. 17). In contrast, the Canadian principal Mr. Collins encouraged the Canadian teachers to respectfully yet carefully open students’ minds about what was out there in other countries and cultures. The other two Ontario policy makers Mr. Collins and Mr. Sedley also expected Canadian educators not to impose their Canadians’ views of democracy and political systems. Canadian teachers’ comments on that issue also showed their inter-cultural understanding of the others. However, their comments and their teaching practices to some extent echo the Canadian principal’s mandate of being “respectful” but “careful”, which left limited space for critical interrogation of why some predominant sociopolitical discourses were encoded in texts but others were not.

Critical literacy is a key component of multiliteracies (The New London Group, 1996). All the investigated Mandarin literacy-related curricula adopt a social conception of literacy and recognize that school literacy should be embedded within particular sociocultural contexts. These curricula reiterate the importance of social practice in knowledge construction. However, these curricula do not go beyond the emphasis on “the social aspects of language production and reception” (Ivanič, 2004, p. 223) and students’ abilities to use literacy skills in social practices. The social forces that privilege certain forms of literacy remain intact in these Chinese curricula. By contrast, in almost all the examined Ontario curricula, educating students to be critical thinkers is salient. However, from the class observation and interview data, I found that critical literacy was largely missing at SCS. The null curriculum in this regard might be partially a result of China’s protective transnational education regulations. Data also supported that Canadian teacher participants and the examined Ontario curricula might convey different perceptions of critical literacy from what is advocated by critically oriented literacy scholars (e.g., Bean & Harper, 2006; Janks, 2000; Lewison et al., 2002; The New London Group, 1996). For instance, among the democratic goals acclaimed by the examined Ontario curricula, there is little focus on students’ action aiming at social changes. The English curriculum specifically expects students to reflect upon sociopolitical issues such as inequity, power, and social justice. However, Lewison et al.’s (2002) recommendation of “using language to exercise power to enhance everyday life” (p. 384) is absent across the examined Ontario curricula.

Based on the findings of the study, I find it necessary to differentiate elite multiliteracies and peripheral multiliteracies. Patterns of power relations in SCS’s multiple forms of literacy tended to favour the economically advantaged recipients. This form of elite multiliteracies at SCS involved a number of new literacies (e.g., business literacy and information & technological literacy) and major international (or regional) languages. For example, the spread of English-related literacies and new literacies at SCS was enabled by English’s economically profitable features and facilitated by the globalization of investment, the globalization of economy, and the globalization of science and technology (Phillipson, 2006). By contrast, peripheral multiliteracies might or might not involve the globally dominant languages. Ethnographic studies on multiliteracies in the

New Literacy Studies are primarily about out-of-school literacies, non-mainstream literacies, or oral literacies for non-elite (Canagarajah, 1996; Collins, 1995; Pahl & Rowsell, 2005). Researchers following this lineage challenge the school literacy as a hegemonic project that involves “displacement of nonstandard varieties of language and a shunting aside or discrediting of alternative literacies” (Collins, p. 84). At SCS, I discerned that despite SCS’s and the Chinese authorities’ efforts to localize transnational education, the powerful English-related literacies tended to marginalize Mandarin-related literacies and the Mandarin-related literacies in turn tended to marginalize the other local dialects and languages that students were proficient at. However, power negotiations at SCS were only restricted to meeting these literacy recipients’ educational or even economical needs and facilitating their future global mobility. At SCS, there was no salient engagement of these elite students in critical interrogation of the privileged and underprivileged language varieties. Following Ivanič (2004), critical literacy education might open up more possibilities for literacy practices and identity options in globalized schooling contexts. Teachers could explicitly teach and encourage students to create texts that disrupt power, ideology, and identity issues that are engrained in both local and global contexts. Critical engagement with both local and global literary texts may also be necessary to foster students’ cosmopolitan understanding of the others and their language varieties and literacy practices. Such a critical engagement might also help nurture humanistic designers of social futures who take into consideration the wisdom and funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005) of the others.

#### 8.1.4 Hybrid and Contradictory Social Space & Students’ Identities

The research findings suggest that some of these transnational education students’ identity options were enabled in various globalization processes whereas others were constrained constantly by a series of local and global flows of power and ideologies.

At SCS, student participants’ out-of-school literacies took place in local contexts but relied on several global technologies and global networks. For instance, Jean-Qin used new literacies to display and share multimodal information on the Internet. Mark-Ji thrived on online gaming as a form of self-expression and self-discovery. Tina-Qin newly developed a hobby of browsing Micro-blogs to “excavate” interesting information.

Students' multimodal artifacts and assignments reveal how the local-global nexus at the globalized schooling context fueled students' imagination and creativity in using non-traditional symbols to represent meanings. Students' multimodal artifacts and assignments also showcase how the local-global nexus has breathed new life into students' identity formation. For example, students reflected upon their "multiple attachments" across borders (Saito, 2010, p. 335) in forms of "being" and "becoming". These multiple attachments were inspired by the "local-global continuum" (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 80) and enabled by the transnational high school program. Pahl and Rowsell argue that "Modal [modal] choice is ideological, and some voices are heard more readily in some modes than others" (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 94). At SCS, print literacy stood out as a ready and dominant mode for meaning making in students' Mandarin and English assignments. Approaching dominant cultures' privileging of print literacy from a multimodality perspective, Kress (1997) contends that writing-centred cultures suppress human's innate "synaesthetic qualities" such as the abilities to translate a sound into words, words into colours, and smells into tangible feelings (p. 37). Kress (1997) suggests that educators and learners create paths and spaces to negotiate and relearn these capabilities.

Based on data collected from classroom observations and students' assignments, at SCS, there were limited spaces for students to recruit multiple media as "the main ingredient" (Johnson & Kress, 2003, p. 5) for creative and transformative learning. The Ontario English curriculum expects students to understand, interpret, and critique media (e.g., texts, forms, conventions, and techniques). But two other key components of the expectations of media studies were missing in observed classes, namely, students' creation of media and their reflection on their skills as media interpreters and creators (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b). At SCS, media was not used as leverage for students to creatively and critically invest in palette forms of learning. SCS students acted more often as "media consumers" (Lange & Ito, 2010, p. 244) instead of media designers or creators.

SCS students' identities were constructed in fluidity and unpredictability given their educational choices and international mobility. As is shown in students' artifacts, these

transnational education students' multiple choices of leaving a place and entering a new place had the potential to validate new identities in new places and reinforce the ever-changing feature of their identities. Various depictions of transnational education students' "imagined communities" (Norton, 2001) are present in students' multimodal representations. These imagined communities display transnational education students' strong desire for memberships in communities other than their current ones through overseas studies and immigration. These imagined memberships might potentially inspire "a sense of future possibilities" and stimulate actions and transformation (Slattery, 1995, p. 221). As Toohey and Norton (2010) argue, the multiplicity of literacy learners' identity might not merely result from language learners' diverse discursive practices, but also from the possible ways in which they use language to position/negotiate their sense of self.

The students' depictions of their imagined Canadian membership also reflect their limited participation in the Canadian community. As students shared, their knowledge about the Canadian community was mainly obtained from the interactions with the Canadian teachers and their participations in curricular and extracurricular activities associated with the Canadian cultures. Their full participation into the Canadian communities was limited because of their geographic locations. Thus, these students were living in an interconnected but also divided world. Inspired by Hull and Stornaiuolo's (2010) project of "Space2cre8", I think perhaps a creation of bilingual or even trilingual social network platforms can connect students in Canadian classrooms and their offshore peers in various transnational education communities. These platforms will offer ample spaces for cross-language transfer between students' L1s and L2s through diverse online communicative forms. They will also enable offshore program students and local Canadian students to have enhanced cosmopolitan sensibilities and have more situated understanding of the other communities through expanded interactions. As Toohey and Norton (2010) contend, the incorporation of learners' imagined membership into teaching and curriculum can help construct learning opportunities that enrich students' "desired trajectories toward participation in their imagined communities" (p. 184).



Torres (2009) contends that postmodernists accentuate the fading importance of nation-states against the backdrop of globalization. Nation states are perhaps not as incapable of controlling economic, cultural, political, or even educational activities as assumed by the strands of postmodernism mentioned by Torres. “National identity”, though no longer a “fixed marker” of students’ identity in multicultural discourses (Torres, 2009, p. 100), was still evident in the examined Mandarin literacy-related textbooks. Classroom observation and Canadian and Chinese teacher interview data reveal students’ strong feelings of patriotism and nationalism. By contrast, the investigated Ontario literacy-related curricula accentuate knowledge, skills, and sensibilities that are needed to be a responsible and respectful citizen in linguistically and culturally diverse societies. The juxtaposition of the discourses of nationalism and multiculturalism at SCS might potentially result in SCS students’ hybrid identities. Torres (2009) notes, “Globalization and regionalization seem to be dual processes occurring simultaneously” (p. 125). The coupling of multiculturalism and nationalism and the juxtaposition of educational ideologies of socialism and democracy may well have shaped SCS students’ senses of identity. Plus, Mark-Ji’s love for online competitive games, Dave-Yue’s craving for hip-hop, Alice-Mei’s passion for piano music, and Steve-Jian’s adoration of Harry Potter also refer to an internationalized taste that has shaped these students’ sense of who they are and who they want to be. These individuals’ expert use of certain modes supports their identities and memberships in particular local and global communities (e.g., computer geek, hip-hoppa, online gamer, and athlete). As Torres (2009) points out, “A growing convergence of worldviews, mind-sets, even thought processes, and a commodity consciousness---all multimedia driven---are creating a serious generational rift between the ‘Nintendo kids’ generation and their predecessors” (p. 119).

The findings also imply that transnational education institutions like SCS are “important agents of globalization, facilitating the formation of a global elite” that is characteristic of hybrid identities that were “linked by a universal business culture” (Marginson, 2001, p. 6). Most student participants indicated that they enjoyed their enhanced educational options and global mobility validated by privatization and internationalization of education. Marginson argues that students in globalized schooling contexts tend to

“fashion their lives in terms of a private career rather than national citizenship” (p. 6).

This echoes Singh et al.’s (2005) argument,

Neoliberal globalism constructs active, self-actualizing individuals who optimize a narrow sense of the good life by their own decisions regarding consumption based on their capacity to secure credit for goods and services... Individuals are expected to learn to equate their interests with the creation of a globally oriented enterprise culture and a state that disinvests in the collective social and economic security needed for citizens to exercise their public and private autonomy. (p. 16).

Sloan (2008) also notes that neoliberal ideology attempts to maximize “market-place liberties” for “investor[s]” and “consumer[s]”, instead of nurturing the “engaged, critical, civic-minded citizen” (p. 557). Dahlström and Lemma (2008) contend that it is the neoliberal influences on education that turn people into “tightly controlled individuals who insist on claiming to be free in a globalized world” (p. 29). Accompanying the commodification and globalization processes of education, the concepts of freedom of choice in education were also positively accepted (Dahlström & Lemma, 2008). Students’ identities were thus shifted to be “free competitors in an ‘open’ market” (Dahlström & Lemma, 2008, p. 30). I therefore suggest that in the above-mentioned social networks that connect the Canadian and offshore students, spaces could be created to raise students’ cosmopolitan sensibilities and engage them in critical dialogues about the push-and-pull impacts of globalization upon literacy education and students’ identity options. Admittedly, without the neoliberal forces, for-profit transnational education schools like SCS might not exist at all. To advocate a critically oriented cosmopolitan literacy education, my study has to acknowledge this conundrum. However, I do believe that educators and schools, be it private or public, which cherish a transnational vision to connect the self and the others and nurture world citizens, shall be bold enough to embrace the potential chaos and uncertainties of incorporating such a critically oriented cosmopolitan literacy education.

## 8.2 Final Recommendations on Cosmopolitan Literacy Education & Significance of the Study

Bell hooks (1991) states, “To imagine, then, was a way to begin the process of transforming reality. All that we cannot imagine will never come into being” (p. 55).

Besides the recommendations that I proposed earlier in this chapter, in this section, I expand the imaginable spaces of literacy curriculum and instruction in transnational education arenas by accentuating the importance of cosmopolitan education.

Saito (2010) accentuates cosmopolitan education approaches that can enable transnational students' agencies to theorize and understand the multiplicity of their affective attachments that are rooted in a network of connections with concrete foreign others. For him, another key of cosmopolitan education is its cognitive dimension, that is, to transform students' idiosyncratic attachments into more "enlightened', mature, and serious commitments" (Saito, 2010, pp. 341-342); for example, to raise students' awareness of the hidden transnationality in their immediate life. According to Saito, the third dimension of cosmopolitan education is to take up projects that can "enable human actors to effect changes beyond the confines of their localities" (p. 347).

Applying cosmopolitan education ideas in my study (e.g., Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010; Saito, 2010; Smith, 2003), I propose a multidimensional model of cosmopolitan literacy education. I advance that human actors involved in transnational education, particularly students, educators, and policy makers could benefit from (a) nurturing a genuine openness and attachments to the languages and cultures of the foreign others; (b) cultivating their cosmopolitan understanding of the languages and cultures of the others; (c) critically reflecting upon locality and transnationality; (d) co-constructing the teaching, learning, and assessing conditions for biliteracy or multiliteracies education in the transnational education contexts; (e) and taking up local and global projects for individual transformation and societal changes.

Saito (2010) argues, "To effect changes in the world, young people have to step out of the subject position of student vis-à-vis the confines of classrooms" (p. 334). In the contexts of Sino-Canada transnational education, to begin with transnational education students' immediate realities, I see the value of creating two-way learning models in the form of virtual social networks where offshore Chinese students and teachers, Canadian educators and local Canadian students can dialogically share their respective perceptions of Chinese and Canadian cultures, their knowledge of their L1s and L2s, and their understanding of

transnational connections. Similar to Mr Wilson's Pen-Pal practice, such dialogic platforms can bring transnational education students' affective attachments to the foreign others to a higher level and help both offshore and local students realize that their transnational network could expand beyond the confines of schools.

Particularly, there could also be two-way learning models in which local Chinese educators can celebrate their funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005) about the wisdom and values of Chinese educational philosophies and Chinese ways of teaching literacy. It would be preferable if transnational education programs could engage Canadian and Chinese educators' "critical, inward-looking reflection" (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010, p. 92) upon the curriculum discourses that enable and constrain transnational education students' literacy and identity options in order to collectively figure out ways to harnessing and interacting the merits of both systems to optimize students' learning experiences.

Policy makers can also be invited to the network and collaboratively (a) problematize the global discourses that buttress certain forms of literacy (e.g., English-related literacy and business literacy), the English-only mandates, and the unidirectional flow of education from the developed to less developed countries; and (b) interrogate host countries' local agendas of regulating what should be taught in transnational education programs.

This multidimensional model of cosmopolitan literacy education accentuates the human actors' roles in negotiating and rejecting the negative impacts of non-human actors at the local and global levels. It also foregrounds these human actors' creative agencies in effecting structural changes through local and global commitments (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010). Goals of protecting students' interests and enhancing their literacy learning experience in the globalized and diversified backdrop cannot come true if host countries, also home countries, are reluctant to put aside their political agendas that might hinder students' literacy development in a globalized world. A genuine openness to the languages and cultures of the others can provide enrichment to narrow views of internationalizing education which have traces of neoliberal accountability and cultural/linguistic imperialism. I also see the potential of virtual social networks to

engage students', educators', and policy makers' participation in critical dialogues about local and global concerns, such as the universal business discourse, diversity vs. marginalization, the global trend of accountability in education, various forms of ideological control and media censorship in different countries, and the "unjust transnational connections" (p. 344) such as economic exploitation and poverty caused by the globalization of neoliberal forces. As Hull and Stornaiuolo (2010) propose, a "consideration" of "obligations" to the concrete others (p. 91) and ensuing actions are needed to effect societal changes at both local and global levels.

This study offers multiple interpretations (Doll, 1993) of how literacy-related curricula were constructed by various local and global actors in transnational education contexts. In this study, the depictions of contingency and hybridity in curriculum, fluidity of identity, and diversity and fragility of literacy practices at SCS are efforts to challenge the "established paradigms" in the critical frames of educational inquiries (Lather, 1992, p. 88). They are also efforts that try to enrich curriculum reconceptualization in cross-border communities. Given the scarce literature on integrating literacy curricula from different educational systems, this study might offer insights into internationalizing literacy curriculum to differing sociocultural contexts. The study provides suggestions as to how to deploy controversies and contradictories in transnational education spaces to expand students' literacy and identity options in globalized schooling contexts. Giving special attention to the complicated web of local-global interaction and connectivity, this study might also enhance the existent understanding of the situatedness and complexity of curriculum issues entrenched in transnational education communities.

Concurring with Doll (1993) and Slattery (2006), I do not anticipate a harmonious mix or compromise of differences, pluralism, and particulars in the literacy curriculum trajectory in transnational education contexts. Dialogic conversations between various actors of transnational education curriculum are bound to be dynamic, chaotic, and uncertain in nature. However, I believe that these dialogic conversations will also allow for spaces for policymakers', educators', and students' creative agencies, critical reflections, and interactive actions to effect structural changes through local and global commitments.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Ethics Approval Notice



#### THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO FACULTY OF EDUCATION

#### USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS - ETHICS APPROVAL NOTICE

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Review Number: 1008-4  
 Principal Investigator: Rachel Heydon  
 Student Name: Zheng Zhang  
 Title: *Mapping the contact zone: A case study of an integrated Chinese and Canadian literacy curriculum in a secondary transnational education program in China.*  
 Expiry Date: September 30, 2012  
 Type: PhD. Thesis  
 Ethics Approval Date: September 20, 2010  
 Revision #:  
 Documents Reviewed &  
 Approved: UWO Protocol, Letters of Information & Consent

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This is to notify you that the Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board (REB), which operates under the authority of The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the date noted above. The approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the REB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the study or information/consent documents may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB, except for minor administrative aspects. Participants must receive a copy of the signed information/consent documentation. Investigators must promptly report to the Chair of the Faculty Sub-REB any adverse or unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected, and any new information which may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study. In the event that any changes require a change in the information/consent documentation and/or recruitment advertisement, newly revised documents must be submitted to the Sub-REB for approval.

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Dr. Alan Edmunds (Chair)

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#### *2010-2011 Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board*

<b>Dr. Alan Edmunds</b>	<b>Faculty (Chair)</b>
<b>Dr. John Barnett</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
<b>Dr. Jacqueline Specht</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
<b>Dr. Farahnaz Faez</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
<b>Dr. Wayne Martino</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
<b>Dr. George Gadanidis</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
<b>Dr Immaculate Namukasa</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
<b>Dr. Robert Macmillan</b>	<b>Assoc Dean, Graduate Programs &amp; Research (<i>ex officio</i>)</b>
<b>Dr. Susan Rodger</b>	<b>UWO Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (<i>ex officio</i>)</b>

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The Faculty of Education	Karen Kueneman, Research Officer
	Faculty of Education Building

## Appendix 2: Letter of Information to Canadian and Chinese Policy Makers

My name is Zheng Zhang and I am a PhD Candidate at the Faculty of Education at University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada. I am currently conducting research on offshore Canadian secondary school programs in China. This research won the “Ontario Graduate Scholarship” and is funded by The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), Ontario, Canada. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The purposes of this study are: 1) to document how the Canadian secondary curriculum has been adapted to meet the local needs in China and how it is integrated with Chinese curriculum in the offshore program and 2) to provide insight into the factors and processes that produce literacy curricula in the offshore program, including how children, their educators, parents (if applicable), and the larger social processes produce curricula, map the contours of these curricula, and understand what the curricula in turn generate.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to join me in an interview which will last for about one hour. The interview will be conducted in a site that is mutually agreed upon between you and me. To protect the confidentiality of your participation in the study, I will choose interview places other than your workplace. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed into written format. In the interview, you will be asked to talk about the integrated offshore program curriculum (e.g., how are the Canadian provincial and Chinese curricula are integrated, what is intended to be taught, how it is operationalized, how curriculum shapes/informs the position of teachers, students, subject matter, and the environment, and what informs the curriculum). You will also be invited to check the transcripts and offer clarification, elaboration, or any other feedback you deem pertinent. You will be able to remove parts of the interview. The review of the transcript might take half an hour.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only. Only I will have access to the tapes and transcripts. You may (or may not) be quoted directly in the

research report, but once you are quoted, you will not be identified as the source of the quotation and any information that could identify you will be removed.

There are no known risks to participating in this study. I will also ensure your anonymity as a respondent to your organization.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your status at your institution.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics, University of Western Ontario, at XXX. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Zheng Zhang at XXX or my supervisor: Professor Rachel Heydon at XXX.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

[Signature]



## Appendix 3: Letter of Information to Canadian and Chinese Instructors

My name is Zheng Zhang and I am a PhD Candidate at the Faculty of Education at University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada. I am currently conducting research on offshore Canadian secondary school programs in China. This research won the “Ontario Graduate Scholarship” and is funded by The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), Ontario, Canada. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The purposes of this study are: 1) to document how the Canadian secondary curriculum has been adapted to meet the local needs in China and how it is integrated with Chinese curriculum in the offshore program and 2) to provide insight into the factors and processes that produce literacy curricula in the offshore program, including how children, their educators, parents (if applicable), and the larger social processes produce curricula, map the contours of these curricula, and understand what the curricula in turn generate.

If you agree to participate in this study, your classroom will be observed by the researcher. The researcher will be making field notes of your regular literacy classroom, and with the permission of the student photocopying or photographing student regular assignment samples (writing or artefacts) with your comments, which are made in this program. The length of observation depends on a cycle of literacy activities as defined by you until saturation has been reached (approximately 8-10 weeks). Students in your class who are willing to partake in the research will be interviewed about their literacy-learning experience. All classroom-based research will be conducted during the normal part of the program with exception of the interviews.

You may (or may not) be invited to join me in two successive interviews during and after classroom observation. The interview will be conducted in a site that is mutually agreed upon between you and me. To protect the confidentiality of your participation in the study, I will choose interview places other than your workplace or your school. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed into written format. In the interview,

you will be asked to talk about the literacy curriculum in the offshore program (e.g., what is intended to be taught, how it is operationalized, how curriculum shapes/informs the position of teachers, students, subject matter, and the environment, what informs the curriculum, and the interactions between the Mandarin and English literacy curriculum), the make-up of your classroom, your preparation for literacy teaching, literacy professional development, and related teaching experiences. The second interview at the end of the observation is for you and the researcher to clarify issues that emerged and discovered in the process of observation, which are not covered in the first interview. You will also be invited to check each transcript and offer clarification, elaboration, or any other feedback you deem pertinent. You will be able to remove parts of the interview. The review of the transcript might take half an hour.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only. Only I will have access to the tapes, field notes, and transcripts. You may (or may not) be quoted directly in the research report, but once you quoted, you will not be identified as the source of the quotation and any information that could identify you will be removed.

There are no known risks to participating in this study. Though it is known that I will observe the classes of yours and several other teachers, I will ensure your anonymity as an interview respondent to your supervisor, your school, or any policy maker.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your status at your institution. In your interviews, no questions will be asked about students who do not agree to partake in the study. No observational notes or photographs will be made for those in the classroom who have not agreed to participate in the study. To protect the confidentiality of students' participation in the study, I will collect all the students' assignment samples with your comments, only take photographs of those of the student participants, and return all the assignments to you. I will also ask you to provide a rubric that you would use to grade the work.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics, University of

Western Ontario, at XXX. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Zheng Zhang at XXX or my supervisor: Professor Rachel Heydon at XXX.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

[Signature]

## Appendix 4: Letter of Information to Chinese Students’ Parents

My name is Zheng Zhang and I am a PhD Candidate at the Faculty of Education at University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada. I am currently conducting research on offshore Canadian secondary school programs in China. This research won the “Ontario Graduate Scholarship” and is funded by The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), Ontario, Canada. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The purposes of this study are to document how the Canadian secondary curriculum has been adapted to meet the local needs in China and how it is integrated with Chinese curriculum and to investigate students’ biliteracy experiences in the classroom.

If you agree to have your child participate in this study, I will collect some of your child’s assignments relating to Mandarin and English classes for the research. He/she will not be identified as the source of these assignments in any reports of the study and any information that could identify him/her will be removed.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only. Only I will have access to the collected assignments.

There are no known risks to participating in this study. I will not tell your child’s teachers or school whether or not your child participates in the study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to have your child participate, your child may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on his/her academic status at his/her school. I will only collect assignment samples for students for whom I have informed consent.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your child’s rights as a research participant you may contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics, University

of Western Ontario, at XXX. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Zheng Zhang at XXX or my supervisor: Professor Rachel Heydon at XXX.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

[Signature]

## Appendix 5: Consent Form

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name (please print):

Signature:

Date:

Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 6: Interview Questions for Canadian Policy Makers

### Overarching Structure, Philosophy and Key Planning Texts

1. Please describe the history and rationales for setting up Ontario private schools overseas (specifically in China) (comparing rationales for B.C. to set up offshore programs, e.g., impacts of neoliberalism and decentralization upon education).
2. Please describe the rationales for not certifying any more overseas Ontario private schools for the time being.
3. Please describe the Ontario offshore programs that you offer in China (e.g., size, grade, socio-economic status of the families, students' academic levels, and governing structure).
4. Please specifically describe the program that SCS offers in terms of integrated Chinese and Ontario curriculum (e.g., effects and reasons of the integrated curriculum)
5. In what ways, if any, do these two curricular systems relate or align?
6. What are the required/intended aims, content, materials, and activities of the Ontario Secondary School curricula (e.g., ESL, English, Career Education, Business Studies, Canadian and World Studies, and Mathematics)?
7. How is literacy conceived across the curriculum as demonstrated in curriculum documents, instructional approaches, and evaluation tools (including OSSLT)?
8. In what ways, if any, are these English literacy-related curricula, which are transplanted from Canada, different or similar to the original English literacy-related curricula (e.g., curriculum accommodation/modification etc.)?
9. What types of literacy-related learning opportunities (particularly those related to different types of literacy) are intended to be offered for students in the Ontario offshore program?
10. In what ways, if any, might different Chinese and Ontario educational ideologies shape the transplanted curriculum (e.g., student-centred vs. teacher-centred teaching approaches, public education in Canada vs. education as commodity in offshore programs, literacy defined as reading and writing vs. literacy more broadly defined as is shown in the Grades 9 and 10 "English" curriculum)?
11. What major influences might inform the offshore in general programs (or this specific program) (e.g., policy documents, educational thinkers, or educational ideologies, parental choices etc.)?
12. What specific texts/documents/policies do you take into consideration in the curricular planning/inspection for the offshore programs in general (or this specific program)? Which of these are mandatory? Which are optional?
13. How do you think about the fact that students graduate from Ontario offshore programs still need to sit for IELTS or TOEFL test to prove their English proficiency levels?
14. What are the rationales for students to attend summer schools to enhance their English proficiency levels?

### Opportunities for Students and Educators in the Ontario Offshore Program

15. What resources and supports does your organization provide for the creation of learning opportunities for students enrolled in the Ontario offshore program?

16. What is the role of the educators in providing these opportunities and what is their relationship to the organizational structure of the offshore program and organization as a whole?
17. What resources and supports are provided to the program in China and to educators in the provision of literacy-related learning opportunities for students enrolled in the Ontario offshore program?
18. What might be missing or not taught or provided in the Ontario offshore program?
19. If we were to ask the students in the Ontario offshore program to tell us about their experience of learning literacy in different languages and cultures, what do you think they would emphasize?

Comparison with Regular Ontario Public/Private High Schools

20. In what ways, if any, is the Ontario offshore program different or similar to those offered in the Ontario public/private high schools with respect to: philosophy/approach, literacy learning opportunities, and identity options available to students, educators, or anything else you consider to be pertinent?
21. What are your thoughts regarding integrated curriculum involving different languages, cultures, and educational philosophies/approaches (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?
22. What are your thoughts regarding Ontario offshore programs in China (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?

Additional

What would you like people to know more about the Ontario offshore programs (particularly those using integrated Ontario and Chinese literacy curricula), particularly with respect to literacy?



## Appendix 7: Interview Questions for Chinese Policy Makers

### Overarching Structure, Philosophy and Key Planning Texts (Intended and Hidden Curricula)

1. Please describe your school (e.g., size, age, governing structure).
2. Please describe the Canadian offshore program that you offer (e.g., size, age, grade, and governing structure).
3. Please describe the types of families and students you serve (e.g., ethnic groups, socio-economic status of families, students above/below the cut-off level of high school entrance examination, and reasons that they chose the Canadian offshore program).
4. What is taught using a Canadian-English literacy curriculum and what is taught using the Mandarin curriculum?
5. How do these curricula relate (or not)? What are effects and reasons of the integrated curriculum?
6. Please describe the philosophy/approach of your organization with respect to literacy (e.g., students' biliteracy development, and new forms of literacy [business literacy, and information and technology literacy etc.]).
7. In what ways, if any, are the English literacy-related curricula, which are transplanted from Canada, different or similar to those Mandarin literacy-related curricula?
8. What are some of the major ways, if any, your organization attempts to balance different Canadian and Chinese literacy and educational approaches (if any)?
9. What types of literacy-related learning opportunities (particularly those related to different types of literacy) does your organization attempt to provide for students in the Canadian offshore program?
10. What are some of the major ways your organization attempts to provide these learning opportunities?
11. What major influences (policy documents, educational thinkers, or educational ideologies, parental choices etc.) inform your organization's approach in general?
12. What specific texts/documents/policies do you take into consideration in your organization's (curricular) planning in general? Which of these are mandatory? Which are optional?

### Opportunities for Students and Educators in the Canadian Offshore Program (Operational, Hidden, and Null Curricula)

13. What resources do you provide for the creation of learning opportunities for students enrolled in the Canadian Offshore Program?
14. What is the role of the educators in providing these opportunities and what is their relationship to the organizational structure of the offshore program and organization as a whole?
15. What supports are provided to educators in the provision of literacy-related learning opportunities (particularly those related to different types of literacy) for students enrolled in the Canadian Offshore Program?
16. What might be missing or not taught or provided in the Canadian Offshore Program?

17. If we were to ask the students in the Canadian Offshore Program to tell us about their experience of learning literacy in different languages and cultures, what do you think they would emphasize?

Comparison with Regular Public High Schools (All Levels of Curricula)

18. In what ways, if any, is your organization's Canadian offshore program different or similar to those offered in the public high schools with respect to: philosophy/approach, literacy learning opportunities, and identity options available to students, educators, or anything else you consider to be pertinent?
19. What are your thoughts regarding integrated curriculum involving different languages, cultures, and educational philosophies/approaches (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?
20. What are your thoughts regarding Canadian offshore programs in China (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?

Additional

What would you like people to know more about your organization as a Canadian offshore program, particularly with respect to literacy?

## Appendix 8: Interview Questions for Canadian and Chinese Instructors

### Overarching Structure, Philosophy and Key Planning Texts (Intended and Hidden Curricula)

1. Please describe your class (e.g., classroom make-up, size, its role in the Canadian offshore program, students' academic levels, and students' Mandarin or English proficiency levels).
2. Please describe how the philosophy/approach of your organization with respect to literacy relates to your teaching (e.g., students' biliteracy development, and new forms of literacy [business literacy, and information and technology literacy etc.]).
3. What types of literacy-related learning opportunities (particularly those related to differing types of literacy) does your organization attempt to provide for students in general and what is their relationship (if any) to your teaching?
4. What are some of the major ways your organization attempts to provide these learning opportunities as related to differing types of literacy?
5. What is taught using a Canadian English literacy curriculum (to the Canadian instructor) and what is taught using the Mandarin curriculum (to the Chinese instructor)?
6. How do these curricula relate (or not)? What are the effects and reasons of the integrated curriculum?
7. What are the ways, if any, the Canadian educators teaching English literacy-related courses are interacting or communicating with the Chinese educators teaching Mandarin literacy-related classes with respect to students' learning opportunities and identity options?
8. In what ways, if any, are the English literacy-related curricula as transplanted from Canada different from or similar to those Mandarin literacy-related curricula?
9. What are some of the major ways, if any, your organization attempts to balance different Canadian and Chinese literacy and educational approaches (if any)?
10. What specific texts/documents/policies do you take into consideration in your teaching in general? Which of these are mandatory? Which are optional?
11. What major influences (policy documents, educational thinkers, or educational ideologies, parental choices etc.) inform your literacy teaching in general?

### Opportunities for Students and Educators in the Canadian Offshore Program (Operational, Hidden, and Null Curricula)

12. What do you hope to provide to your students in the Canadian offshore program vis-à-vis literacy and their identity options in your preparation for literacy teaching?
13. What literacy-related learning opportunities do you provide for your students? Are there opportunities you would like to provide but cannot at this time? If yes, what are they?
14. Please describe your regular lessons (e.g., aims, teaching approaches, students' interaction with the Canadian/Chinese educators, students' participation in the classroom activities, and materials etc.)?

15. What would be needed for the creation of optimum literacy-related learning opportunities?
16. How do you provide for the creation of learning opportunities for your students enrolled in the Canadian offshore program?
17. What is your role as an educator in providing these opportunities and what is your relationship to the organizational structure of the Canadian offshore program as a whole?
18. What supports are provided to you in the provision of literacy-related learning opportunities for the students in the Canadian offshore program?
19. What might be missing or not taught or provided in the Canadian offshore program?
20. If we were to ask the students in the Canadian offshore program to tell us about their experience of learning literacy in different languages and cultures, what do you think they would emphasize?

Comparison with Regular Public High Schools (All Levels of Curricula)

21. What ways, if any, is your organization's Canadian offshore program different or similar to those offered in the public high schools with respect to: literacy education approaches, education resources (e.g., teachers and other teaching resources), literacy learning opportunities (e.g., bilingual literacy & new forms of technology and Information literacy), identity options available to students (e.g., global elite), or anything else you consider to be pertinent?
22. What are your thoughts regarding integrated curriculum involving different languages, cultures, and educational philosophies/approaches (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?
23. What are your thoughts regarding Canadian offshore programs in China (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?

Additional

What would you like people to know more about your organization as a Canadian offshore program, particularly with respect to literacy?

## Appendix 9: Interview Questions for Students

### A. Introductory questions:

1. Please describe your multi-modal description of your identities and literacy-learning experience in the Canadian offshore program (Prior to student interviews, I used multimodal methodology to encourage students to use their preferred modes [e.g., artifacts, pictures, or stories] to depict their experience and understanding of their identities as students enrolled in the Canadian offshore program).

### B. Interview questions:

#### Overarching Structure, Philosophy and Key Planning Texts (Intended and Hidden Curricula)

2. Please describe your class and peers (e.g., classroom make-up, size, students' academic levels, and students' Mandarin or English proficiency levels etc.).
3. Why you choose to study at SCS?
4. What's your goal? What kind of people you want to be? What learning opportunities is SCS providing you to realize this goal?
5. Please describe what you have learned or experienced in Mandarin literacy-related subjects (e.g., aims, teaching approaches, students' interaction with the Chinese educators, students' participation in the classroom activities, and materials etc.)?
6. Please describe what you have learned or experienced in English literacy-related subjects (e.g., aims, teaching approaches, students' interaction with the Canadian educators, students' participation in the classroom activities, and materials etc.)?

#### Opportunities for Students in the Canadian Offshore Program (Operational, Hidden, and Null Curricula)

7. What do you hope to be provided as a student in the Canadian offshore program vis-à-vis literacy and your identity options?
8. What might be missing or not taught or provided in the Canadian offshore program?
9. What's your role (if applicable) in the curriculum?

#### Comparison with Regular Public High Schools (All Levels of Curricula)

10. In what ways, if any, are your literacy-related experience/learning opportunities in the Canadian offshore program different or similar to those students in the public high schools with respect to: literacy education approaches, education resources (e.g., teachers and other teaching resources), literacy learning opportunities (e.g., bilingual literacy & new forms of technology and Information literacy), identity options available to students (e.g., global elite), or anything else you consider to be pertinent?
11. What are your thoughts regarding integrated curriculum involving different languages, cultures, and educational philosophies (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?
12. What are your thoughts regarding Canadian offshore programs in China (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and identity options available for students)?

Additional

What would you like people to know more about your organization as a Canadian offshore program, particularly with respect to literacy?

## Curriculum Vitae

- Name:** Zheng Zhang
- Post-secondary Education and Degrees**
- Xiangtan University  
Xiangtan, Hunan, China  
1995-1999 B.A.
- Central South University in China  
Changsha, Hunan, China  
2000-2002 M.A.
- The University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario, Canada  
2006-2008 M.Ed.
- Honours and Awards:**
- Province of Ontario Graduate Scholarship  
2010-2011, 2012-2013
- Graduate Thesis Research Award  
2011-2012
- John Dearness Memorial Graduate Award  
2010-2011
- Related Work Experience**
- Research Assistant/Project Manager  
The University of Western Ontario  
2008-2012
- Lecturer/Researcher  
Shanghai University of Electric Power  
2002-2006
- Cross-Appointed Lecturer  
Shanghai Jiaotong University (School of Continuing Education)  
2003-2006
- Publications:**
- Journal Articles & Reports
- Heydon, R., Crocker, W. A., & Zhang, Z. (Submitted). Nest, novels, and other provocations: Emergent literacy curricula in a child care centre. *Journal of*

*Curriculum Studies.*

- Zhang, Z. (in press). Book review: Kenner, C. (2004). *Becoming biliterate: Young children learning different writing systems*. Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Trentham Books. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*.
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