A CULTURAL BRIDGE FOR THE ACADEMIC CONCEPT OF PLAGIARISM: A COMPARISON OF CHINESE AND BRITISH CULTURAL CONCEPTS OF PLAGIARISM BY CHINESE MASTER'S GRADUATES OF UK INSTITUTIONS EMPLOYED BY SINO-FOREIGN JOINT VENTURES IN SHANGHAI, CHINA

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Abstract: Cultural and developmental perspectives (Flowerdew & Li, 2007) of plagiarism are explored through interviews with Chinese graduates of UK Master's degrees after they have returned to work in China. Plagiarism in the context of the participants' educational history, life in the UK and their return to China were investigated. These accounts provided narratives of their development of the concept of plagiarism and a cultural comparison of the British and Chinese cultural understandings of the term. Narratives were analysed for the use of interpretive repertoires (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1984) to identify the significant commonalities and inconsistencies within and between the participants' accounts. The findings suggest that the participants use UK institutional vocabulary for plagiarism which they have developed on their Master's course and in subsequent work. Furthermore, participants insist that the cultural concepts of plagiarism in China and the UK are equivalents, the only difference being the strictness with which rules are applied in the UK system. In contrast, their accounts of Chinese pre-university and undergraduate education reveal how educational expectations shape a divergent Chinese concept of plagiarism. Finally, the potential for these returning Chinese graduates to act as a cultural bridge for a rigorous application of plagiarism regulations within TNHE education is discussed.

Introduction

International education has faced a perceived plagiarism "epidemic" (Howard, 2004) as educators attempt to deal with the shift to the era of the Internet and globalisation (Sutherland-Smith, 2008). In this context, Chinese education has been singled out for particular attention as a result of issues concerning academic integrity and the cross-cultural conceptualisation of plagiarism. This attention is a symptom of the success and side effect of China's ambitious educational reform and internationalisation. In addition to being the world's largest education market (Wang, 2009), and leading source of international students (Counsell, 2011), China's scientific publication output has overtaken the UK and reached second place behind the US (Clarke and Plume, 2011).This has led to the comparison of the Western (mainly English speaking countries: UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) and Eastern (particularly Confucian Heritage Cultures: China, Japan, Singapore, Vietnam) philosophical, legal and educational roots of plagiarism, and raised questions about the future form of research in a globalized world.

This paper aims to explore the intercultural (Gu, 2009) nature of plagiarism through examining a unique sample of the Chinese population who hold UK master's degrees and are employed in transnational higher education (TNHE) in China. Through in-depth interviews, the study creates a narrative which can be analysed for use of interpretive repertoires (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1984). The analysis will be used to explore the cultural and developmental hypotheses of plagiarism research in a new context. The experiences of this sample are by no means representative of the Chinese population. However, the participants' knowledge and experience of both UK and Chinese education provide an opportunity for an informed comparison of the Chinese and UK concept of plagiarism and reflection on students' development of this concept.

Background

The background of intercultural plagiarism research is highly complex and controversial. See Sutherland-Smith (2008) and Bloch (2012) for historical overviews.

Chinese Context

The development of the Chinese term for plagiarism; *chaoxi* (抄袭/to copy or steal) (also *piaoqie* 剽窃/to steal writing) (Hu and Lei, 2012), has occurred within the bounds of Confucian heritage culture (CHC). *Chaoxi* has not developed in the context of economic, educational and scientific development as it has in the West due to a Confucian opposition to profiteering, the legal system and didactic approach to education (Alford, 1997). Historically, education in China was dominated by imperial examinations, the *keju* (科举, until 1905), which required memorisation and analysis of the four books and five classics of Confucian literature (Miyazaki, 1981). As a result, citation was unnecessary and would even be interpreted as insulting to the learned reader (You, 2010).This educational culture has permeated into the modern era. The National Higher Education Entrance Examination, known as the *gaokao* (高考) has provided equality and quality in Chinese secondary education since the 1978 post-Mao reforms. However, this has relied on the traditional CHC didactic methods encouraging memorization of declarative knowledge rather than critically assessing the multiple perspectives of sources (Gao, 2012). These techniques are then continued at university level with little attention to intertextuality or attributive source training (Hu and Lei, 2012).

This educational background has been exacerbated by the successful yet breakneck pace of development and internationalization of HE in China. The consequences of this have been the unattributed translation of foreign research articles into Chinese (Li and Xiong, 1996) and a lack of originality in Chinese research (Ye, 2007 in Liu, 2009). In recent years, higher publication targets and policy driven targets in Chinese universities have led to a "publish or perish" culture which in turn has led to plagiarism and rushed research (Yi, 2011:502). As a result of this intense educational pressure, academic corruption and plagiarism have been reported in the national and international media (Baty, 2009, Guo, 2010, Osnons, 2010). Recent research emerging from China has shown the extent and proposed solutions to this problem (Zhang et al., 2010, Yi, 2011). In reaction, the government's desire to crack down "mercilessly" on corruption

and to revamp postgraduate education, placing "a premium on integrating learning with thinking" has also been clearly stated in its 2010–2020 Educational reform plans (Educational-reform, 2010:25 & 50).

21st Century Paradigm

Since the turn of the century, universities around the world have experienced a cultural shift in the approach to plagiarism due to internationalistion and the Internet. Cut and paste functions, and the explosion of availability of online sources have led to a noticeable increase in plagiarism (McCabe, 2005). Kress (1998) and Howard (Howard, 1999) note that as a result the internet is a contested intertextual space which challenges the traditional romantic notions of authorship. This situation has been magnified by the increase of international students on campuses, some of who have limited experience of non-exam based assessment, source use and contrasting approaches to textual practices (Carroll, 2008). These changes have made an explicit pedagogical and procedural approach a necessity (Stefani and Carroll, 2001). Whether it be Howard's (also Howard, 1999, Pecorari, 2010) distinction between blatant plagiarism and patchwriting or Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook's (2004) transgressive and non-transgressive intertextuality, the aim is to define the concept within the global, post-internet paradigm. Consequently, in order to maintain quality academic standards and integrity (Carroll and Appleton, 2001) UK universities have moved away from plagiarism as an academic death penalty (Howard, 1995), to more consistent and measured punishments which take into account intention and the cultural complexity of the concept (Park, 2004). In addition, universities have adopted an accommodation model, providing support for changing student demands, including explicit instruction of avoiding plagiarism (Ryan and Carroll, 2005).While the development of software has successfully assisted the detection of non-originality for tutors and students, it seems to handicap International students (Zobel and Hamilton, 2002) providing further complexity to the issues of writer development, intent to deceive and the cultural concept of plagiarism.

UK's China problem?

UK higher education's (UKHE) reputation for quality education, as reflected in world rankings, has attracted increasing numbers of Mainland Chinese students (MCS) (Counsell, 2011). They are a major revenue stream for UKHE, especially since the signing of bilateral government agreements in 1999 (Gu and Brooks, 2008). In addition, they are a source of unique global research perspectives (Rastall, 2009), which in turn improve rankings. Accommodating these global perspectives of this significant minority on British campuses (UKCISA, 2012), provides a challenge to UKHE.

The UK education system prioritises the dissemination of knowledge through critical thinking and essay writing (Durkin, 2008) with roots in the Socratic principal of the extension of knowledge via inquisition (Tweed and Lehman, 2003). Due to MCSs' educational background, especially their *gaokao* experience, the development of independent, critical thinking skills (De Vita and Bernard, 2011) and adoption of Western essay writing practices is a significant adjustment (Gu, 2009). Smith and Zhou (2009)

found the following image of Chinese students emerged from interviews with British staff; on the one hand polite, hard-working and respectful, on the other rote learners with a lack of academic curiosity and an unwillingness to mix with other students. Unfortunately, the positive traits of Chinese students have been somewhat overlooked due to staff having to spend more time dealing with the strugglers. In addition to the linguistic difficulties faced by non-native English speakers (NNES), cultural differences have been magnified by the significant presence of Chinese International students on UK campuses (Sowden, 2005). This has resulted in the perception of a "Chinese problem" on UK campuses (Smith & Zhou, 2009:133) and as a cumulative result Chinese students have gained a reputation for plagiarism (Gu & Brooks, 2008).

The stereotype of the Chinese rote learner and plagiarist is unfortunate. As Gu and Brooks (2008) note, Chinese students are successful in UKHE and a number of Chinese students suit the creative and methodical educational approach abroad. This has resulted in a brain drain of Chinese talent (Huang, 2003) with only a quarter of those studying abroad returning between 1987 and 2005 (Mohrman, 2008). The government programmes, such as the 2008 Thousand Talents (千人计划) programme (Yi, 2011) aim to attract returnees, often referred to as *haigui* (海归, sea turtles) (Wattanavitukul, 2002).

Theory

Ten perspectives have been identified by Flowerdew and Li (2007) within plagiarism research, of which two are especially significant for Chinese students and this study:

- The cultural perspective accepts that cultures are different and concentrates on studying Chinese perceptions of plagiarism, usually within China (Matalene, 1985, Pennycook, 1996, Shi, 2004, Shei, 2005, Valentine, 2006, You, 2010, Hu and Lei, 2012)
- The developmental perspective acknowledges that cultures are not static and that perceptions and interpretations of plagiarism will change as a result of internationalization (Flowerdew and Li, 2007). In addition, Chinese students must develop to bridge the gap between cultures, which Durkin (2008) names a "middle way", in order successfully graduate from Western institutions (Gu and Brooks, 2008, Gu, 2009)

The cultural theory in respect to Chinese culture and plagiarism has developed since the 1980's (Matalene, 1985). There were especially significant developments from scholars based in Hong Kong in 1990's, such as Deckert (1993), Scollon (1995) and Pennycook (1996). With increased internationalization of universities however, these cultural examinations produced a "crude East/West dichotomy" (Pennycook, 1996) which created Chinese stereotypes when studying abroad (see Liu, 2005, Sowden, 2005). As a result the developmental approach proved to be a more constructive theory to examine students and the concept of plagiarism in an international context (Flowerdew and Li, 2007).

This research project shall examine plagiarism through the cultural and developmental perspectives of Chinese graduates who have studied in China at secondary

and undergraduate level, and then successfully gained a UK Master's degree before returning to work in higher education in China. This aims to take a long term view of plagiarism as not merely a concept faced by students in one particular environment but as a developing cultural concept throughout their educational careers.

Sino-Foreign Joint Ventures

A joint venture (JV) is a partnership between a receiving country (developing nation, e.g. China) and a providing country (developed nation e.g. UK) (Rastall, 2009). The providing "parent" university opens a branch campus in the receiving country to offer the "parent" university's degrees or a joint degree between the parent and partner institution (Cao, 2011). Since the 2003 Sino-Foreign Higher Education Law a number of high profile JVs have opened in China (Drew and Britain, 2008). The Chinese staff require international experience and qualifications in order to work in the intercultural environment.

Research Focus & Hypothesis

The main focus of the research reported in this paper is to:

 • Examine participants' accounts of plagiarism and the relevance of this cultural concept to their educational, professional and social development.
 • Compare and contrast their experience of plagiarism in Chinese and British educational contexts.

   The research aims to extend the developmental and cultural perspectives to the new context of returning Chinese graduates from UK institutions. The research question is therefore:

 • To what extent do these returnee scholars understand and transmit the concept of plagiarism when returning to work in China?

   The hypotheses are as follows:

 • The participants will describe a difference in the cultural concept of plagiarism in China and the UK and the continuing process of development which they have undergone to adapt to the culturally varied concept of plagiarism.
 • The participants' accounts will display how Chinese returnees with Master's degrees from UK institutions develop an intercultural understanding of plagiarism and act as a cultural bridge for the development of the concept.

Methodology

Participants

The sample includes teachers from English for academic purposes (EAP), business, engineering and management, and a number of participants from administrative roles and student support. The researcher gained access to five participants from each of the JVs (total 10), selected on the basis of Miles and Huberman's (1994, p. 28) criterion sampling:

- Be a Chinese national;
- Have studied at secondary and tertiary undergraduate level in a Chinese higher education institution;
- Have completed a Master's degree at a UK higher education institution;
- Have returned to live in China and work in a Sino-foreign JV institution in Shanghai.

Interviews

This study uses Holstein and Gubrium's (1995) concept of the active interview. Kvale (1996) notes that interviews engage the ambiguous and contradictory nature of participants' experiences while providing openness to new insights into phenomena. Due to the illicit (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) and cross-cultural nature of the topic, a familiarity with Chinese interactional dynamics (Shah, 2004) was significant in establishing a rapport conducive to in-depth discussion (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). Having lived in China for five years, working in JVs and national institutions, my familiarity with the context helped to carry out effective interviews. The English language (with Mandarin used to clarify terms) interviews (approx. 1 hour) took place at private locations in the JV institutions between April/May 2012. They were recorded and later transcribed in a simple format suited to phrasal and sentence level analysis (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1984)

Open questions were used for the exploration of the sensitive issue of plagiarism. The interview was divided into three stages which create a narrative of the participant's development through his or her time studying in the UK and returning to China:

1. Educational Background

    - University and subject of undergraduate study in China;
    - University and subject of postgraduate study in the UK;
    - Reasons for studying abroad.

2. Living & Studying in the UK

    - Problems faced living and studying in the UK;
    - Encounters with plagiarism and a definition;
    - Informal and formal instruction on plagiarism.

3. Working & Living back in China

    - His or her current work role and the relevance of his or her UK qualification to securing the position;
    - His or her encounters with plagiarism in current work role;
    - His or her perceived relevance of plagiarism to the broader context of originality in China;
    - Comparing the British and Chinese concepts of plagiarism;

Ethics

Plagiarism is an illicit activity synonymous with cheating (Hayes and Introna, 2005) as it concerns possible "guilty knowledge" (De Laine, 2000, p. 85). The research, therefore, may reveal embarrassing or damaging information concerning individuals

or institutions, such as criticism or accusations (Stanley and Wise, 2010). As a result, extra care was taken to explain the context of the research and aims via the *Research Information* and *Informed Consent* forms. The participants were given written and verbal reassurance of their right to withdraw at any time. The anonymity of all people involved and institutions has been maintained through the removal of identifiers. Numbers have been used (e.g. P1, P2, etc.) to reduce the risk of coincidental confusion of participants with other identities. The data was kept on password protected USBs and on in a back-up hard drive, to which only the researcher had access.

Interpretive Repertoires

Interpretive repertoires are a method of discourse analysis based on ethnomethodology which identifies global patterns in accounts of actions and beliefs (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). First used by Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) to analyse discrepancies between biochemists' *empiricist* and *contingent* repertoires, the authors found that scientists required two repertoires to make sense of their empirical findings. This method is especially suited to exploring controversial and sensitive issues (Wetherell, 2005) such as plagiarism, as it explores representations of "recognizable themes, common places and tropes" (Potter and Wetherell, 1987) known as doxa in discourse (Barthes, 1977 in Wetherell, 1998). The repertoires are identified by the repetition of exact matches of phrases or similar descriptions embedded in the historical context (Edley, 2001). The commonalities and inconsistencies between participants and repertoires emerge through continuous, in-depth involvement in the design, interviews, transcription and reevaluation of the data (Edley, 2001).

Findings

The analysis of the participants' discourse reveals five repertoires through which a sense of plagiarism and study in the UK is provided. The following section will include a brief description of these repertoires and some key examples.

Comparing Plagiarism & Chaoxi

When asked directly to compare plagiarism and *chaoxi* (抄袭/to plagiarise), the common translation, the participants repeated the notion that the "interpretation" was the same yet the "methods" were different. However, after closer questioning the participants began to describe the different educational contexts within which the term is used. Due to both their educational background in the UK and working in the JV, they show a familiar usage of institutional vocabulary referring to plagiarism as an "academic crime" (P3, P10) or "academic dishonesty" (P2). In contrast, their Chinese experience with *chaoxi*, revealed a "lighter sense" of the phrase. This referred to more general cheating in exams and homework starting in primary school, rather than in the academic sense. There was a strong sense of "sharing" or "helping" fellow students rather than cheating, which at times received "silent approval" (P3) from teachers. As one participant mentioned, the teacher would "close one eye, open one eye" (P4).

Once reaching undergraduate level in China, *chaoxi* would be mentioned but formal instruction on the definition and avoidance of misconduct would not be offered.

Assessment and Referencing

The participants frequently refer to the difference in assessments, particularly writing assignments. In the Chinese context, it seems that in many of cases *chaoxi* or cheating is referred to in respect to exams. When written assignments were requested, such as dissertations, the participants referred to them being similar to a literature review without major referencing; this was a quicker and easier process than in the UK (P1, P5). One participant had never written an essay prior to studying in the UK and thus felt at a disadvantage to start with (P7). For more of the participants, the referencing system proved to be a confusing and time consuming task. In relation to paraphrasing and quotation, a minimal amount was required in China; however it was not strictly enforced. The participants admitted to struggling or failing early assignments (P1, P5, P7, P10) or referred to having acquaintances who were accused of plagiarism (P1, P2, P3, P4, P8, P9), similar to findings by Ryan and Carroll (2005). Furthermore, the timing and requirements of the UK MA assignments confused the participants. In one case a participant was shocked to have an exam after three months, claiming she had not learned anything. This was reinforced by P1, who was surprised to be asked to brainstorm a topic about which she knew nothing, noting "you give me input and I'll give you output".

Independence, Responsibility & Multiple Perspectives

Independence dominated not just the participants' academic life, but also their social life in the UK. In China they noted that social activities, food, accommodation, opening bank accounts were all supported or clearly explained by a representative of their institution or fellow students. Many participants noted that they learned to cook in the UK out of necessity and also spent their first month busy, lonely and confused. There was a common view that "nobody will tell you anything" (P1, P4, P8, P10) and the responsibility being on the student to read the relevant documents and seek help themselves, for example at the English language centre. This was reflected in the academic experience. In China "they will tell you everything...everything is in the book" (P1), this was repeated in one form or another by most participants. While comforting, this did not breed a sense of responsibility or choice in the educational process. Students would have little academic choice and considerably more classroom hours, including compulsory political courses. It seems the responsibility lay more on the teachers to teach and take care of the students, who have little option to think or make choices. The contrast is clearly exemplified by P5:

> *If you are sleeping [during class] or anything, I think he [the monitor or tutor] will call my parents*

In contrast to the UK:

> *You can come, or you can don't come [sic]. It's your personal responsibility.*

As a consequence many participants noted, the focus of the repertoires shifts from *they,* referring to the Chinese teachers and staff, to *self* in the UK. For example "push myself" (P2) or "push yourself . . . you need to study for yourself" (P5). This shift to self-responsibility leads to new conflicting perspectives of truth and authority. One participant refers to the time consuming process of the "switch from Chinese thinking to English thinking" (P4), others refer to changing habits (P10) and getting used to British thinking (P1).

With this newfound responsibility, the participants had to adjust their perception of a teacher of a sole authority to a lecturer as a research guide. This shift was preferred by certain participants who positively note that the lecturers have office hours (P4, P5) and the value of one-on-one sessions (P4, P6, P10). The British lecturers were also more likely to relate information to the real world than to textbooks or exams. Contrastingly, two participants (P3 & P5) faced problems with busy dissertation advisors; this was a situation the students were responsible for resolving.

As a result, an independent, critical self-identity was created within the group of students. Although strange at first, the multiple, often conflicting perspectives in research, group and class work started to form a critical dimension to participants' thinking (P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P10) and also improved their communication skills (P1, P2, P3, P10). As opposed to communal studying in China, where the students studied together, in the UK the participants were able to appreciate different perspectives in reaching group objectives and assessing sources, a highly valued skill (P1, P2, P3, P6, P7).

Strictness & seriousness

The role of tutors and independence are contrasted with of strict and serious attention in matters of attribution of knowledge. In the British context, the participants describe both written and oral warnings about committing plagiarism. All participants made a distinct reference to this, here are two representative examples:

> P2—Everything academically is very serious . . . Formality and seriousness. Strictness and formality . . . Academic seriousness . . . In the UK I found plagiarism is more strict.

As opposed to:

> P5—Chinese won't check it, time and money . . . maybe for postgrad they will check it . . . Even if you plagiarise you will be allowed to graduate. We do not focus on plagiarism according to Chinese culture . . . if no one finds it, it will be ok.

As a result of this strictness the participants focused on the mechanics of citation and avoiding plagiarism, with P5 mentioning "you just write the bibliography and quotations". However, this simplistic description seems to overlook the process of adaptation to fundamentally different education system. Additionally, the role of the teaching staff provides a paradox. On the one hand the Chinese teachers are watchful over students at all times (P5) and timetables are full (P4, P10), yet on the other hand teachers are "too busy" (P1, P5), or even lazy and complicit (P4), in seeking out and finding plagiarism. This is contrasted with the relaxed or uncaring description of the British tutors who switch to enforcers at the sight of plagiarism.

Plagiarism in work and life

The UK qualification was seen as playing a major role in their ability to work in the JV institution. The participants felt that their experience in the UK had led them to be more open-minded and flexible (P10, P7) and that they benefited from research (P4), multi-tasking, communication, and group-work skills (P3). The role of plagiarism in the participants' jobs was more significant for English teaching staff and personal tutors than subject teachers and administrative staff. Poor language skills and the use of copy-paste were viewed as sources of student plagiarism which had been reduced by the use of software, such as *Turnitin* (P1, P3, P4, P6, P9, P10), which contrasted with the holistic, cultural experience of their own narratives.

A broader perception is of the difference in the standard of education provided by UK and Chinese institutions and the issue of academic corruption. A proportion of participants (P2, P3, P6, P10) reflected general concerns about academic plagiarism at Chinese universities. The "publish or perish" culture and political nature of universities (P6, P10) is identified as a cause, as are the lower standards of certain Chinese universities compared to the UK's trusted high standards (P2). These concerns are reflected in local media stories and also the government's educational reforms. These educational concerns were also reflected in a general concern in society for copyright issues. The participants saw the short-term benefits for economic development, such as counterfeit products and internet sites, such as Facebook compared to Weibo (P3, P4, P5, P7). Yet, there is a clear desire shown by the participants for China to innovate rather than follow in the future (P1, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P10).

Discussion

When asked directly on the difference between plagiarism and *chaoxi*, the participants implied the meaning was the same, however the action in the UK was more strict and serious. Analysing this repertoire in isolation from the previous repertoires would provide a clear case of the difference being the rules applied to plagiarism. However, simply concentrating on the rules and punishments overlooks the underlying approach to education in the two countries. In the Chinese context, the participants described instances of plagiarism involving copying from other students and also in the context of exams. In this sense, *chaoxi* resembles the dictionary definition of plagiarism i.e. "passing someone else work, idea off as your own" (O.E.D, 2013) rather than the academic definitions based upon new plagiarism pedagogy (e.g.Howard, 1999, Carroll and Appleton, 2001). In contrast, the British experience of plagiarism is imbedded in critical research essays showing awareness of intertextual and attributive practices. As a result, the whole academic process in the UK is encapsulated with the repertoire of independence. Self-responsibility and awareness develop through exposure to multiple perspectives.

Plagiarism represents the corruption of the process of independent and critical thinking which are the key to adding to the body of knowledge. Detailed citation and referencing not only avoids the corruption of knowledge through false attribution, but also provides links within the body of knowledge, evidence for assumptions and the logical formation of conclusions. The switch in the role of the UK tutor from a liberal

guide to a strict police officer in regards to plagiarism is contrasted with the Chinese teachers who reportedly were strict on attendance to class and conformity yet lenient on plagiarism. This is due to the different expectations of the systems. In the context of the Chinese exam-based educational experience, plagiarism is not strictly punished because the students' role is primarily to learn rather than to think and create. The concept of copying from a fellow classmate as plagiarism does not concern copying their way of thinking but strictly copying the correct answer; this bypasses effort rather than corrupts knowledge.

Conclusion

The participants in the study therefore do not return to China espousing an explicit difference between the British and Chinese concept of plagiarism. However this does not imply that they do not act as cultural bridge for the concept. The repertoires of strictness, independence, self-awareness, critical thinking and creativity, in addition to the perceived benefits of a UK education, such as collaborative and presentation skills, implicitly rely on the stricter definition of plagiarism. As Durkin (2008) suggests, the participants have adapted to a "middle way" between British and Chinese culture. Their attention to strictness is due to the traditional respect for authority; however in British higher education the authority is in the system rather than the teachers. Their strict adherence to the rules and the educational context has forced them to think critically and independently and within this process they have successfully adapted to the system. Therefore when they have returned to China and work in the JV, they present a positive example of the transformation to students. In instructing, offering advice and collaborating with Chinese and international staff and students, they implicitly reinforce the stricter academic concept of plagiarism implicitly and explicitly through the use of institutional vocabulary.

Implications

As more UK graduates return to live and work in China, their views will influence the country's future trajectory. These findings imply a strict enforcement of policies and rules regarding plagiarism in universities and the introduction of essay based qualitative assessment at a lower level may lead to the "integration of learning with thinking" (Educational-reform, 2010:25). However, as with Chinese economic reform, it may be a case of reform with Chinese characteristics, or a middle way (Durkin, 2008) to produce similar results. The participants saw the need for China to lead rather than follow in the future but plagiarism and copying may hinder national development in the long-run.

   Previous research into Chinese students and plagiarism in the UK, particularly Gu and Brooks (2008) and Durkin (2008) is reinforced by this study. By placing development into a broader context, the Chinese graduates' pre- and post- UK educational and career history emerge. The accounts show that the measures taken to accommodate international students are successfully assisting Chinese learners to adapt however raises the question of how far to accommodate them without creating dependence. A deeper understanding of Chinese students' backgrounds and their intercultural

accounts of education can assist UK educators to refine the accommodation process and inform Chinese students intending to gain UK qualifications. Furthermore, the intercultural accounts provide a unique insight into the implicit role of the concept of plagiarism in educational culture in the era of the Internet and internationalisation.

Further Research

This project presented a small sample of UK educated Master's students from China working in one particular field. Further investigations could trace the alumni UKHE in the global employment market and differing reflections on the UK educational experience. In addition, the comparison of the academic integrity expectations at Master's level in China and the UK, as suggested by the quote "…maybe for postgrad they will check it…" (P5), has yet to be published in English. Citation analysis by Bloch and Chi (1995) and Shi's (2002) examination of publication practices by Western trained scholars in China has shed some light in the difference in publications, however establishing the differences in academic integrity instruction at equivalent degree levels would provide an interesting study. As I have now returned to the UK to complete a PhD, I intend to explore the developmental process of Mainland Chinese Master's students' academic writing with specific attention to academic integrity.

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