An Ethnographic Study of Teaching Chinese as a Heritage Language and Foreign Language in Three Educational Contexts in the United Kingdom

By

Wei Lu

A thesis submitted to

The University of Birmingham

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

School of Education

The University of Birmingham

2013

ABSTRACT

This thesis documents an ethnographic study of teaching Mandarin in three educational contexts in the United Kingdom. The first context is a complementary school where the language is taught as a heritage language. The second context is an evening class which took place in a community centre in Birmingham where Mandarin is taught and learnt as a foreign language. The third context is a secondary school in London where students are learning Mandarin as a foreign language in order to obtain a GCSE. This thesis makes an original contribution by bringing together, within the same research agenda, three different contexts for teaching and learning of Mandarin. Although not a comparative study, this research highlights how context shapes learning for three very different groups of students. The analytical chapters describe how the different environments each sustain a variety of practices, beliefs and values in and around learning Mandarin which shape identity and pedagogy. The thesis is organised around the following themes: culture and intercultural understandings; multilingual identities; language ecology; and multilingual practices. Findings show the political and economic rise of China is imperative in understanding the local ecological order of classroom practices. Evidence shows the importance of establishing 'small cultures' in classrooms to engage students in intercultural questioning and understanding. The socially imposed identities of ethnicity along with affiliation to heritage language are investigated. The importance of negotiation is highlighted across the three contexts as young people are shown transforming identities which are presupposed by teachers. The researcher's role is also investigated in this regard. Finally the use of multilingual pedagogies for teaching Mandarin are described with proficiency as an important element in determining the use of code-switching in the teaching of Mandarin. Several suggestions and recommendations for policies and practices are formulated at the end of the study which argue for pedagogic and linguistic flexibility.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to dedicate my sincere grateful to the following people, without them this thesis would not have eventual fruition.

My gratitude to my supervisor Professor Angela Creese started from the first day of this academic journey. Her support, guidance and understanding enable me to not only finish this thesis but also went through some difficult time in my life and learn from it. Her role as a scholar inspired me to develop my ideas and made this research project possible. In addition, I would like to also show my respect and gratitude to scholars whose work I cited in this thesis. Their outstanding works made possible the construction of the theoretical framework of this thesis.

Many thanks to all individuals and organizations which participated in this study - for their kindness in allowing me to conduct investigations and their willingness to share their experiences. Their contribution to this thesis will be forever in my heart. In this regard, my special thanks to Dr. Wang Yi, Dr. Shang Yinghong and Alex.

To my close friends who shared both my sad and joyful tears in the last five years in Birmingham: Sham, Da, Eti, Saeed, Nadia, Adel, Ruben, Miao, Isaac, Yun Ju, Ning Lin, Du Zhonghua, Zhao Chao, Wang Minlue and Xu Chuangjie. Without their support and company, my life would have been colourless.

My greatest gratitude to my dear family members: Lu Jiashou, Li Xiuliu, Huang Yue, Wu Shuhuan and Huang Yitong, for their understanding and their continuous support, no words in world can express my gratitude to them.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

Mandarin is now increasingly recognised for its importance in the global economy. Similar to the British Council whose role is to promote the English language and British culture, the Confucius Institute, a non-profit public organisation established by the Chinese government has been increasingly active in supporting the teaching of the Chinese language and the promotion of Chinese culture internationally through its affiliated institutes. As of October 2009, 396 Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms have been set up in 87 countries, eight of these are in the UK (Confucius Institute online, 2009).

Apart from the Confucius Institute, there are other institutions taking up the role of teaching Mandarin albeit for different purposes, for example, teaching Mandarin for use in academia or teaching Mandarin for occupational needs. According to CILT <the National Centre for Languages> (2008), between 10-13% of all secondary schools in England offer some form of Mandarin teaching as part of their curriculum. Apart from the language itself, most of the schools surveyed state that their curriculums also include other forms of Chinese studies, for example, History, Geography and Art. Generally, schools which offer the teaching of Mandarin will usually have established partnerships with local schools in China (CILT, 2008). Joint activities are then organised to provide opportunities for students from both schools to interact and share their different cultural backgrounds, for example, through student exchange visits during the summer holidays.

However, the teaching of Chinese is not a new phenomenon in this country. According to Creese et al (2007), the Chinese people have been one of the longest established immigrant communities in the UK. According to the 2001 census report, the total number of Chinese immigrants was about 247,403 which is about 0.4 % of the population of Great Britain. Chinese, as a result, has long been taught as a heritage language in complementary schools in the UK. The first Chinese community class started in 1928 at a restaurant in London, and this later developed into the first full Chinese complementary school in Pennyfield in East London named Chung Hua Chinese School (Wong, 1992: 63). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the number of Chinese complementary schools in the UK grew steadily with classes generally taking place on Saturdays and Sundays. Initially, the majority of students making up this group of ethnic Chinese originated from Hong Kong and spoke Cantonese as their first language. Nevertheless Francis, Archer and Mau's 2008 report indicated that while the majority of complementary schools are still Cantonese-oriented, Mandarin is becoming increasingly popular with many Cantonese Chinese schools providing some Mandarin classes because there is a 'strong demand from parents and pupils'. With the rapid economic development of the People's Republic of China, the number of people interested in learning Mandarin has become overwhelmingly larger than those who desire to learn Cantonese. Chinese complementary schools in Britain are therefore providing an opportunity for young people to sustain their heritage language, Cantonese, while simultaneously offering new opportunity for learning Mandarin, a language which is not traditionally of these young people' home but is connected to them through history and cultural exchanges.

Chinese is classified as a language with many dialects. There are two terms which are used to indicate the standard Chinese in the field of linguistics: Mandarin and Putonghua. According to Li and Zhu (2010: 159), Mandarin is 'the English name often used for northern varieties of Chinese'. It is also used to refer to 'the standard national language in Taiwan and

Singapore where the Chinese term is 国语 (guo yu) and 华语 (hua yu) respectively'. On the other hand, Putonghua is a term from mainland China which use simplified Character and Pinyin as its official phonetic system. In this research, although the three contexts in my study relates to learning simplified Chinese, the students' backgrounds are however, diverse. Therefore I have taken the liberty of using the term of Mandarin as it is accepted and understood by people of different backgrounds.

In this thesis, the focus is on how Mandarin is taught and learnt as a foreign language and a heritage language. Foreign language instruction is defined by Garcia and Flores (2012: 233) as 'the additional language taught explicitly with the purpose of adding a language that is to be used in another different societal and national context'. According to Kramch (2008:5), a foreign language (FL) is 'learned in an instructional environment or during a temporary sojourn abroad as part of general education or for professional purposes'. In context B of this study, participants are learning Mandarin as a foreign language within the formal educational system while in context C, the learning takes place outside the formal system

Within the field of foreign language education, the study of heritage language education is considered a new area of study. Even the term 'heritage language' was not officially recognized until 1996 when it was formally included in the 'National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project' in the United States. 'Heritage language' is defined by Kramsh (2008: 5) as a language that is learned by members of an ethnic group desirous to reconnect with the culture of their ancestors. The study of heritage language and institutions where it is taught is now being seen as the new direction in research inquiry (Creese et al, 2006, 2007; Douglas, 2005; He, 2006; Lynch, 2003). In fact, teaching methodologies and pedagogies of heritage language are still being developed for many languages. In context A of this study, most students attending the complementary school fall within the category of heritage learner.

However, with the influence of Mandarin being increasingly worldwide, students' multiple backgrounds has become an issue as it has resulted in a very diverse and dynamic learning environment. This research therefore looks at how Chinese complementary schools in Britain provide opportunities for young people to sustain their heritage language, Cantonese, while simultaneously offering new opportunities for learning Mandarin, a language which is not traditionally spoken in these young people' homes but is connected to them through history and cultural exchanges.

1.2 Aim and scope of the study

This research project will look at the teaching and learning of Mandarin in the following educational settings: 1) As a heritage language in a complementary school; 2) As a foreign language in a community centre; 3) As a foreign language in a secondary school. The effects of teaching Mandarin in different learning environments is an area of education which I think is currently under-researched but which has great significance to those interested in looking at ethnic and linguistic diversity. The reason for conducting this project across three educational contexts is not for comparison, but rather an attempt to provide readers with a broader view of how Mandarin is being taught and learnt in this transnational and globalised world. Although shared themes such as cultural study, intercultural communication, identity formation, classroom interaction and classroom ecologies will be discussed across all three sites, an institutional comparison is not the intended aim of this study.

There are four analytical points which will be explored and discussed in this study. The first is to understand culture and intercultural communication in multilingual classrooms. Though the understanding of culture has been developed by many scholars, my study will be based on

Holliday's work of large culture and small culture, which emphasised the importance of understanding culture from interactions within a small scale environment (Holliday, 1999; Holliday, 2010a; Holliday, 2010b). Secondly, the relationship between language and the processes of participants' identity development will be explored. Thirdly, language classrooms will be studied from an ecological perspective which focuses on the relationship between Mandarin and the existing language and how language classrooms are influenced by the power of large society. Last but not least, multilingual practices in the classrooms will be explored under the theoretical framework of code-switching and translanguaging.

1.3 The significance of this study

There has been a huge amount of research on the teaching of foreign languages, as well as many studies focusing on the teaching of heritage languages. However, very little research has been undertaken with regards to combining these two together, specifically to portray a picture of the teaching of a foreign language and heritage language across different contexts. This study will focus on following research questions:

1) How do the teachers and students across the three educational contexts understand culture?
2) How can culture and intercultural communication be used as teaching resources in the different language classrooms?
3) How are participants' identities constructed?
4) How do participants use languages to negotiate their identities?
5) What is the language ecology of the three educational contexts?

6) How is multilingualism used as a teaching resource for teaching and learning Mandarin in the three contexts?

1.4 Overview of the study

In short, this study aims to provide insights into the ways in which Mandarin has been taught and learnt in three different educational contexts. Following a review of the existing literature on culture and intercultural study, the development of individuals' identities, language ecology and multilingual practices in Chapter 2, I will provide a methodological framework which supports the processes of my research in Chapter 3. The four chapters which follows from this will serve to discuss and analyse collected data from three educational contexts in my study.

Chapter 4 focuses on cultural study and intercultural communication in both fields of teaching Mandarin as a heritage language and a foreign language. How large culture and small culture (Holliday, 1999) are understood by teachers and students in these contexts and how cultural elements are used as recourses in the teaching and learning. As Piller (2007) argues no culture exists in isolation in this world, hence the study of intercultural communication is essential in our globalised world. In this chapter, intercultural communication will be investigated based on participants' understanding of culture and conversations related to cultural elements in three contexts.

Chapter 5 will investigate the identity of participants in my study. The development of identities is considered as an on-going process of individuals in this changing world. Discussions will be explored under the categories of imposed identity, assumed identity and negotiated identity (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2003). Imposed identities refers to some identities people find difficult to resist, such as ethnicity; negotiated identities are those that individuals can negotiate and contest through interactions. These two categories offer a theoretical framework for my research to study the multiple and dynamic identities of young people and teachers.

Chapter 6 continues to study language classrooms from the ecological perspective. Language ecology emphasises the relationship between the target language and the environment (Haugen, 2001). The discussion will try to reveal how the social elements such as transnational movements, economic development and language policy influence the language classroom and the development of teaching Mandarin as a foreign and heritage language.

Chapter 7 turns the focus towards multilingual practices in the classrooms, and theories of code-switching and translanguaging will be applied to investigate the conversations among students and teachers in the three educational contexts in my study. Code-switching has been studied in a variety of ways in the past two decades to investigate bilingual practices in the field of sociolinguistics. By examining the multilingual practices that the participants use in classrooms in my study, the tolerance of using languages in the classroom and the translanguaging space constructed will be explored from a pedagogical perspective.

In the last Chapter, I will summarise the findings of the study and discuss the significance of these findings. Some suggestions and recommendations for teaching and learning Mandarin worldwide will be provided at the end.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

This chapter is divided into four main sections and serves as the literature review for the thesis. In the first section, I shall explain at how ‘culture’ is to be understood in my study. In the process, I will outline the relationship between culture and language education, and discuss this in the context of intercultural communication in the language classroom. I will also emphasise the necessity of distinguishing ‘small culture’ from ‘large culture’ in my study, and how both the ‘large culture’ and ‘small culture’ function in the teaching of Mandarin as a foreign language and as a heritage language. This section will provide a theoretical background for the first research question which focuses on how participants understand culture and intercultural communication in three different contexts. The elements of language and identity will be the second focus of this chapter. In this context, bilingual students’ identities and the role played by the language teacher will be discussed. Foundational theories which provide a framework for analysing participants’ identities relating to multilingual classrooms will be outlined. This section will serve to support the exploration of the second research question. The third part of my literature review will focus on a discussion of the language classroom from an ecological perspective. Theories relating to language ideology and language ecology will be addressed to provide a background understanding for the third research question, which aims to investigate classroom language ecology. Multilingual practices in the language classroom will be the last focus of this chapter with the terms code-switching and translanguaging discussed specifically as these are seen to be important from a pedagogical perspective in language teaching and learning.

2.1 Culture and intercultural communication in multilingual classrooms

Kramsch (1998: 79) argues that 'the relationship of language and culture in language study is one of the most hotly debated issues at the present time'. She points to the need to understand the role that culture plays in language education. Studies have focused on culture in language education from a variety of perspectives. Some scholars look at how cultures might influence language learning (Byram et al. 1994; Kramsch, 1993). Other studies focus on how classroom cultures are created by participants and institutions (Holliday, 1994; Holliday 1999; Fong, 2007) and the dynamic of culture in this fast changing world (Holliday, 2012a; Holliday, 2010b). In all these studies, the emphasis has been on the importance of participants' cultural backgrounds in shaping their classroom interactions. These interactions subsequently shape the classroom learning environment. This will thus be another focus of my study.

Language is an intrinsic part of culture. For this reason, cultural studies have always occupied a significant position in language education. As Kramsch has indicated:

> *'Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them.'*
>
> *(Kramsch, 1993: viii)*

Kramsch argues the significant position that cultural awareness has in language education. She stresses the importance of the learners' communicative competence and their ability to negotiate meaning in cultural contexts. In addition, cultural communication becomes an important terminology in this transnational and globalized world. However, defining culture itself is an extremely ambitious mission as there is no one shared definition for culture.

Nevertheless, I will try to outline how I perceive culture and intercultural communication to be functioning in the context of my study in this section.

2.1.1 Culture and intercultural communication

The word 'culture' has been used in many aspects and is associated with a variety of meanings. Hofstede (1991: 4) indicates that culture is the 'software of the mind' and must always be seen as:

> *'a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it was learned. It is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another'.*
>
> *(Hofstede, 1991: 5)*

Hofstede's statement indicates that culture is a complicated entity shaped by groups of people who share the same social environment. In the current literature, the dynamic nature of culture has in fact been highlighted by many scholars. Eisenhart (2001a) indicates that there is variety in the meanings pertaining to culture in different disciplines. Casnir (1999: 91) maintains that culture is comprised of 'dynamic, changing, developing processes' and 'chaotic systems', rather than monolithic 'endstates'. Blommaert and Verschueren (1998: 17) argue that culture is not a stable 'self-contained' issue, it has 'a high degree of variability', and 'constant negotiability, and multidirectional adaptability'. Culture is considered more as a dynamic process rather than a stable product in this globalised and transnationalised world. Therefore, issues relating to intercultural communication have now become more significant both within as well as outside the academic field.

Some scholars (Holliday, 1999; Holliday et al., 2004) maintain that the act of communication itself is intercultural. According to Scollon and Scollon (2001: 140), the word 'culture' in the term ‘intercultural communication’ is based on an anthropological meaning that focuses on ‘ideas, communications, or behaviors of a group of people which gives them a distinctive identity and which is used to organize their internal sense of cohesion and membership’. Intercultural communication has been highlighted as an important component in many disciplines. Piller (2011: 15) indicates that intercultural communication is a ‘multidisciplinary undertaking’ which could be studied within different disciplines, such as anthropology, business studies, communication, cultural studies, education, linguistic, management studies, languages, psychology or sociology. Intercultural communication refers to:

> *‘the symbolic process by which people from different cultural backgrounds interact with each other. This process includes language, but also encompasses the background of the participants, stereotypes or prejudices they may hold of the other cultural group, social roles they each hold in their respective cultures and culturally appropriate norms they have each learned for communicating with strangers.’*
>
> *(Lucas, 2003: 302)*

In the classroom, both culture and language should be seen as products shaped by specific human activities brought about by relationships established between groups of people rather than arising from the norms of the society of which they are part (Goodenough, 1994). In this light, cross-cultural understanding cannot just happen when students are made to learn the culture of the target language. Rather actual learning takes place when teachers and students bring together their own experiences. This then contributes to the creation of the cultural environment within the classroom. Intercultural communications in language classes is thus said to result in the formulation of a ‘third culture’ (Kramsch, 1993) or ‘small culture’ (Holliday, 1999).

In addition to the term ‘intercultural communication’ and its importance to this study, there are other terms in circulation which are also relevant to this thesis. The concept of ‘third culture’ as proposed by Kramsch (1993) is concerned specifically with the boundaries between cultures. According to Kramsch (1993: 235), 'third culture' implies the '"broader" experiences' of large cultures, such as national cultures, between which people can move around. Holliday supports Kramsch's argument and considers the 'third culture' as situated 'between two large cultures, no matter how temporary, which are not anomalous, are not subservient to large cultures, and constitute a seamless melange which stretches across national boundaries' (Holliday, 1999: 240).

The study of 'third culture' is not aimed at minimizing the differences between cultures or to ignore their boundaries. Instead, it's purpose is to frame the 'conceptual space that recognizes the language classroom as the site of intersection of multiple worlds of discourse' (Kramsch 1993). This includes the 'cultural' voices reflected in the discourses highlighted in this investigation. In this study, I specifically highlighted the concept of 'third culture' because it enables the portrayal of language learners as individuals creating ideological spaces for cultural intersection. By doing this, these learners can benefit from not 'being held hostage by their home culture or the target culture' (Robinson-Stuart and Nocon 1996: 435).

Clearly there are some overlaps in the concepts of 'intercultural communication' and 'third culture'. However, while 'intercultural communication' takes into account the broader view of the interaction between one culture to another culture, 'third culture' specifically focuses on the negotiated space between two cultures. Nevertheless, both concepts are useful in this thesis. An intermediary concept which bridges the two for me in this thesis is Holliday's conception of 'small culture', which will be discussed further in the next section along with the understanding of 'large culture' (Holliday 1999). Both 'third culture' and 'small culture' refer to the 'negotiated space' created by participants as a result of their encounter between the target culture and their own cultural background. However, 'small culture' pays attention to the small-scale cultural environment which participants create via their interactions. The reason I prefer to use the term 'small culture' is because it focuses on unfolding interactions in situated contexts and allows me to explore the dynamic of the classroom spaces. I must add however that I also retained the use of ‘large culture’ because it allows me to further understand and discuss the intercultural differences in the classroom. The negotiation of these ‘small cultures’ should be encouraged as they are deemed to be ‘a necessary foundation for academic success and for the confidence and motivation that will come as the new context is mutually habilitated’ in the language class (Fong, 2007:154). This phenomenon can be seen in the three Mandarin teaching classrooms where my study takes place. In my observations, each of these three classes can be seen to form a particular ‘small culture’ as the teachers’ and students’ backgrounds form the dynamics of classroom interactions. Understanding the workings of these ‘small cultures’ is significant for my study as the findings can subsequently be conveyed to other classroom teachers who will then be in a better position to prepare their teaching pedagogy. In the next section, I will outline some of the features of large and small cultures.

2.1.2 Large culture and small culture

Holliday (1999) emphasises the essentialism and reification of culture and argues that all conversations are in a sense intercultural. He states that it is necessary to distinguish between ‘large culture’ and ‘small culture’ in linguistic studies. ‘Large culture’ refers to the ‘default notion’ of culture which has been widely used in the areas of applied linguistics and social sciences as well as in common usage. Concepts like ‘ethnicity’, ‘heritage’ or ‘nationhood’ (Holliday, 1999: 237) are based on the notion of ‘large culture’. On the other hand, he defines small culture as comprising elements ‘relating to cohesive behaviour in activities within any social grouping’ (Holliday, 1999: 241) such as those existing in ‘family culture’ or ‘classroom culture’. The following table from Holliday’s work outlines the features of a ‘large culture’ paradigm vis-à-vis a ‘small culture’ paradigm.

	Small culture	Large culture
Character	Non-essentialist, non-culturist	Essentialist, culturist
Relations	No necessary subordination to or containment within large cultures, therefore no ‘onion-skin’ relationships	Small (sub) cultures are contained within and subordinate to large cultures through onion-skin relationships
Research orientation	Interpreting emergent behavior within any social grouping Heuristic model to aid the process of researching the cohesiveness of any social grouping	Prescriptive, normative Beginning with ideas that specific ethnic, national and international groups have different ‘cultures’ and then searching for details (e.g. what is polite in Japanese culture)

Two paradigms (Holliday, 1999: 241)

This table summarises the characteristics of ‘small culture’ and ‘large culture’. It also indicates the differences in their research orientations. Research conducted within the ‘large culture’ paradigm is based on the question of ‘what makes culture?’, where researchers pay attention to the components of the social world such as those acting at the ethnic, national or international level. On the other hand, studies focusing on small culture look at details such as participants’ interactions in a particular environment. Holliday (1999) argues that there are several reasons why ‘small culture’ studies should be distinguished from large culture. Firstly, the domination of ‘large culture’ approaches in linguistic studies results in the ‘overgeneralizsation and otherisation of foreign educators, students and societies’. Secondly, it is necessary to differentiate ‘large – small’ cultures so as to avoid confusion around such issues in linguistic studies. Moreover, the distinction between large and small culture will enable the researcher to understand how culture is socially constructed as reality in linguistic studies (Holliday, 1999).

Small culture can be used to describe any particular social context and is important for research focusing on participants' activities along with the environment where these activities happen. This is important for studies centering on the language classroom. Holliday (1999) suggests:

> *'Seeing small culture as rooted in activities enable us to apply 'culture' not only to the processes that give cohesion to group behavior, but also to the processes that give cohesion to behavior, as long as it involves groups.'*
>
> *(Holliday, 1999:250)*

By observing 'small culture', the researcher will be able to not only explain the behaviour of groups of people, but also how the individual actions of its members contribute in driving the groups' behaviour. This approach is therefore crucial for research which looks at classroom teaching as well as those focusing on research and evaluation methodologies in language education (Holliday, 1999: 250). From this perspective, the need to distinguish 'small culture' from 'large culture' is important in my study. In this research, I intend to study the phenomenon of intercultural communication which results from the diverse ethnic backgrounds of people studying in the same language classroom. This will be part of an overall study to understand the teaching and learning of Mandarin in three educational contexts, which, as already explained, implies looking at three different 'small cultures'.

However, the study will not be able to escape from any association with 'large culture'. As Holliday (1999: 239) argues, small cultures 'run between as well as within related large cultures'. This means that the study of 'small culture' will inevitably relate to 'large culture' issues. In his later study about cultural politics, Holliday points out that 'I was forced unexpectedly to appreciate the importance of nation, but not in ways I had predicted' (Holliday, 2010a: 167). He argues that it is impossible 'to employ western and non-western categories' in his study, because none of his participants are willing to position themselves into western culture or non-western culture categories (Holliday, 2010a: 167). Furthermore, Holliday proposes the following specific terminologies which he thinks are more appropriate to describe his participants' understanding of culture:

> *'Cultural reality: something which is going on around the individual which carries broad cultural meaning. 'Reality' is a psychological entity which implies that it is real to the person concerned, but may not be to other people.*
>
> *Cultural arena: a setting, environment or context within which cultural realities are situated. A psychological place. This could be a country, region, religion, ideology, language (perhaps large), or a community, institution, group, discourse, etc. (perhaps small culture).*
>
> *Cultural universe: a broad, rich complex of cultural realities which generates a large number of cultural references a big psychological entity or place.*
>
> *Cultural marker: an artefact which signifies a cultural reality.'*
>
> *(Holliday, 2010a: 175 -176)*

While it is argued that 'small culture' does not have a subservient relationship to 'large culture', the study of small culture will not be able to escape from large culture. 'Small culture' is considered as 'heuristic means in the process of interpreting group behaviour' (Holliday, 1999: 240), while 'large culture' acts as a 'reified small culture' (Holliday, 1999: 241). The focus of the small culture paradigm is not to discover details of large culture but to explore the cohesive behaviours of a social group. The four terminologies above have provided the small cultural paradigm with an understanding of existing cultural elements in the social group, and also offer a framework to explore how the small culture will be built up in this social group.

All the three contexts in my study are located in the UK, which is considered as a multi-ethnic country. As such, the background of students in the classrooms can similarly be said to be dynamic. Holliday (2010a: 175) proposes that the cultural reality in a social group can 'form around and be carried with individuals as they move from one cultural arena to another', and being a member of one cultural reality 'does not close off membership and indeed ownership of another'. In other words, individuals can be considered as belonging to two or more cultural realities at the same time. This can be applied to the participants in my study who are multiracial or who are from immigrant background families with migrant backgrounds. My study, therefore, focuses on the investigation of small culture in each of these contexts. In the next section, I will explain the interplay of large and small culture in my observation of the different social contexts.

2.1.3 Culture and Foreign language teaching and learning

Culture has always played a significant role in foreign language teaching and learning. In discussing the relationship between culture and foreign language teaching and learning, Hymes' (1971) theory of communicative competence needs to be mentioned here, as he maintains that language would be meaningless without the sociocultural context in which it occurs. Lustig and Koester (1993: 25) emphasise this when they summarise communication as a 'symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people create shared meanings' in a globalised world. Historically, the cultural component in foreign language education mainly refers to acquisition of knowledge relating to the 'target culture', for example, information about history, geography, society and literature of the language being learnt. The higher the linguistic proficiency achieved by learners, the higher the level of cultural awareness required of them. According to Fenner (2008: 274), students only need to understand cultural knowledge of everyday life at the lower levels. However, after they have achieved a certain level of linguistic ability and want to develop more of their communicative competence, a deeper understanding of the 'culture' is needed (Fenner, 2008: 274). Krasner (1999) supports the idea of an intimate connection between language and culture in foreign language education. He believes that the sole acquisition of linguistic competence is not enough to master a language. The learning of a foreign language should be accompanied with a rise in the cultural awareness of the target language.

Although my study aims to investigate small cultures in three contexts, the concept of national culture needed to be noticed, since it has been considered as an important part of cultural study by teachers across all three contexts. Holliday proposes acknowledges that the idea of the 'nation' is 'often that of 'an external cultural reality which provides a framing for identities which may be in conflict with personal cultural realities' (Holliday, 2010a: 175). For example, the word 'dragon' in Chinese is '龙' (Pinyin: long). Based on the Chinese and English languages, both words will refer to a powerful mythical creature. The learner of the Chinese language will have understood that in both Chinese and English cultures, stories of such a creature exist in their literature. However, each culture projects different images and attaches different meanings to the creature. The dragon in English culture looks like a huge lizard and normally plays a negative role in their legends and myths. On the other hand, the dragon in Chinese culture is actually a combination of many animals. The Chinese people, in fact, consider themselves as the 'descendants of the dragon'. In addition, the dragon has been considered as the totem of Chinese emperors as they believe that they are the son of Heaven and, consequently, the son of the dragon.

The dragon also plays an important part in folk stories and festivals in Chinese culture such as the Dragon Boat Festival. Therefore, if a Mandarin learner does not develop this cultural understanding, he or she may misunderstand the context of some conversations or become confused with folk stories regarding the dragon. Intercultural awareness is, therefore, important as it enables language learners to build an 'ideological bridge' between two cultures, thus creating a 'temporary, contextual understanding of both self and other' (Fenner, 2008: 277). In order to successfully communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds, the development of this aspect of communicative competence is important in language education. From this perspective, communication can be considered as a process of meaning negotiation, where meaning 'is constructed between [the two participants] as a kind of ideological bridge, built in the process of their interaction' (Bakhtin and Medvedev, 1985: 152). In terms of investigating small culture in a social group, nation can 'represent an idea which stimulates personal cultural realities' (Holliday, 2010a: 175). However, national culture is not the only element which influences the construction of small culture in the classroom. Holliday (2010a: 175) acknowledges that individuals' cultural identities 'can be made up of a variety of things such as religion, ancestry, skin colour, language, discourse, class, education, profession, skills, community, family, activities, region, friends, food, dress, political attitudes, many of which can cross national boundaries'.

The phenomenon of globalisation and transnational migration today requires that forms of communication develop from that which is 'nation-based' to that which is intercultural (Piller, 2011: 73). The study of intercultural communication has received more and more attention within the foreign language education field. Piller (2011: 73) argues that intercultural communication should be considered as 'a mobile resource', and details of 'who makes culture relevant to whom and in which context for which purposes' are more important than the nature of communication itself. As already implied, when learners enter a classroom to master a foreign language, they do not come in with empty minds. They enter armed with their life experiences, their professional knowledge and their cultural backgrounds. With these, they contribute to the creation of the small culture in the language classroom. Therefore, verbal and physical interactions which take place are important phenomena to take note of when analysing the functions of culture in foreign language teaching and learning.

The importance of observing interaction in the study of intercultural communication in language education is reinforced by Cole (1998: 296) who argues that the focus when analysing culture in language education should be in the activities which take place, because 'activities are the locus of culture creation and use'. Goodenough (1994) maintains that:

> *'People who interact with one another regularly in a given kind of activity need to share sufficient understanding of how to do it and communicate with one another in doing it so that they can work together to their satisfaction. All they need to share, in fact, is whatever will enable them to do that.'*
>
> *(Goodenough, 1994: 266)*

As such, Goodenough argues that interactions between people will, in turn, shape a particular cultural environment because people need to create a common scenario in order to direct and fulfil a target. Therefore, activities in which groups of individuals involve themselves become 'the proper unit of analysis for cultures' (Cole, 1998: 296). The activities taking place within the 'small culture' of the language classroom thus become an important focus for the researcher to investigate.

Apart from acting as an ideological bridge for language learners of different backgrounds, knowledge of culture in foreign language education also has political implications. Culture has been used as a political tool in history 'as both dominant and dominated groups often resort to the culture card in managing their power-maintaining and power-acquiring purposes' (Sarangi, 1994: 416 cited in Holliday, 1999). Pennycook (2001: 177, cited in Kramsch, 2005) argues that 'language and the knowledge it conveys are inseparable from power and politics'. This can be seen from the fact that most governments establish governmental agencies whose function is to promote their country's national language around the world. Some examples are the British Council of Great Britain and the Confucius Institute (Hanban) of the People's Republic of China.

> *'The Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters, as a public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, is committed to providing Chinese language and cultural teaching resources and services worldwide. It goes all out in meeting the demands of foreign Chinese learners and contributing to the development of multiculturalism and the building of a harmonious world.'*

(Hanban online, 2011)

These practices show that in the Chinese government's attempts to promote the teaching of Mandarin as a foreign language, culture is used as a reified and essentialised political tool to attract overseas learners. The Hanban in the UK, for instance, has organized many national level events for Mandarin learners such as the Dragon Boat Festival Mandarin speech competition (Hanban online, 2011).

In the Mandarin as foreign language classroom, the large culture of the target language and the small culture created by group members in the classroom complement each other in the teaching and learning process. In the next section, I will explain how both large culture and small culture function in the teaching of Mandarin as a heritage language in the complementary school.

2.1.4 Culture in Chinese complementary schools

Complementary schools are also known as 'community schools' or 'supplementary schools'. They are voluntary educational institutes which serve 'specific linguistic or religious and cultural communities, particularly through mother-tongue classes' (Creese and Martin, 2009: 1). These schools are normally run by the relevant community outside the statutory sector. Creese et al (2006) indicate that different kinds of complementary schools exist in the UK via the following ways: some schools provide extra learning opportunities for students to improve in their mastery of mainstream subjects together with components of heritage language and culture learning; some work towards the maintenance of religious studies; and some complementary schools are focused on the development of language learning and cultural maintenance of the community. Most of the Chinese complementary schools in the

UK fall into the last category. They aim to ‘tackle the problem of maintaining Chinese language and culture among the new generation born’ in the UK (Wu, 2006). In addition, complementary schools not only create ‘an important social context for developing identities for the immigrant and ethnic minority children attending them’ (Li, 2006: 80), they also have ‘positive complementary functions’ to mainstream schools (Creese, Wu, and Blackledge, 2009). Many studies (Xiao, 2006; Li, 2006; Francis et al, 2008; Creese et al, 2009) point out that Chinese complementary schools have common features: most do not have permanent locations as they normally only rent several classrooms from mainstream schools during the weekends. Chinese complementary schools receive little or no funding from the government. Instead, they are supported by the Chinese community. Teachers are either volunteers or employed staff with very low salaries. Some of them are actually parents of students who do not have any teaching background. The practice of culture in Chinese complementary schools is closely bound by these features.

Culture has always been considered a significant component of the curriculum in complementary schools. This is especially so for communities experiencing diasporas and rapid migrations (Greig, 2002; Hall, 2006). Some of these studies focus on the processes of cultural hybridisation (Bhaba, 1994), while others focus on cultural crossings (Rampton, 1995). Students in complementary schools are considered as possessing two or more cultures. Some scholars label children who are born to expatriate parents as ‘Third Culture Kids’ (Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2003, cited in Piller, 2003: 213). Kramsch (1998: 82) describes them as multicultural people by referring to them as ‘persons who belong to various discourse communities, and who therefore have the linguistic resources and social strategies to affiliate and identify with many different cultures and ways of using language’. What this large amount of literature indicates, is that ‘no culture exists in isolation’, and it, in fact, emphasises the connectedness between different cultures (Piller, 2007: 213). However, with the development of economic and cultural globalisation, the function of culture in complementary schools is not just about inheriting tradition. It often enters the sphere of intercultural development and intercultural communication. In the following section, I will discuss the different perspectives relating to the function of culture in Chinese complementary schools.

From the perspective of parents, teachers and the community, the primary obligation of these schools is the maintenance of heritage language and culture (Creese et al, 2006; Creese and Martin, 2009; Li, 2006; Wu, 2006). In order to fulfil the obligation of sustaining Chinese traditions, culture and values, cultural elements have been planted in the curriculum of Chinese complementary schools. Much literature has focused on developing a critical perspective on the use of heritage, history and tradition in the complementary school curriculum (Blackledge and Creese, 2010; Curdt-Christiansen, 2008; Creese et al, 2009; Francis et al, 2008; Wang, 2008; Wu, 2006). Teaching about festivals, foods and holidays of a language has always been considered as reification of teaching culture in the language classroom (Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor, 1991; Cortazzi and Jin, 1999). Creese et al (2009: 363) focus on the use of 'folk stories' as part of the curriculum in Chinese complementary schools and argue that the teachers in the complementary school consider folk stories as 'iconic, culturally authentic artefacts which are retold across time and space'. They also indicate that the interaction between teacher and students when studying folk stories create opportunities for students to negotiate meaning in social context, and develop their linguistic and communicative competence (Creese et al, 2009).

In addition, Francis et al (2008) report that apart from the teaching of Chinese language and literacy, most of Chinese complementary schools in the UK offer some traditional activities related to Chinese heritage, such as Chinese dance, calligraphy, Kung Fu, and so on. Parents of ethnic Chinese families believe that traditional cultural heritage can be passed on to their children through the learning of Chinese language and participation in the activities of complementary school (Francis et al, 2008). Chinese complementary schools take the responsibility of providing 'a special social network' for the children who attend them and for their parents and families. With this special social network comes a different 'culture' and 'set of values' (Li 2006: 81). According to Worth and Gross (1974, cited in Fong, 2007: 154), 'being a member of a culture "tells" one when certain events are communicative in nature. However, interpretive problems which arise in clearly marked communication situations will require the assignment of a specific meaning or meanings to be inferred'. In this sense, the Chinese complementary schools therefore become 'socially, politically, and educationally important institutions' (Li, 2006) in which children's multicultural identities are developed through the process of learning to make and interpret meaning via their participation in the language classes.

Students from Chinese ethnic backgrounds attend complementary schools to learn the Chinese language and to understand tradition and culture according to their parents' expectations. However, cultural learning in language classrooms is never a one-way process. Teachers and learners will bring their own experiences into the classroom and contribute to creating the 'third culture' (Kramsch, 1993; Casnir, 1999) or 'small culture' (Holliday, 1999) according to the complementary school context. Unlike their teacher and parents, who believe that complementary schools are places where their children can learn Chinese culture along with the language, students of complementary schools overwhelmingly consider the key purpose of their attendance as being to learn the Chinese language (Francis et al, 2008). Most of these children claim English as their native (or first) language, and the majority of them claim 'family background' as their primary motivation for studying Chinese (Xiao, 2006).

Students in the complementary school that my study is based on are learning Mandarin as a Heritage language. They come from various backgrounds and their mother tongue may either be Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Taiwanese or something else. Their ages may also be different because most of the complementary schools categorise students by their language proficiency regardless of how old they are. In addition, globalisation of the media and the popularity of the internet have provided the young generation with a wide platform to learn and exchange information broadly and internationally. Consequently, the teaching and learning of language and culture in complementary schools are seen to be complicated. Students, teachers and parents need to negotiate a new culture with or without being conscious of their decisions by virtue of their intercultural encounter of Chinese culture in the complementary school and the British cultural environment in which they are living (Wu, 2006). In these circumstances, students may not even consider language as being tied to any particular culture or ethnicity.

In a multilingual and multicultural society like Britain, educational systems are required to be developed beyond what is monolingual and unicultural (Li, 2006). Complementary schools are thus seen to be 'providing a pivotal role in the transmission of the Chinese language and culture, and in their provision of an additional source of learning' (Francis and Archer, 2005) for immigrant and ethnic minority children.

2.1.5 Summary

In this ever globalising world, where transition has been a key word, culture can never be described as an entity that is stable. In reality, it is best described as undergoing a continuous process of evolution. Due to this continuous development, intercultural communication has become an important theme in language education. According to Hall (2008), culture is not located in 'accumulated bodies of static knowledge'; it is located in particular sociocultural contexts especially in the activities happening between individuals during a particular time.

In this sense, cultural study in language education should not only focus on 'large culture', but also the 'small culture' in classroom.

My study took place in three different educational contexts although these three contexts are all Mandarin teaching classes. Also, though most students in the study are similar in age, Mandarin is taught and learnt for different purposes. According to Holliday (2010a: 175), language can be considered as many things in the small culture paradigm, it can be considered as 'a cultural reality, a cultural marker, artefact, a cultural arena and the location of a cultural universe'. In the complementary school, Mandarin is taught as a heritage language and learners are from the same ethnic community; whereas in the secondary school and community centre settings, Mandarin is taught as a foreign language. Thus while the secondary school falls within the formal educational system, the other two do not. Therefore, it can be seen that students are learning Mandarin for different purposes. These three contexts can also be described as composing three small cultural environments. I have adopted the small culture theory in this research as small culture, applied to 'the location of research' in ethnography, is useful as an 'interpretive device for understanding emergent behaviour' (Holliday, 1999). The emphasis on small culture will enable the researcher to interpret in detail the forms of physical and verbal interactions within these three classes which in turn, present vivid descriptions that will be invaluable for this study. In the next section, the focus will move on to outline the theoretical background of identities in multilingual classrooms. Similar to the understanding of culture, individuals' identities also share the characteristics of being complicated and dynamic.

2.2 Identities in multilingual classrooms

This section serves as a theoretical framework to support the investigations of identities of teachers and students in my study. Norton (2010: 350) maintains that 'the signifying practices of a society are sites of struggle, and that linguistic communities are heterogeneous arenas characterized by conflicting claims to truth and power'. According to Norton,

> *'Every time we speak, we are negotiating and renegotiating our sense of self in relation to the larger social world, and reorganizing that relationship across time and space. Our gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, among other characteristics, are all implicated in this negotiation of identity.'*
>
> *Norton (2010: 350)*

The speaker's language choices and attitudes in the multilingual environment are 'inseparable from political arrangements, relations of power, language ideologies, and interlocutors' views of their own and other's identities' (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003: 1). In this section, a close look at the links between language and identity will be outlined, and some categories of identities which will be used to analyse collected data will be discussed, and ways in which identities are constructed by power in classroom contexts will be explored.

2.2.1 Language and identities

Language had previously been considered to have a close link to individuals' ethnic identity. From an ethnic perspective, language can be considered as 'the most obvious and the most emotive symbol of belonging to a group' (Jones, 2009). Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz (1982: 7) emphasise the important role of language in the process of constructing one's identity from the ethnic point of view and argue that 'social identity and ethnicity are in a large part established and maintained through language'. Perhaps this is one of the important reasons for the existence of complementary schools and why immigrant parents send their children to these schools to study their heritage languages. Heller viewed language as ‘central to the formation of boundaries’ (Heller, 1987: 199), and notes that ‘shared language is basic to shared identity’ (Heller, 1987: 181). However, Heller made a comment as follows:

> *‘…but more than that, identity rests on shared ways of using language that reflect common patterns of thinking and behaving, or shared culture.’*
> *(Heller 1987: 181)*

Instead of talking about the language itself, Heller also emphasised the importance of language usage in the processes of identity development. In the twenty-first century, poststructuralists take the position that ‘language is not conceived of as a neutral medium of communication, but is understood with reference to its social meaning’ (Norton 2010: 350). Heller views language in society as:

> *‘sets of resources called into play by social actors, under social and historical conditions which both constrain and make possible the social reproduction of existing conventions and relations, as well as the production of new ones.’*
> *(Heller, 2007a: 15)*

She takes the position that the messiness of language usage needed to be understood related to histories, power, and social organisation (Heller, 2007a). In other words, to understand participants’ identities in my study, an investigation of their language usage needed to be studied related to his or her social environment. Norton (2000: 13) argues that language is ‘more than words and sentences’, it is ‘constitutive of and constituted by a speaker’s identity’. From this perspective, language should be referred as ‘discourse’, which is defined as ‘practices which form the objects of which they speak’ (Foucault, 1972: 49) in this frequently changing world (Norton, 2010: 350). Pavlenko (2001: 121) supports this argument and maintains that the movement from ‘language’ to ‘discourse’ corresponded to the shift ‘form modernism and structuralism toward postmodernist and poststructuralist approaches’. It has been viewed as ‘heavily vested with meaning’, and ‘involves human beings as agents operating in specific contexts, and, thus, brings back the relativist view of the world’ (Pavlenko, 2001: 121).

From the poststructuralist perspective, identity is considered as 'multiple, dynamic, and subject to change', and the relationship between language and identity is 'mutually constitutive' (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 249). Individuals' identities are changed across time and space. For example, the young participants in my study are living in a highly technological world, in which the popularisation of internet is putting them into a multicultural environment. Compared with their parents, their identities are influenced by this fast-changing world. Wenger (1998: 154) argues that identity is 'constant becoming' and the development of identity is 'always going on'. Hall (1996: 2) proposes that identity should be considered as:

> *'[…] a process never completed - always 'in process'. It is not determined in the sense that it can always be 'won' or 'lost', sustained or abandoned. Though not without its determinate conditions of existence, including the material and symbolic resource required to sustain it, identification is in the end conditional, lodged in contingency.'*

In this quotation, Hall indicates the incomplete nature of identity. Instead of seeing identity as an essentialism of human beings, he considered it as 'strategic and positional' (Hall, 1996: 3). Language plays an important role in the processes of individuals' identity development. Tabouret-Keller (1997) proposes that the interaction between language and identity provides, in linguistic terms, recourses for individuals to express their identities, and these linguistic resources become the index of individuals' identities at the same time. As Weedon notes:

> *'Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed.'*
>
> *(Weedon, 1987:21)*

Weedon (1997) acknowledges that individuals construct their identities in a particular context at a particular time through language, and it is through language that the individual 'gains access to – or is denied access to – powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak' (Norton, 2010:351). Hamers and Blanc (2000: 208) maintain that language is 'the most important medium of socialisation', and that individuals' identity and the 'internalisation of values and behaviours' are influenced by speakers' different backgrounds. Hamers and Blanc recognise the significant position of language in establishing people's identity. While learners are learning a language, they are also making an effort to understand the cultural background and are influenced by the value embedded in the language. According to Piller, there are several aspects that show the link between language and identities:

> *'in some settings language function as markers of national or ethnic identities, in others as a form of symbolic capital or as a means of social control, and yet in others these multiple roles may be interconnected, while multilingualism is appropriated to construct transnational consumer identities.'*
>
> *Piller (2001, cited in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003: 2)*

Piller indicates that languages are linked to national or ethnic identities in some contexts. Language and identity has an established 'reciprocal' relationship and this is reflected in the way 'language use influences the identity formation of the group, while at the same time, the identity of the group influences the patterns of attitudes and language uses' (Liebkind, 1999, cited in García, 2008: 82).

However, in a multi-cultureale and dynamic society of the 21st century, identity can no longer be precisely connected to any particular nation or ethnic group. Gee (1996) understands language from a discourse perspective and interprets the relationship between discourse and individuals as follow:

> *'Discourses are ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes. A Discourse is a kind of identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize.'*
>
> *(Gee, 1996: 127)*

From this understanding of discourse and identity, learning a language entails mastering complex sets of discursive practices for use in a range of social contexts (Miller, 2003: 291). For example, the young language learners in my study are not just simply learning Mandarin as a foreign or heritage language, they are also children 'who need[s] to acquire a range of discursive practices in addition to those already possessed' (Miller, 2003: 291). Living in a transitional and globalised world in 21st century, people have a much more 'fluid positioning of identity' (García 2008: 82). Hall emphasises the mutability of identity and maintains that:

> *'Identities are never unified and, in late modern times, are increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply and constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions.'*
>
> *(Hall, 1996: 4)*

The mutability of identity means the relationship between language and identity is not, therefore, 'unidirectional' (García, 2008: 82). How people act and react based on their perception of their own identity has been argued by LePage and Tabouret-Keller as follows:

> *'[T]he individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behavior so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified, or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished.'*
>
> *(LePage and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 81)*

This quotation shows how individuals and social identities are mediated by language. Apart from having semiotic and symbolic function, language also has a rhetorical function which can be used to 'discursively construct and create solidarity' within particular communities (García, 2008: 83). However, communities here are not just simply indicative of particular ethnic groups, but can also be used to refer to any small-scale humanistic environment such as the three contexts in my study. How participants in these environments perform and negotiate their identities will be studied in chapter five. The concept of performativity has been introduced to indicate that instead of using language based on their identities, people act upon their identities by their use of language (Pennycook, 2003). From this perspective, language is ‘not only a simple identity marker, but is capable of generating imagined communities and of constructing particular loyalties’ (Anderson, 1983: 133, cited in García, 2008: 83). This means that apart from being recognized as the cultural attachment a person has to his or her ethnic group, language also provides the opportunity for individuals to perform and negotiate their identities and establish a small-scale community by doing so.

To sum up, language has been considered as a reminder to the individual of ‘how one makes sense of the present by looking to his or her past’ (Mills, 2001: 297). This is due to the significant role it plays in ‘managing identities by stressing the core values of religion, and cultural and community affiliation’ for young language learners (Mills, 2001: 383). In this way language has been recognised as the cultural attachment a person has to his or her ethnic group. On the other hand, language allows individuals to perform and negotiate their identities in this transnational and globalised world. In other words, in the process of identity development among bilinguals in the classroom context, language does occupy a significant position.

2.2.2 Categorisations in the Identities of bilinguals

Categorisation of individual identity is difficult to define. In this section, I will outline some categorisations of identities which will be used to analyse data in my study. Four themes pertaining to the issue will be addressed in this section: national identity, ethnicity, heritage identity and gender identity. While nationality refers to ‘the country or countries where a person holds citizenship, ethnicity relates to a person’s social heritage’ (Greer, 2007: 9). In this sense,

> *‘a descriptive form of the word “ethnicity” can be used to encompass both physically distinguished “racial” traits and socially transmitted behaviour patterns, attitudes and beliefs that go to make up the participants’ “mixed” cultural backgrounds.’*
>
> *(Greer, 2007: 9)*

Gatt et al (2001, cited in Greer, 2007: 9) argue that an ethnic group is ‘one that (a) shares common origins, (b) claims a common history, (c) possesses a collective cultural identity and (d) feels a sense of distinct collective solidarity’. Kiang (2008) studies the ethnic labels of young American adults from Chinese backgrounds and examines associations between these ethnic labels and the development of their identity. An argument is subsequently made as follows:

> *‘... (The) choice of ethnic labels was related to young adults’ country of birth, the degree to which they were exploring what it means to be a member of their ethnic group, and their proficiency in the English language.'*
>
> *(Kiang, 2008: 109)*

Kiang proposes that the majority of children from Chinese backgrounds in the study choose distinct ethnic labels which reflect both of their national identities and heritage identities. According to Kiang (2008: 109), ethnic identities have ‘unique implications for development as well as for how individuals relate to the broader society’. To be more specific, how individuals understand and label themselves depends on their self-esteem and their relationship with other members in the ethnic group. Kiang’s study shows that young learners’ study can be benefit from their identities when they ‘acknowledge their specific ethnic ancestry along with their American affiliation’ (Kiang, 2008: 109). Heller (1987: 182) proposed that ethnicity ‘is based on boundaries; it does not acquire meaning except as a function of opposition to that which lies on the other side of the gap in social ties that differentiates one ethnic group from another’. In a homogeneous society, people would not be categorised by their ethnic identity (Heller, 1987). Ethnicity is considered as ‘a product of opposition’ (Norton, 2000: 10) in such as society. Ng (1981) studies immigrant women in

Canada and argues that ethnicity must be understood as 'a set of social relations that organize people in relation to larger social processes in society' (Norton, 2000: 12). Ethnicity is considered as an important term in this study because of the dynamic background of participants' ethnic identities. I will adopt the understanding of it 'relates to a person's social heritage' (Greer, 2007: 9).

However, individuals' ethnic and heritage identities will be investigated in the context of transnational and globalised context. Smith (2007: 2) proposes that heritage is a 'process or performance that is concerned with the production and negotiation of cultural identity, individual and collective memory, and social and cultural values'. From this perspective, heritage can be seen as 'a process of meaning-making' (Blackledge and Creese, 2008: 537) as it enables individuals to create their own identities by seeing themselves as not being bound to national or a range of sub-national collectives or communities (Smith, 2006: 66). In addition, heritage is understood as 'particular resources' which act as 'powerful symbols of, or mnemonics for, the past' (Lipe, 2007, cited in Blackledge and Creese, 2008: 537). By acting to complement each other, the teaching and learning of heritage language takes responsibility for providing 'sites at which 'heritage' values may be transmitted, accepted, contested, subverted, appropriated and otherwise negotiated' (Blackledge and Creese, 2010: 166).

Ethnicity and heritage identities are two related but different terms. On the one hand, ethnicity refers to the individual's ethnic background by emphasising his or her race or traits. On the other hand, heritage identity contains the traditional values and culture passed down from an individual's ancestors. For example, Blackledge and Creese (2008: 535) investigated the negotiation of young people's multilingual and multicultural identities in complementary schools in four communities, and argue that in certain contexts, some languages represent the 'important and constitutive factor of their individual, and at times, collective identities' (May, 2005: 330). Language has 'powerful connotations in terms of their sense of belonging and selfhood' for some of the participants in the research (Blackledge and Creese, 2008: 535). In the complementary school I visited, it can be argued that the learning of a 'heritage' language plays 'a critical role in the process of children's identity formation' (Nicholls, 2005: 164).

Gender is another identity category which will be used in my analysis chapter. According to Pavlenko (2001: 118) the majority of research conducted on gender in language studies between 1975 and the early 1990s focus on 'differences between women's and men's language'. They intended to explain these differences through 'a generalized feature of gender identities or relations: deficit, difference, or dominance' by investigating the relationship between gender and multilingual practices. For example, some scholars suggest that females are better language learners compared to males in the field of second language acquisition (Ellis, 1994; Oxford, 1993). However, such research frameworks are currently being challenged. Piller and Pavlenko criticised these earlier approaches as follow:

> *'their essentialist assumptions about 'men' and 'women' as homogeneous categories, ... lack of attention to the role of context and power relations, and ... insensitivity to ethnic, racial, social, and cultural diversity that mediates gendered behaviours, performance, and outcomes.'*
>
> *(Piller and Pavlenko, 2004: 58)*

This framework has been challenged since the 1990s. As Heller (2007a: 2) notes, the understanding of language in the 21st century should focus on 'whose meaning and values are socially constructed within the constraints of social organisational processes, under specific historical conditions' within 'social networks and discursive spaces'. Instead of seeing language as 'disembodied structures' research on gender in language study considers language as 'a site of identity construction and negotiation, a source of power' (Weedon, 1997, cited in Norton, 2000).

Pavlenko (2001: 117) investigated the relationship between bilingualism and gender within a feminist poststructuralist framework and argues that 'all language contact phenomena, including bilingualism, acquire different meanings in different contexts and can be linked to gender only indirectly'. Instead of being considered as individual property, gender is considered as 'a system of social relations', and 'a product of social doings' from a poststructuralist perspective (Pavlenko, 2001: 124). According to Gal (1991: 176), gender is 'a system of culturally constructed relations of power, produced and reproduced in interaction between and among men and women'. In other words, research about gender in the field of sociolinguistics is now more focused on language learning. The aim of research relating to gender and language can be understood as twofold:

> *'On the one hand, to study gender as a system of social relations constructed and negotiated in discourse through naming, representation, and interaction practices, and, on the other, to investigate effects of gender as a system of social relations on individuals' access to linguistic resources and possibilities of expression.'*
>
> *(Pavlenko 2001: 124)*

Pavlenko (2001: 125) maintains that research about gender cannot be studied in isolation because the understanding of gender in the processes of identity construction is closely linked to other aspects such as ethnicity, age, class, race, culture, economic status. This view positioned the study of gender in a neutral place, and proposes that the focus of the research be 'no longer on women and men as two separate groups and how they differ linguistically', but 'the diversity of gendered identities and discursive practices in context, ideologies that inform beliefs about what is normative' (Takahashi, 2012: 4). In my study, although identity was not included in my research design at the beginning, the issue of gender emerged from my data after I talked to young people in the complementary school. In our conversation, gender developed into an important categorisation for these young participants and myself as a researcher to describe people's identity.

2.2.3 Multiple identities of the diaspora

One of the main foci in my study is that of the diaspora students from complementary schools. As already mentioned in the previous section, this group of students grew up in a society where the mainstream culture is different from their ethnic culture. As such, the conflict of values and beliefs between the two cultures may cause problems with their identity development. Jones (2009: 64) conducted a study on the languages and identities of Welsh and British-Asian girls where he argued that children of second generation families who arrived in the UK from former colonial locations have had to face the situation of being 'between two cultures'. This was considered a disadvantage for the young people's identity development by many scholars. Jacobson (1998: 65) views the phenomenon negatively as he describes these young people as 'passive victims of their circumstances'. Phinney and Rosenthal maintain that:

> *'For adolescents from ethnic minority groups, the process of identification has an added dimension due to their exposure to alternative sources of identification, their own ethnic group and the mainstream or dominant culture.'*
>
> *(Phinney and Rosenthal, 1992: 145)*

Apart from being faced with economic, social or cultural problems due to their status as members of a minority group, these individuals also suffer from psychological issues (Tajfel, 1978: 3). In this regard, Tajfel (1978: 3) raises the question: 'Do they or do they not feel themselves to be members of a particular social group which is clearly distinguished from other groups?' The complexity of this relationship between minority groups and mainstream society has been under question for a long time. Tajfel (1978: 3) holds the view that the status of minority groups has often been accorded based on the definitions of the majority instead of members of these groups. Kich argues that there are three stages in the process of individuals developing multiple identities:

'the first is characterised by feelings of indifference and discrepancy, the second in which individuals search for acceptance from others and the final ongoing stage when they reach an understanding and self-acceptance of their "biracial" identity.'

(Kich 1992, cited in Greer 2007:14)

In the case of the UK, the current trend reveals that immigrants coming from Mainland China into the country are increasing rapidly. However, they tend to be better educated and wealthier than the previous generation of Chinese immigrants thirty or forty years ago (Li and Zhu, 2010: 167). This change is reflected in the discourse which takes place in the language classroom. This issue will be addressed later in this study.

From the perspective of language research, the development of minority identities can be seen as essentially how bilinguals manage to balance their position in the ethnic community and the main society. Francis, Archer and Mau (2010) studied the language constructions of parents of pupils attending these schools, and argue that most parents do not hold high expectations of their children's Chinese language proficiency although they do wish their children to be able to communicate with other Chinese people more effectively. The results of their study show that British-Chinese pupils recognise their Chinese identity and consider it to be the main reason why they study their heritage language (Francis, Archer and Mau, 2010: 111). Li and Zhu (2010: 166) conducted a study of the Chinese diasporas to Britain, Australia and Singapore, and maintain that many of the second or third generations of these Chinese diasporas 'have experienced difficulty with Chinese literacy', but 'all of them feel very strongly that they are Chinese':

'They belong to a new generation of overseas Chinese who are multilingual and multicultural. They have created a new social space for themselves through their social practices, including their multilingual practices. They want to develop their distinctive identity as multilingual and multicultural individuals and as a new group of Chinese transnationals.'

(Li and Zhu 2010: 166)

This argument outlines the multilingual and multicultural factors facing young Chinese diasporas and indicates that they are developing their identities in this transactional and globalised environment by way of social practices. Meanwhile, Li and Zhu highlight the tensions between the generations about their different attitudes of language and identities. They argue that 'the tensions between maintaining the tradition and creating a new generation of 'proper' Chinese and developing new identities as multilingual and multicultural transnationals will no doubt be a major challenge to the Chinese diasporas in the years to come (Li and Zhu, 2010: 170). Different from their parents who hold the conventional view of heritage language and culture, this younger generation tends to practice 'a more flexible approach to identity which is not narrowly based on racial and linguistic grounds but more on broad socio-cultural practices' (Li and Zhu, 2010: 170).

2.2.4 Identity construction in the language classroom

Within the poststructuralist framework, identity formation is considered as an embedded component within each individual's discursive practices and related to the larger ideological framework in the society (Gal, 1989; Woolard, 1985, 1998; Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001). This theoretical framework enables researchers to study the connection between language practices and the power of socioeconomic and socio-political processes in society, and understand how 'macro-social factors' shape individuals' identities (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 245). From the ecological perspective, one's multiple identities are not just identities constructed by the social world, but are also due to 'so many subject positions emerging in the interplay between the social world and the discursive situation at hand' (Kramsch and Steffensen, 2008: 26). This means that bilinguals' identities are composed of their social identities and their position in the particular environment. In the language classroom, the identities of bilinguals are negotiable within a range of multiple categories, such as ethnicity, gender, race and their identities as students or teachers attempting to achieve better academic results. According to Pavlenko and Blackledge:

> *'individuals are agentive beings who are constantly in research of new social and linguistic resources which allow them to resist identities that position them in undesirable ways, produce new identities, and assign alternative meanings to the links between identities and linguistic varieties'.*
>
> *(Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003: 27)*

As agentive beings, individuals are not seen as passive receivers of new information. Instead, they actively think, react and contribute to this information. This is reflected in the field of linguistics by the hybrid usage of language, or translanguaging, which will be referred to in the last section of this chapter. These actions thus allow bilinguals to negotiate their identities in particular language contexts. According to Hamers and Blanc (2000: 201), the negotiation of different identities within society is significant for individuals to position themselves in the society, because this process 'exists within the same society and helps the individual to define him/herself in relation to the roles and the social groups in that society'.

In their research, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003: 22) introduce three types of identity. 'Imposed identities' are those in which individuals cannot resist or argue with at any particular point in time, such as skin colour. 'Assumed identities' are those assumed by individuals but which others may not totally agree with; the last is 'Negotiated identities', which refer to 'all identity options which can be – and are – contested and resisted by particular individuals and groups'. The contested nature of the ideological links between sets of linguistic resources and their assumed associations was frequently made visible in the interactional data recorded in the classroom. Teaching 'language' became sites at which identities were negotiated in discourse (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001; Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003). Here, negotiation of identities is understood as 'an interplay between reflective positioning, i.e. self- representation, and interactive positioning, whereby others attempt to position or reposition particular individuals or groups' (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003:20). Indeed, Blackledge and Pavlenko continue to maintain:

> *'identities can be negotiated in numerous ways, starting with public debates over political alliance or educational and economic policies and ending with private decisions about religious affiliations, celebration of particular holidays, and even food choice and clothing.'*
>
> *(Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2003: 3)*

Conceptually, the development of identities among bilinguals will never reach an ending point. The process of negotiation and construction of identity enable individuals to participate in different environments flexibly.

2.2.5 Summary

This section describes the understanding of identities from a poststructural perspective, and holds the position that identities are of multiple nature and that the development of individuals' identities are constantly on going. Identity is negotiable and will be developed during such negotiation processes. The relationship between language and identity are discussed in this section. Language plays an important role in the processes of identity construction. According to Pavlenko (2001: 121), instead of it being 'merely a tool for communication', discourses taken to be within the domain of language have become 'the main site of world and identity construction'. While identities of speakers are reflected in the language usage of their interlocutors, the processes of language learning could nevertheless influence the development of identities.

This section has also highlighted and subsequently discussed some categories of identities which will be used to analyse my data. The reason for outlining national identities, ethnicity, heritage identities and gender is not because I intend to investigate identity separately. As it is, I agree that 'individuals are agentive beings' (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003: 27), and that the identity of the individual is a 'plural notion' (Hall 1996: 6), especially since it is constructed by the discursive practices of the individual. The idea of 'imposed identities' 'assumed identities' and 'negociated identities' Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003) introduced are important for my study. My data analysis of participants' identities in Chapter five will be structured along two of these categories: the 'imposed identities' and 'negotiated identities' based on the data collected form research fields. This theory provides me with a helpful structure to investigate how teachers and students negotiate and develop their understanding through discursive practices in the classroom. The study of identity development can never be separated from language usage. In the next section, how the large social environment influences language ecology in the classroom and how participants switch between different languages in the classroom will be discussed. The subject matter of code-switching and translanguaging will surface in the discussion.

2.3 Language ecology of multilingual classrooms

Language, as one of the most basic forms of communication among human beings, does not exist in a vacuum. It involves speakers and listeners and must happen in particular contexts. For purposes of analysis, these linguistic contexts can be considered to be the equivalent of the ecological environment. According to Creese and Martin (2003: 164), apart from describing the relationship between different language speakers in certain situations, an ecological approach will also be 'proactive in pulling apart perceived natural language orders'. In the context of the language classroom, the setting will normally comprise the teacher, students and other participants, such as the teaching assistant, researchers and parents. The language classroom will have its own linguistic ecology, but one which is also related to the bigger society. This section serves to provide a theoretical framework based on the ecological perspective aimed at attaining a better understanding of the classroom language environment. In this section, some features of linguistic ecology will be outlined, the relationship between language ecology and language ideology will be addressed, and how the power from society influences language ecology will be discussed.

2.3.1 Language ecology

Language ecology has been understood as an approach to, or dimension of, language use in society (Creese and Martin, 2003; Kramsch and Steffensen, 2008). It has been widely applied within the many themes in the field of linguistics such as second language acquisition, multilingualism and language diversity, death and revitalization of languages, and also language policy and planning (Crystal: 2000). Language ecology has been defined as 'the study of interactions between any given language and its environment' (Haugen, 1972: 325; Haugen, 2001: 57). This definition is borrowed from the German biologist Haeckel's definition of ecology within the life sciences: 'the total science of the organism's relations to the surrounding environment, to which we can count in a wider sense all "conditions of existence"' (Haeckel, 1866: 286). Haugen argues that a given language will always exist in a particular environment as every 'society uses [a language] as one of its codes (of communication)' (Haugen, 1972: 325). For example, the three educational contexts in my study share the same learning language: Mandarin. However, their language ecology is different due to the differences of participants, institutional obligations and positions in society.

Fill and Mühlhäusler (2001: 3) indicate that just as the language ecology metaphor is useful in explaining 'the diversity of inhabitants, it will also be useful in allowing for an understanding of 'the functional interrelationships between the inhabitants'. The ecological perspective applied in the study of language in society will enhance the understanding of 'the relationship of languages to each other and to the society in which these languages exist' (Creese and Martin, 2003: 161). Such relationships involve the geographical, socio-economic and cultural conditions of speakers in a particular environment, as well as the wider environment (Creese and Martin, 2003: 161). According to Kramsch and Steffensen (2008: 18), the keyword of language ecology is 'holism'. This means that from the ecological perspective, language is not studied as 'an isolated, self-contained system, but rather in its natural surroundings'. Kramsch and Steffensen (2008: 8) indicate that the ecological framework is also useful when studying the 'contradictions, the unpredictabilities, and paradoxes that underlie even the most respectable research in language development'. Haugen (1972) argues that several ecological questions need to be considered when studying a particular language environment. In this aspect, he then provides a useful framework for research. Based on his work, Edwards (1992, cited in Creese and Martin, 2003: 161) outlines a checklist of 33 questions and summarises these into three basic categories of variables: speaker, language and setting.

In the study of multilingualism, language ecology is 'essentially about opening up ideological and implementational space in the environment for as many languages as possible' (Hornberger, 2002: 30). By associating the classroom to an ecological microsystem, Jaffe (2007: 225) suggests the necessity of studying 'microecologies' in linguistic, social, political, and pedagogical practice. Creese and Blackledge (2010: 104) argue that it is important to explore 'ecological minutiae of interactional practices' in classrooms, and link these to the 'ideologies that pervade language choice and language policy' (also seen in Creese and Martin, 2003, 2008). Kramsch and Steffensen, however, offer the following ecological perspective on language studies:

'Whether an ecolinguist works with bilingualism, language acquisition and language socialization, political discourse or environmental problems, he/she stands up for the minority language and its learners, for the victims of political exploitation and ecological devastation.'

(Kramsch and Steffensen, 2008: 19-20)

In this aspect, an ecological perspective of language study offers the researcher opportunities to look at not only the social and psychological situation of a language, it also provides the researcher with a method to study language development from the perspective of minority or endangered languages. In other words, the study of language ecology is the 'study of diversity within specific socio-political settings in which the processes of language use create, reflect, and challenge particular hierarchies and hegemonies, however transient these might be' (Creese and Blackledge, 2010: 104).

2.3.2 Language ecology and language ideology

The concepts of ideology and language use have been tied up with fields such as anthropology, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994: 55). Blackledge (2008: 27) argues that the language ecology metaphor is more easily understood by associating it with language ideology as the former includes 'discourse which constructs values and beliefs about languages at state, institutional, national and global levels'. Therefore, in this section, I will discuss some features of language ideology as it functions as the theoretical framework providing a better understanding of language usage among teachers and students in the three settings of my study.

Language ideology is important for both social and linguistic analysis because it links the language to 'group and personal identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology' (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994: 55). To begin with, an understanding of language ideology is important. Gee (1988: 31) argues that language ideology is an expression of 'how people structure their language to express themes, values and a particular worldview'. Silverstein (1979: 193, cited in Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994: 57) defines language ideologies as 'sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use'. Irvine (1989: 255, cited in Li and Zhu, 2010:161) argues that language ideology reflects 'the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships' of speakers, it also expresses the speaker's 'moral and political interests'. Rumsey (1990: 346) summarises language ideologies broadly as 'shared bodies of common sense notions about the nature of language in the world.' While variously defined, the main function of language ideology in the field of linguistic studies is that it reflects the speaker's conception of the world, the community and her or himself. In summary, language ideology influences how the individual selects and uses language within a particular social context.

According to Blackledge (2008: 29), language ideologies shape 'the values, practices and beliefs associated with language use by speakers, and the discourse that constructs values and beliefs at state, institutional, national and global levels'. These features influence judgments made by individuals, which are also known as language choices, especially with speakers who speak more than one language. The ability to speak more than one language is increasingly considered as a useful skill worldwide. How one uses these languages properly in different contexts requires the individual to have a certain ability to choose the right linguistic patterns in certain contexts. This is especially important in multilingual settings. Language choices, according to Fishman (1965: 67), is about 'who speaks what language to whom and when' in particular settings. The issue of language choices is important in the field of bilingual study. Ricento (2000: 208) argues that the question of why individuals opt to use (or cease to use) particular languages and varieties for specified functions in different domains, and how these choices influence – or are influenced by – institutional language policy decision-making needs to be emphasised. In other words, language choices become dependent on the individual's language ideology, and to some extent indicate how the social environment influences a particular language in particular contexts.

My study focuses on the teaching and learning of Mandarin in three different settings. It is concerned with bilingualism, bilingual communities and how they are influenced by the powers from society. In the following section, the position of power in the process of language ecology construction will be discussed.

2.3.3 Power in language ecology

Language ecology is largely influenced by the power from society. In the context of language research, the term power is used to reference 'the socially constructed relations among individuals, institutions and communities through which symbolic and material resources in a society are produced, distributed and validated' (Norton, 2000: 7). Indeed, Norton (2000: 7) explains that symbolic resources are resources such as 'language, education and friendship', and material resources refer to 'capital goods, real estate and money'. In this case, symbolic power is not 'something that can be physically possessed', but 'a relation which always implies social exchange on a particular set of terms' (Norton, 2000: 7). It means that power is a negotiable relation between symbolic and material resources in a society. The negotiations of power relationships are conducted at both macro and micro levels of society. According to Norton:

> *'power does not operate only at the macro level of powerful institutions such as the legal system, the education system and the social welfare system, but also at the micro level of everyday social encounters between people with differential access to symbolic and material resources – encounters that are inevitably produced within language.'*
>
> *(Norton, 2000: 7)*

In other words, power also influences daily life in small contexts such as the language ecology of multilingual classrooms. As has been mentioned in the previous section, language is considered as a distinct symbol of unique tradition and history of the people who share it (Tajfel, 1978). The teaching and learning of a language or languages has an influence on the processes of identity development of this group of people thus influencing the language ecology in the classroom.

The power from the big social context influences language ecology by affecting the language policy and the social leaning environment. Blommaert and Verschueren (1998, cited in Blackledge (2003: 71) acknowledges that 'the symbolic status of language can create identity and discontinuity, and can both unite and divide, as it can become a battleground, an object of oppression and a means of discrimination'. In a multi-ethnic country like Great Britain, the influence of power on citizens who speak minority languages is always an important issue to study. Desforges and Jones (2000: 30) studied how language influenced national identity in Wales and maintain that 'despite the role that language plays in affording sustenance to a nation and its national culture, difficulties often arise when mastery of a particular language is deemed to be a requirement for full membership of a given nation'. Mills (2001: 383) studied the culture, language and identities of the third generation Asian children in the Britain and argues that for those children, 'language played a significant part in managing identities and in stressing the core values of religion, and cultural and community affiliation'. Li and Zhu (2010) conducted a study of the Chinese diasporas to Britain, Australia and Singapore, and argue that the national standardised Chinese language, Putonghua, is becoming popular among Chinese diasporas all around the world because of globalisation and the rise of China as a world politico-economic power. Putonghua has very strong institutional support from the Chinese government and some other non-governmental organizations such as the Confucius Institutes (Li and Zhu 2010: 168). Li and Zhu in their

2010 study provide a summary of the language ideologies which impact on linguistic practices among Chinese diasporas:

> *'(1) there is a standard Chinese language and it is represented by Putonghua; (2) whatever the spoken variety of Chinese, the written Chinese characters are common to all and are part of the standard form of the language; (3) the Chinese language, especially the written form, is an important cultural symbol and has certain advantages over other languages; (4) to be "proper" Chinese, one must know the Chinese language, especially the written form, which needs to be learned through repeated copying.'*
>
> *(Li and Zhu, 2010: 170)*

This statement indicates how globalisation has a massive effect on the language attitudes and practices of the overseas Chinese diasporas with regard to Chinese families and Chinese schools as well as public institutions. My participants in the Chinese complementary school are part of this group of children. They came from different Chinese dialect backgrounds, but Mandarin is the language their parents want them to learn. According to Li and Zhu (2010: 161), language ideology significantly influences not only language policy and planning, but also speakers' actual use of language, and what individuals believe about language influences their language behaviour. The changing position of Mandarin in the last few decades has not only influenced the Chinese diasporas, it has also changed people's attitudes about learning Chinese globally.

2.3.4 Summary

Section 2.3 provided a theoretical framework of language ecology for the three educational contexts in my study. From an ecological perspective, the given language in the classroom is considered as one of the habitants in the ecological environment and should be studied in relation to the other existing languages in the context of the bigger environment. The language ecology metaphor provides the researcher with an opportunity to study the diversity of languages and explains the relationship between these languages as well as their relationship with society. Language ecology also offers a platform for the researcher to study how the powers from society influence the development of the given language. This approach allows my study to understand the development of teaching Chinese as both a heritage language and a foreign language in this transnational and globalised world.

In attempting to understand language ecology in these three settings, language usage in a particular context is important and should be emphasised in this study. In typical bilingual settings, speakers and listeners share more than one language. Technically they are able to use any one of the languages in their common knowledge bank to communicate with one another. However, in practice, people normally tend to associate certain languages with certain contexts depending on situations, settings, topics, groups of interlocutors, and so on. These are said to be the habitual language choices made by speakers in the bilingual community (Mesthrie et al, 2000: 153). In the next section, language practices in multilingual contexts will be outlined. Theories of code-switching and translanguaging will be addressed and discussed.

2.4 Multilingual practices in multilingual classrooms

Multilingual practices in the classroom have been studied from many different angles. Li (2011b) acknowledges multilingual practices as 'behaviours that involve the use of different linguistic systems'. He explains that these practices include:

> *'choice of specific languages, switching between languages, mixing and temporary borrowing of elements from languages that are not part of the speaker's normal linguistic repertoire, imitating other speakers' accents or style, as well as switching among speech, writing, and signing.'*
>
> *(Li, 2011b: 370)*

Multilingual practices have been noted by many scholars in different ways. For example, Rampton (1997: 2) indicates the term 'language crossing', he argues that 'a sense of movement across quite sharply felt social or ethnic boundaries' is involved in language crossing. Bailey (2007) notes it as 'heteroglossia', which refers to the simultaneous multilingual practices. García uses 'translanguaging' to refer to 'normaliz[ing] bilingualism without diglossic functional separation' (Garcia, 2007: xiii, also see Garcia, 2008). Creese et al (2011) propose the term 'flexible bilingual' to describe these multilingual practices in the classroom. In my section, I begin with the understanding of the traditional term code-switching, and use the theories of translanguaging and flexible bilingual in my analysis of mutilingual practices in my study. These can subsequently be used as a pedagogical tool in Mandarin language teaching in the classroom.

2.4.1 Code-switching

Traditionally, the term code-switching has been used as an umbrella term to describe different forms of bilingual behaviours. Gumperz (1982: 59) defined code-switching as 'the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems'. Bailey (2001: 238) understands code-switching as 'the use of two or more languages in one speech exchange by bi- or multilingual speakers'. Code-switching has been illustrated by Myers-Scotton (1993: 1) as 'alternations of linguistic varieties within the same conversation'. Bailey (2001：238) argues that language is the central 'semiotic tool' which represents social reality and functions to transmit sociocultural orientations in multicultural, multilingual contexts. Code-switching is therefore 'both reflective and constitutive' of the social processes that occur in such multilingual situations. Code-switching is of particular interest in linguistic ethnographic study as it is both a language contact phenomenon and a social contact phenomenon. In the context of language classrooms like my study, code-switching happens quite commonly among teacher and students. The study of code-switching transitionally has developed into two different but related directions: structural and sociolinguistic. The structural approach focuses on identifying the syntactic and grammatical conditions of code-switching. It is mainly concerned with the structure of sentences. On the other hand, the sociolinguistic approach considers code-switching primarily as 'a discourse phenomenon focusing its attention on questions such as how social meaning is created in code-switching and what specific discourse functions it serves' (Boztepe, 2003: 3). My research aims to study multilingual practices in language classroom contexts to understand how participants use their linguistic and cultural knowledge as resources to break down the barriers between languages and negotiate their identities. This falls within the second category. The terms of 'translanguaging' and 'flexible bilingualism' which I will use in my study have their origins in sociolinguistics.

The reasons people switch between languages are varied. However, they could be categorised into two groups at the basic level. In one way, code-switching can be considered as 'a tool for maintaining the flow of conversation', in another way it can be understood as 'a means of expressing something about the speaker's identity' (Greer, 2007: 29). Auer applied a sequential approach to the study of code-switching and proposed that 'any theory of conversational code-alternation is bound to fail if it does not take into account the meaning of code-alternation, which in turn depends in essential ways on its "sequential environment"' (Auer, 1995b: 116). This means that the understanding of code-switching has to be related to the language contexts in which it is applied. In addition, Auer introduces two functions of code-switching: discourse-related code-switching and participant-related code-switching. Discourse-related code-switching refers to 'the use of code-switching to organise the conversation by contributing to the interactional meaning of a particular utterance' (Auer, 1998: 4). According to Auer (1998: 8), in discourses where code-switching is applied, the meaning of utterances is understood by all participants and usually involves the new language as a new 'frame' or 'footing' in the conversation. On the other hand, participant-related code-switching focuses on the linguistic preferences or competencies of hearers (Martin-Jones, 1995: 99). Martin-Jones (1995: 99) emphasises the importance of distinguishing these two functions and summarises it as discourse-oriented code-switching, which involves speaker-oriented and hearer-oriented alternations. This approach offers me a way to describe the functions of participants' multilingual practices, and to discover the "hows" and "whys" participants break the boundaries between Chinese and English to communicate and negotiate with each other.

Martin-Jones (1995) reviewed a series of research on code-switching in the multilingual classroom and acknowledged that the quantitative approach used in code-switching studies focuses too much on the functions of code-switching and the time participants distributed in different languages. Later, the studies on code-switching switched to micro-ethnographic methods, which paid attention to particular moments in the classrooms (Martin-Jones, 1995). Lemke (2002: 83) considered code-switching as 'skills' while most scholars recognized it as a bad habit, which should be banned in the classroom. He argues that students 'should learn to construct bilingual dialogues and texts which break every traditional rule of the separateness and autonomy of distinct languages' (Lemke, 2002: 83). In the language classroom, language is not just for delivering information, it also serves to convey evidence about the participant's own identity and about the relationship that distinguishes him/her from others (Mesthrie et al, 2000: 156). According to Mesthrie et al (2000: 171), the individual's choice of language has to do with 'maintaining, or negotiating, a certain type of social identity in relation to others'. When relationships between people in certain social contexts are not clear, code-switching provides speakers with an opportunity to negotiate their identities and develop relationships within the group (Mesthrie et al, 2000: 171).

In my study, participants' backgrounds are diverse, and the multilingual practices in classrooms are also varied. For example, in the complementary school, parents and teachers communicate mainly in Chinese (including Mandarin and Chinese dialects such as Cantonese), and students are encouraged to speak as much as Mandarin as they can. Li (1994) studies code-switching and language mixing at the interactional level in the context of the Chinese community in the UK, and propose that individuals' language choices and code-switching are 'network specific socio-cultural practices'. In addition, code-switching is used by young people in the this globalised world for shifting frames of reference and making relevant local as well as global semiotic resources, including gender, life experience, popular culture, and language ideologies (Li, 2011b: 381). The term of translanguaging, therefore, is used by some scholars to indicate these multilingual practices which go beyond code-switching.

2.4.2 Translanguaging

The concept of 'translanguaging' is first used by Williams to explain the pedagogical practice in the multilingual classroom (Williams, 1994, 1996). García develops this term and acknowledges that:

> *'Bilingualism is not like a bicycle with two balanced wheels; it is more like an all-terrain vehicle'. Its wheels do not move in unison or in the same direction, but extend and contract, flex and stretch, making possible, over highly uneven ground, movement forward that is bumpy and irregular but also sustained and effective.'*
>
> *(García, 2008: 45)*

The learning process of bilingualism is not simply linear but dynamic, drawing from the different contexts in which it develops and functions (García, 2008: 53). This means that the language usage of bilingual speakers is not stable, it is flexible and changeable depending on the language contexts and interlocutors. In describing this phenomenon, García defines translanguaging as 'multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds'. Similar to code-switching, the term translanguaging essentially describes the multilingual practices among bilinguals (García, 2008: 45).

Li (2011a: 1223) understands translanguaging from a psycholinguistic perspective and argues that translanguaging is 'both going between different linguistic structures and systems and going beyond them'. According to Li:

> *'It includes the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users for purposes that transcend the combination of structures, the alternation between systems, the transmission of information and the representation of values, identities and relationships.'*
>
> *(Li, 2011a: 1223)*

The alterations are made between 'different modalities', such as speaking, writing, reading even singing (Li, 2011a: 1223). In addition, Bhabba (1994) proposes a concept of 'cultural translation', which indicates the space between two cultures created by the participants. Li develops this idea and offers the term 'translanguaging space', which refers to 'a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging' (Li, 2011a: 1222). Li (2011a: 1223) also introduces Moment Analysis as a methodological approach, which has been defined as a research method 'to highlight the spontaneous performances of the multilingual language users, and the consequences of the spontaneous performances for the individuals concerned and for the translanguaging space'. Translanguaging in the classroom is considered as 'transformative in nature', as it offers participants opportunities to bring their own background and knowledge into the classroom, developing their understanding of ideology and their own identities (Li, 2011a: 1223). The 'translanguaging space' Li proposes is, therefore, represented by a space 'where different identities, values and practices simply co-exist', which also 'combine together to generate new identities, values and practices' (Li, 2011a: 1222). It offers a space for 'creativity' and 'criticality', and these two concepts are 'fundamental but hitherto under-explored dimensions of multilingual practices' (Li, 2011a: 1222).

Creese and Blackledge (2011: 1196) acknowledge two 'seemingly contradictory positions' of bilingualism: 'separate bilingualism' and 'flexible bilingualism'. 'Separate bilingualism' refers to 'parallel monolingualism' (Heller, 1999:271, cited in Creese and Blackledge, 2011: 1196) or alternatively described as the 'language separation approach' by Gafaranga (2000, cited in Creese and Blackledge, 2011: 1196). On the other hand, 'flexible bilingualism' is used to describe what is currently discussed in this section - 'translanguaging' (Garcia, 2009; Li, 2011a, 2011b). According to Creese and Blackledge,

> *''Flexible bilingualism' represents a view of language as a social resource (Heller, 2007a, b) without clear boundaries, which places the speaker at the heart of the interaction. It stresses individual agency and understands language use as predicated on using all available signs (them socially constituted) in the performance of different social subjectivities.'*
>
> *(Creese and Blackledge 2011: 1197)*

Similar to translanguaging, flexible bilingualism focus on language speakers and consider language as resource which can be used flexibly. The distinction between 'separate' bilingualism' and 'flexible bilingualism' reflects the 'dynamic tension described in sociolinguistic research, which has often viewed language as fluid and overlapping, while at the same time acknowledging language as a social construct which demarcates and reifies identities'(Creese and Blackledge 2011: 1196).

Creese and Blackledge have not only acknowledged the naturalistic character of flexible bilingualism, they have also argued that how one harnesses and builds on this will depend on 'the socio-political and historical environment in which such practices are embedded and the local ecologies of schools and classrooms (Creese and Blackledge, 2010: 107)'. There is not a clear distinction between translanguaging and code-switching, however, the former is more suitable to describe high linguistic proficiency speakers in both languages while the late is of used to study the contexts where speakers has lower linguistic proficiency in L2. In the next section, I will outline how multilingual practices are understood from the pedagogical perspective in the language classroom.

2.4.3 Translanguaging as pedagogy in the language classroom

Undoubtedly, one of the most important missions in the language classroom is the development of learners' language proficiency. From the bilingual educational perspective, providing opportunities for bilinguals to be able to use both languages efficiently becomes the target of teaching and learning. According to Kumaravadivelu (2001: 538), the term pedagogy includes not only internal elements such as classroom strategies, instructional materials, curricular objectives, and evaluation measures, but also contains external issues such as historical, political, and sociocultural experiences that directly or indirectly influence language education. According to Coleman (1996: 11), pedagogies of the language classroom should connect to the real world, otherwise the possible disadvantages to the students will be 'so disturbing for those affected by them - so threatening to their belief systems - that hostility is aroused and learning becomes impossible'. Instead of a 'predetermined set of generic principles and procedures', a pedagogy of particularity seeking to provide the classroom with 'a context-sensitive, location-specific' knowledge which is in turn based on 'the understanding of local linguistic, sociocultural, and political particularities' is needed (Kumaravadivelu, 2001: 544). In addition, the ideal bilingual, as defined by Weinreich (1968: 73), is the one who 'switches from one language to the other according to appropriate changes in the speech situation (interlocutors, topics, etc.), but not in an unchanged speech situation, and certainly not within a single sentence'.

However, in bilingual education, it has traditionally been assumed that the use of different languages should be kept separate during the course of learning (Creese and Blackledge, 2010: 104). According to Jacobson and Faltis:

> *'Bilingual educators have usually insisted on the separation of the two languages, one of which is English and the other, the child's vernacular. By strictly separating the languages, the teacher avoids, it is argued, cross-contamination, thus making it easier for the child to acquire a new linguistic system as he/she internalizes a given lesson. . . . It was felt that the inappropriateness of the concurrent use was so self-evident that no research had to be conducted to prove this fact.'*
>
> *(Jacobson and Faltis, 1990: 4)*

Fishman (1965: 67) argues that stable bilinguals should use 'proper' language meaning and that speakers should choose to use only one language variety depending on the particular topic with particular classes of interlocutors. However, the real environment in language classrooms is much more complicated as languages are used by participants flexibly to create their own space for communication and to negotiate their identities. For example, in the complementary school setting, teachers will normally require that students use their heritage language, although the use of English is still prevalent among students. In bilingual classrooms, code-switching or translanguaging are almost unavoidable practices though the phenomenon hardly receives attention. In fact, the use of translanguaging as a pedagogical tool used to be 'frowned upon' in educational settings and is normally rejected by teachers (Creese and Blackledge, 2010: 105). Cummins (2005) criticises the waste of such bilingual resources in mainstream schools. He argues that:

> *'When we free ourselves from exclusive reliance on monolingual instructional approaches, a wide variety of opportunities arise for teaching bilingual students by means of bilingual instructional strategies that acknowledge the reality of, and strongly promote, cross-language transfer.'*
>
> *(Cummins, 2005: 65)*

With this in mind, some scholars propose the use of multilingual practices in the classroom. Cummins (2005) calls for the explicit positioning of translanguaging as an approach in bilingual education and this has been echoed by many other scholars. Anderson (2008: 79) seeks to explore the flexible pedagogical approaches for bilingual education through 'a better understanding of learner backgrounds and needs'. Arthur and Martin (2006: 177) explore how teachers and pupils achieve positive teaching and learning when faced with the challenge of using a language which is not their own in two postcolonial societies. They argue that the pressure of economic issues and globalisation has a huge influence on the 'privilege of imported over indigenous languages', and that the flexible classroom pedagogy adopted has received pragmatic responses (Arthur and Martin, 2006: 177). Gutiérrez et al (1999: 286) conducted an ethnographic study on the literacy practices of a dual immersion elementary school classroom and concluded that the use of multiple, diverse, and even conflicting mediational tools such as hybrid language use, promotes the 'emergence of Third Spaces, or zones of development, thus expanding learning'. Creese and Blackledge (2010: 104) conducted a study on how teachers and students develop and co-construct pedagogic practices for participants in complementary schools. They observed the 'ideological, interrelational, and interactional affordances' of these linguistically diverse classrooms from an ecological perspective and argue that translanguaging among students in the classroom can be seen as a useful pedagogical tool (Creese and Martin, 2003; van Lier, 2008; Creese and Blackledge, 2010). Van Lier (2008) further observed that there is the development of 'new languages alongside the development of existing languages' (Creese and Blackledge, 2010: 104). To summarise, the pedagogic potentials behind translanguaging are now emphasised in the field of language education.

From an ecological perspective, the processes of 'perceiving, and the insight that perception and action go together' is central to language learning (van Lier, 2008: 54). Based on this theoretical framework, van Lier (2008: 61) suggests an 'activity-based or action-based' approach to language learning. He argues that activity driven pedagogy is not a new concept, but it is ‘always useful to advance new arguments to old ideas, and to connect them to concepts that are in current focus (such as communication, identity, agency, and context)’. ‘Pedagogical scaffolding’ was originally introduced by Bruner and Sherwood (1975). They refer to it as ‘a range of teaching strategies that promotes activity in proximal contexts’ (Bruner and Sherwood, 1975: 280, cited in van Lier, 2008: 61). Pedagogical scaffolding normally happens at ‘unpredictable’, ‘non-rule-bound’ moments in a ‘well-structured, predictable game or activity’ (1975: 280, cited in van Lier, 2004: 147). Therefore, the consideration of flexibility between the predictable and the unpredictable is important in pedagogical design. From the ecological perspective of language learning, a structured environment is considered as an agency which benefits bilinguals by helping them to develop linguistic proficiency. However, this process must be ‘assisted and stimulated’ when ‘new responses, behaviours or ventures occur that depart from the script in developmentally promising ways’ (van Lier, 2008: 62). In the context of the language classroom, the teacher and students place ‘a high value on respecting the language, social practices, and beliefs of the classroom community and its individual members’ (Gutiérrez et al, 1999: 291). Diversity in the language classroom is an asset. The acceptance and use of ‘diverse, alternative texts and codes, ways of participating, sharing expertise, and mediating literacy learning’ are part of the regular practice of learners (Rogoff, 1994, cited in Gutiérrez et al, 1999: 291).

It has been argued that translanguaging is not simply a description of bilingual language use or bilingual contact from the perspective of the language, but from the perspective of the users themselves (García, 2008: 45). While translanguaging among bilinguals serves as an agency of communication, it also helps bilinguals construct and make sense of their language ideology. Therefore, it goes beyond code-witching as well as any other kind of bilingual language use and bilingual contact (García, 2008: 45). According to Mesthrie et al (2000: 148), ‘language varieties are meaningful’ in a way that can be considered as ‘indexical’ of the speakers' social identities. It also contains social values which can be 'related to the speakers who use them and the contexts in which they are habitually used' (Mesthrie et al, 2000: 148). The concept of 'performativity' as indicated by Pennycook (2003, cited in García, 2008: 83) argues that people do 'not use language based on their identity, but instead perform their identity by using language'. This means that the language choice of bilinguals depends on the identities that they want to project in particular social contexts. If the teacher shows the learner the various possibilities for flexibility, the negotiation of language usage for teacher–learner engagement activities in the language classroom will result in the emergence of new identity positions of participants (Creese and Blackledge, 2010: 104). As mentioned in 2.4.2, translanguaging offers 'space' for participants to actualise their creativity and criticality (Li 2011b). Creativity is understood as 'pushing and breaking the boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging' (Li, 2011b: 382). In the language classroom, this means that teachers and students break down boundaries and usage of languages and apply them critically as communicative tools in their own way. Criticality is considered as 'the ability to assess the situation systematically and insightfully, to question and problematise received wisdom, and to articulate views and opinions in a reasoned way' (Li, 2011b: 382). Criticality requires speakers to have a certain background knowledge of the conversation and the ability to understand the communication in the environment and connect to the bigger society.

2.4.4 Summary

In summing up, this section outlines the theoretical framework to support the multilingual practices in my study. Code-witching is discussed from a sociolinguistic perspective which focuses on the social meaning it conveys in the conversation. Translanguaging argues for the need to go beyond code-witching and other notions of multilingual practices (García, 2009).

Translanguaging benefits the language classroom from a pedagogical perspective in several ways: it allows participants to use language as a tool to understand and negotiate their identities, and it offers speakers a space to operate the language creatively and critically. According to Li (2011b: 382), creativity and criticality are normally created through ‘tensions, conflicts, competitions, differences, and change’ in the language classroom, and these can be used as measures for language learners to develop their linguistic proficiency. In other words, translanguaging among teachers and students can be considered as a rich resource from a pedagogical perspective.

To conclude, this chapter serves to locate this study within the existing knowledge of four fields of study:

The understanding of culture and intercultural communication in multilingual classrooms;

The understanding of identities and how the concept is negotiated by participants in multilingual classrooms;

The notions of language ecology and how the power from the bigger society influences multilingual classrooms;

The notions of multilingual practices and how translanguaging serves as a resource in classroom pedagogy.

These four aspects of knowledge which have benefited from previous studies will form the theoretical foundation and provide theoretical support for the subsequent data analysis chapters in my study.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Following the previous chapter, which served to provide this study with a theoretical framework, this segment now intends to outline the various research contexts and discuss the methodological approaches of the study. The background information of the three fieldwork settings where this research was conducted will be introduced. It will begin by locating these contexts within the broader landscape of the UK educational system. The research sites will also be described in terms of their geography, history and ethnography. Subsequently, some teachers and students who took part in the study will be introduced as key participants. Though the background information of the research sites and participants may not have much significance in relation to methodology and research techniques, it does offer an understanding of the arenas where this project took place. In other words, it contributes to the ethnographic side of the study. According to Zhu and David (2008), a single case from the research field can provide 'rich and in-depth data on the behaviour of individual or small group'. For example, the understanding of how individuals negotiate their identities within language classroom contexts can possibly be reflected by classroom discourse and interactions made by teachers and students.

This chapter will also provide the methodological framework and research methods which were utilised in the current study. This study is positioned in the field of ethnography which, it is argued is distinguished from its research methods by its emic and historical view of data (Hornberger, 1994, 1995). An emic approach works inductively from collected data to findings and conclusions. It offers readers an opportunity to gain an insight of what is going on in the research sites through the researcher's eyes. This section will also examine the data collection methods I used in my study in turn, and some data will be presented as an example to show how it works. Observational data such as classroom recordings and researcher's fieldnotes along with interview data combine to make up the majority of data in this study.

3.2 Research contexts and research questions

3.2.1 Research contexts

My research takes place in a climate which sees a growing demand for the teaching of Mandarin in the UK. Baker (2001: 106) argues that individuals of all ages can become bilingual in different ways. Specifically, he mentions that there are two routes through which bilingualism can be attained: simultaneous and sequential. Simultaneous bilinguals acquire two or more languages consecutively from birth, for example, ethnic Chinese children who speak Cantonese or Mandarin at home with their parents but use English to communicate with others in school. Sequential bilinguals are language learners who learn a second or more languages through either formal education or the more informal paths, for example, through private language classes or from neighbours who can teach them the language (Baker 2001: 106). In this section, I will briefly introduce the three research contexts of my study.

How these three contexts became my sites of study is a journey I would like to share at the beginning, because it not only shows the background information of these schools, but also portrays the connectedness of these contexts and the power from society behind them. I started by contacting Dr. S, who is the administrator of the complementary school in Nottingham. The reason that encouraged me to make contact with him at the beginning was his e-mail address that ends with <.ac.uk>, which indicated that he is also working in the field of academia, and I thought it might be easier to get permission to conduct my research there.

Dr. S is a lecturer of the University of Nottingham in the field of chemical engineering. He is one of the people who established this school with the headteacher about a decade ago. Then I met the headteacher in the school and took over a teaching position at her request. This was because the teacher of the elementary class was going back to China and they needed somebody who had experience to take over that class. While I was working as a teacher in the school, the headteacher suggested I attended a conference which was organized by Hanban (中国国家汉语国际推广领导小组办公室<the Office of Chinese Language Council International>). It is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation affiliated with the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. This three-day conference was a training course organised for Chinese teachers, or anyone intending to work as a Chinese teacher, outside China. I met Dr. Shang, the teacher of the community centre class at a conference. Apart from the Chinese class in the community centre, she also teaches in the mainstream school. I got her permission to visit her class in November 2010. In addition, this conference was also where I made contact with the secondary school in London which is the context C in this study. The Kingsford School is one of the places at which the conference took place. The administrator of the conference wanted to provide candidates with an opportunity to see what is really going on in the mainstream school by preparing an instructional teaching class, where Alex is the teacher.

The processes of expanding my research from one site to three is actually an ethnographic approach itself. During the data collection periods, I travelled around these schools, I talked to participants and observed classes. As a Chinese new researcher who is doing her research in the UK, I carried my desires to learn from experienced teachers and contribute to the field of teaching and learning Chinese language with me, and I am also a part of this research. Now, the information of these schools will firstly be geographically outlined on a map of the UK.

The locations of three contexts in the UK

Context A: Two Chinese language classes in a complementary school located in Nottingham where most of its students are from Chinese heritage families. In this Chinese complementary school, Mandarin is taught as a Heritage language. In the context of the UK, the Chinese heritage learner is defined by He (2006) as 'a language student who is raised in a home where Chinese is spoken and who speaks or at least understands the language and is to some degree bilingual in Chinese and in English'. These students are 'simultaneous bilinguals' as they were born in the UK or had migrated to the country at a very early age. As such, they are able to acquire knowledge of the Chinese languages (specifically Mandarin and Cantonese) and English spontaneously. English is used in school while Chinese is spoken at home. For this group of learners, the Chinese language is considered as their heritage language. However, their parents believe that knowledge of Chinese language and traditional culture is now at risk of being forgotten due to lack of practice. The responsibilities of complementary schools in this instance are not to just teach the Chinese language, but also to provide these children with opportunities to acquire and experience their heritage culture.

The school in which the data was collected was founded in 1999, and it is sponsored by Nottinghamshire County Council as a supplementary school. There are more than 100 pupils studying at the school, and it is open every Saturday afternoon from 2:30p.m. to 4:30p.m. It operates at the premises of a grammar school, which is located at Nottinghamshire, which is about 5.5 kilometres southwest of Nottingham city centre. Teaching materials are based on textbooks especially created for overseas Chinese learners. The class which I intensively observed is an advanced class comprising 14 students from 9 to 14 years of age. Some key participants are listed below:

- The headteacher is a Chinese women in her fifties. She has two doctoral degrees, one from a university in China and one in the UK. She used to work as a researcher at the University of Nottingham but has now changed her workplace to a world-renowned car company. She was one of the people who set up this school and has been working as headteacher for more than ten years.
- The teacher C is a Chinese speaker from mainland China who migrated to the UK 14 years ago. She has two children who also study in the same school.
- Ying is an eleven-year-old girl, whose mother is Chinese and father is English. Her mother also works in the school to teach children Chinese folk dancing. Ying is interested in learning languages, she can speak Mandarin fluently. Apart from Chinese, Ying also learns German, French and Latin at school.
- Qian is a fourteen–year-old whose parents are Chinese. She told me that she wants to be a lawyer in the future.

Context B: A Chinese evening class at a local community centre in Birmingham. The class was established in 2008 and the lesson is conducted every Thursday evening. This group is comprised of ten mixed-age Mandarin language learners. Most of these learners are staff and research students from the University of Birmingham, they are volunteer to study in this class. Therefore the atmosphere is informal and some learners bring their young children along when attending lessons. The class thus provides an opportunity for the whole family to learn Mandarin together. In fact, interaction between family members in the classroom, though unrelated to the lessons themselves, was later seen to have played a significant part in the classroom discourse. These students can be described as ‘sequential bilinguals’ although their choice for learning Mandarin as a foreign language was for different purposes from the other two contexts. The class exhibited the atmosphere of a small but friendly community as the students seemed to be long-term friends or are very close acquaintances. The teacher is a Chinese speaker. She uses ‘快乐汉语’ (‘Happy Chinese’) as an accompaniment to her Mandarin lessons. Key participant are listed as follows:

- Shang is a Chinese women in her fifties. She is from mainland China and has migrated with her family to the UK. Apart from this class, Shang also teaches in a mainstream school and the University of Birmingham. That is why this group of students is more or less related to the university. She got her PhD in the UK in the field of Chemistry but discovered later that teaching Mandarin is what she really wants to do for her career. She is a devout Christian, and sometimes this identity shows in the classroom interactions.
- There is a family that comes as a group in this class. F represents the father, he is a lecturer in the Biochemical department in the University of Birmingham; M is the mother, she is a research student in the same department as her husband; Davie is their 14-year-old son and Grace is their 12-year-old daughter.
- Katerina is a research student from the same department as the couple. She is actually one of my friends in the university, and it was a surprise when we first met in this classroom. Katerina is in her thirties from Greece. She is interested in learning new things including languages.

Context C: Some Chinese language classes in an English secondary school in London. As previously described, these students fall under the category of 'sequential bilinguals' as learning Chinese as a foreign language is part of their formal curriculum. Forming the majority of bilingual speakers, this group of language learners is also known as 'elective bilinguals' (Valdés and Figueroa, 1994, cited in Baker, 2001: 15). Elective bilinguals are described as people who are learning a second or more languages without any damaging effects on their first language.

As will be shown in the following chart, there is an unbalanced amount of data set in these contexts. The number of visits to the secondary school in London is smaller than the other two research fields. This is because the mainstream school has a stricter policy for visitors; they only allow visitors to come together on specific days. The application for visitors needed to be signed by the headteacher and relevant staff. Therefore the applications normally will be put on a waiting list until the visitors can come as a group. For example, on the second and third occasion of my visits, I met some other visitors from different backgrounds. Some of them were teachers from different schools, some were researchers like me who came for interviews and observations. As an ethnographic researcher, I was willing to travel to London to visit the school and get to know the participants in more detail. However, the strict visiting rule limited my observations, and that is the reason that causes this unbalanced data set in my study.

In addition, in this school, I had to follow an administrator to observe whatever the school prepared for visitors. Therefore, the classes I visited were not always the same group of students. One of the classes I observed, the data of which are presented and analysed in chapter 5, consisted of 9 students aged around 12 years old most of whom were native English speakers. The group of participants in chapter 7 were students planning to take

Chinese for GCSE exam; they were around the age of fifteen and sixteen. Teaching materials are different based on their age. Key participants are listed as follows:

- Alex is an English (Caucasian), Chinese speaker. He studied in China for three years. Apart from Chinese, he also teaches French as a foreign language in the school.
- Ms Liu is the head of the Chinese group in the school. She did her undergraduate studies in China, and she has been working and living in the UK for many years.

The following is a table summarising these three contexts:

Context / Theme	A: Mandarin classes in a Chinese complementary school	B: a Mandarin class in a community centre	C: Mandarin classes in a secondary school
Location	Nottinghamshire	Community Centre in Birmingham	East London
School type	Complementary school	A community night class	Mainstream school
Mandarin is being taught as	Heritage language	Foreign language	Foreign language
Classes are conducted on	Saturday afternoons 14:30 – 16:00	Thursday evenings 18:00 – 20:00	School curriculum time
Teacher	Chinese/Female	Chinese/female	English/Male
Age of students	9 - 14	Mixed age	11-16
Classroom Facilities	Computer, projector screen, speakers, white board, tables, chairs, wall poster	Computer, projector screen, speakers, white board, tables, chairs,	Computer, projector screen, speakers, white board, tables, chairs, wall poster
Textbook	当代中文 (Modern Chinese)	快乐汉语 （Happy Chinese）	Edexcel GCSE Chinese Student Book

Visit	16 times (4 audio recorded)	8 times (3 audio recorded)	3 times (3 audio recorded)
Fieldnotes	16	8	3
Interview sessions	8 (5 audio recorded)	5 (4 audio recorded, 1 video recorded group interview)	3 (3 audio recorded)

Table1: Summary of three educational contexts

This table summarises my data sets across the three educational contexts and provides an overview of my data sets. In the next section, I will outline my research questions and explain why they are formulated in this way.

3.2.2 Research Questions

With the development of technology and with greater globalisation, the study of bilingualism is also developing in a transnational direction. For instance, it is now necessary to undertake research to gain a better understanding of the bilingual learner's formation of social identities, and to provide a framework which sees language education as a social activity that manages 'continuity, change and relationships between social groups' (Blackledge and Creese, 2010: 30, Rampton, 1995). Seen in this perspective, my study aims to bring up the teaching of Chinese as both a heritage and a foreign language in one arena and the investigation will be carried out in four analytical themes, which are referred in the introduction and formulated into the following research questions:

1) How do the teachers and students across the three educational contexts understand culture?
2) How can culture and intercultural communication be used as teaching resources in the different language classrooms?

3) How are participants' identities constructed?

4) How do participants use languages to negotiate their identities?

5) What is the language ecology of the three educational contexts?

6) How is multilingualism used as a teaching resource for teaching and learning Mandarin in the three contexts?

In order to achieve the research aim, an ethnographic approach is taken which focuses on the discourse used and the interactions of classroom participants and other significant key stakeholders, such as teachers, teaching assistants, parents and headteachers. Classroom observation and interviews are two of the most significant data collection methods in my study. My research data include fieldnotes and interviews, as well as video and audio recordings of classroom interactions. This section aims to provide an ethnographic overview of the three educational contexts in my study. The local settings have been introduced geographically and historically. The next section will turn the focus on the methodology and research methods which were applied in the current study.

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1 Epistemological Position

In this section, I will introduce the methodology and my reasons for choosing it. Epistemologically, my study is underpinned by an interpretive research paradigm. A research paradigm, according to Kuhn (1962, cited in Erickson, 1990: 80), refers to 'an integrated set of theoretical presuppositions that leads the researcher to see the world of one's research interest in a particular way'. Ernest (1994: 24) argues that the interpretative research paradigm is primarily concerned with 'human understanding, interpretation, inter subjectivity, lived truth' and so on. In other words, interpretive research looks for truth by observing the world. The paradigm provides researchers with an opportunity to get close to the real ‘field’ and thereby get a sense of what actually goes on in classrooms, schools, hospitals and communities. My study intends to investigate how bilingual participants’ cultural and social identities influence language teaching and learning, and how language teaching and learning subsequently shape their identities. Therefore the interpretive approach provides the most suitable framework to guide me in carrying out my investigation.

The interpretive approach will largely use qualitative methods of enquiry to carry out the investigation. Mason (1996: 3) maintained that ‘qualitative research - whatever it might be – certainly does not represent a unified set of techniques or philosophies, and indeed has grown out of a wide range of intellectual and disciplinary traditions’. Ethnography has been said to be one of the most significant concepts of the interpretive approach as it emphasises the role of culture in language teaching. As it plays a very important role in this study, the ethnographic approach will be elaborated in the next section.

3.3.2 Ethnography

My study intends to explore the teaching and learning of Mandarin as a heritage and a foreign language in the UK. The research theme lies within the field of sociolinguistics as it focuses on the study of languages in society. Heller (1984: 54) indicates that to understand the relationship between language and society, one should focus on two essential questions:

‘What is it about the way we use language that has an impact on social processes’?

‘What is it about social processes that influence linguistic ones’?

Ethnography, considered as representing an epistemological perspective on language and communication, is a significant theoretical and methodological tool for the study of 'language in society, or better, of language as well as of society' (Blommaert and Dong, 2010: 5). Heller (2008: 250) also maintains that ethnographic research provides the researcher with an opportunity to interpret the stories of participants, which 'illuminate social processes and generate explanations of why people do and think the things they do'. This argument is supported by Blackledge and Creese (2010: 58) who further indicate that the ethnographic research of multilingualism will enable researchers to link 'political and other public discourses' with day-to-day linguistic practices. This will then enhance the study of 'citizenship, social cohesion, national unity, British identity and even national security' in the UK. These reasons underlie my rationale for adopting the ethnographic approach in my study.

In the field of language, ethnography has been largely considered as a research approach and has been the basis of a series of conceptualisations relating to studies which analyse phenomenon relative to 'context' (Blommaert and Dong, 2010: 4). In terms of my study, I intend to investigate issues relating to identities, beliefs and values by analysing the participants' linguistic practices in their language classes. Subsequently, I would like to present to the reader a general view of how Mandarin as a Heritage Language (HL) or a Foreign Language (FL) is taught in the UK. In other words, I intend to tell the 'story' of the teaching and learning of Mandarin as a heritage and a foreign language in the three different educational contexts, giving the reader an ethnographic 'looking glass' so as to see what is happening in the language classroom. There is a special feature which distinguishes ethnography from the other approaches – the researcher's 'position' in the study. Erickson (1990: 80) argues that ethnographic approaches enable researchers 'to be rigorous and systematic in investigating the slippery phenomena of everyday interaction and its connections, through the medium of subjective meaning, with the wider social world'. In other words, ethnographic approaches allow the researcher to interpret the world by interpreting the subjective meanings of participants, and thus provide audiences with the opportunity to see the world from the 'lens' of the ethnographer.

According to Hornberger (1994: 688), 'the value of ethnography lies in its emic and its holistic view'. The emic view represents first-hand information, which the researcher collects directly from the participants, for example, linguistic practices from the participants of the research group. The holistic view points to the researcher as a reporter who presents his interpretation of the recourse taken by participants at the research site. Increasingly, scholars realise that the researcher, as a human being, will undoubtedly more or less bring his or her cultural and social identities into the research from the moment they set up their research questions until they finish the report. Therefore, the researcher's awareness of her/his own values and perceptions in the investigation will enable her/him to be more objective in attempting to describe events which occur at the research site, especially if there is a need to report these happenings from the perspective of the subjects. In fact, by making clear the researcher's position in the research, the reader will be in a better position to understand the 'lenses' through which they are 'watching' the study.

3.3.3 Background of the researcher

At this point, as the researcher, I would like to briefly introduce myself and my background as well as indicate my personal context in conducting this research. I am a member of the Zhuangs, a minority ethnic group of the People's Republic of China. The Zhuang people are the biggest minority group in China, representing about 1.25% of the Chinese population (Chinese census 2000). We live in the 'Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region', which is located in the southern part of China. Gaung Xi itself is a region comprising many minority groups with as many spoken dialects. Apart from English, I am able to speak Mandarin, Cantonese as well as the Zhuang and Guiliu dialect. This has been advantageous, for example, when interviewing parents at the complementary school. I completed my first degree (BA in Chinese language and literature education) in China before proceeding to undertake my Masters in Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in the UK. Currently, I have been residing in the UK for the past 8 years. As previously mentioned, my multilingual background has provided me with opportunities to communicate with people of different backgrounds. Added to my training in education and my teaching experiences, my current status as a researcher, therefore, makes me want to better understand classroom pedagogy especially that relating to the teaching of language.

With the onset of globalisation, cooperation between the UK and China is rapidly increasing. Thousands of overseas students choose to come to the UK to further expand their studies because of the quality of education, especially in the universities. However, different political systems practised by the two countries may sometimes cause misunderstandings. For example, most people in the UK receive information regarding China from the local media and the internet. However, such information is not usually objective as it tends to be 'coloured' by certain political perspectives and agenda. In other words, the general public may have been offered a 'story of China' only through a particular political 'lens'. My study will therefore offer audiences an alternative set of 'lenses' in which China is seen from the perspective of an overseas Chinese student'. This is achieved by analysing how she/he studies her/his first language in the UK. Ethnographic research is said to enable the researcher to understand 'big issues' by discovering and analysing 'small phenomena' in particular contexts. In the same way, I intend to interpret the events and interactions in the three Mandarin language classrooms so as to discover the 'meanings' behind them and therefore relate them to the bigger 'story' of how Mandarin language teaching and learning takes place in this country .

However, ethnography is not the perfect magic pill of social research. It has its limitations. The challenges of doing ethnography in this globalised world stems from difficulties in 'conceptualizing the participant, the community and the site' (Blackledge and Creese, 2010: 58). Eisenhart (2010b: 21 in Creese, 2008) portrays the limitations of ethnographic study as that of three 'muddles': Firstly, she points to 'the trouble with culture', and argues that the study of culture now should not be considered 'as relatively enduring, coherent and bounded' (Eisenhart 2001a: 17); secondly, she explores the limitations of the ethnographer's ability to participate in various settings, the amount of time the researcher can devote to a particular study and the narrow scope created by the researcher's areas of special interest and expertise; lastly, she questions ethnographers' responsibilities to others, referring to how far researchers can provide opportunities for participants to speak in their multiple and diverse 'voices'.

3.3.4 Linguistic ethnography

Blackledge and Creese (2010:61) argue that linguistic ethnography takes a 'post- structuralist orientation by critiquing essential accounts of social life'. The research methodology is shaped by interpretive approaches taken from anthropology, applied linguistics, cultural studies and sociology. The developments of linguistic anthropology in the mid-twentieth century in the United States have had a very important influence on linguistic ethnography (Creese, 2008; Rampton et al, 2004; Rampton, 2007). For example, approaches based on the ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1968, 1974, 1980), interactional sociolinguistics

(Gumperz, 1982, 1999) and micro ethnography (Erikson. 1990, 1996) have all had a significant position in shaping the theoretical and methodological conception of linguistic ethnography. Rampton (2007) indicated that:

> *'Linguistic ethnography is in itself neither a paradigm, a cohesive 'school', nor some kind of definitive synthesis. Instead, it is more accurately described as a site of encounter where a number of established lines of research interact, pushed together by circumstance, open to the recognition of new affinities, and sufficiently familiar with one another to treat differences with equanimity'.*
>
> *(Rampton, 2007: 585)*

Based on this argument, linguistic ethnography is portrayed as a concept, which combines several established traditions sharing similar characteristics and reflecting features of those traditions.

Although the approach has been shaped by established traditions, linguistic ethnography claims initiative. It has been argued that linguistic ethnography benefits from the wisdom of established theories by 'making wider connections, drawing attention to neglected issues' (Tusting and Maybin, 2007: 575). According to Rampton, linguistic ethnography generally holds that:

> *'language and social life are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity'.*
>
> *(Rampton et al, 2004: 2)*

In this statement, Rampton indicates the mutual connection between language and social life. Rampton (2007: 585) provides two tenets to explain the development of linguistic ethnography: (1) 'meaning takes shape within specific social relations, interactional histories and institutional regimes, produced and construed by agents with expectations and repertoires that have to be grasped ethnographically; and (2) 'meaning is far more than just an 'expression of ideas', it is biography, identification, stance and nuance as extensively signalled in the linguistic and textual fine-grain'.

Research based on a combination of studies relating to the use of language as well as that which is specific to situated language will enable me as a researcher to understand the ‘meanings’ behind the interactions and discourse in the research sites. I will then be able to provide the reader with a comprehensive picture of how Mandarin is currently being taught as a heritage or foreign language in the UK. In this study, I audio recorded participants’ verbal conversations so as to be able to analyse how meanings are transmitted by the speakers. I also recorded the contexts of these recorded conversations through the use of fieldnotes. In addition, I interviewed participants so as to gather data on their experiences as well as to obtain their perspectives on the teaching and learning of Mandarin. This combination of approaches under the banner of linguistic ethnography has distinguished the method from the other interpretive processes.

Linguistic ethnography plays a significant role throughout my research. My study focuses on the teaching of language in cultural contexts. It investigates how participants’ cultural identities affect and influence classroom interaction. Thus, in this way, linguistic ethnography offers me a theoretical and methodological guideline. The combination of linguistics and ethnography will allow me to look at specific patterns and identify their uniqueness in the classroom interaction. Linguistic ethnography has become a bridge between the ideological and the interactional, connecting the structural and the agentic, and offers a critical potential because of its open perspective of other discourse analysis techniques (Rampton el al, 2004; Blackledge and Creese, 2010: 69). It will allow me to understand the use of language and its implied meanings by analysing interactions brought about by classroom discourse. These can even be triangulated based on other available evidence. In the next section, I will outline the research methods I used in my study.

3.4 Research methods

According to Cohen et al (2007: 44), methods in educational research refer to the range of approaches initiated 'to gather data which are to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction'. In this study, participant observation and ethnographic interviews have been selected as tools to collect first-hand data. Because of the limitations of space in this document, I will only present some of the data gathered from the Chinese complementary school in Nottingham to illustrate how it was collected from the research site.

3.4.1 Participant observation

Observation is said to be one of the most significant techniques for collecting data in social research. According to Mason (1996: 60), observation usually refers to 'methods of generating data which involve the researcher immersing (him or herself) in a research setting, and systematically observing dimensions of that setting, interactions, relationships, actions, events, and so on, within it'. Cohen el al (2007: 396) argue that observation is distinctive from other research processes because it offers researchers opportunities to gather 'live' data. Fundamentally, observational methods employed in social research aim to watch what people do in the research site. The researcher then reflects this by taking down written notes or video/audio recordings. The data will then be transcribed, analysed and interpreted in order to answer the research question.

Different types of observations can be identified according to their degree of structure as well as the observer's degree of participation. According to Cohen (2007: 397), a highly structured observation requires the researcher to understand what she/he will need to look for in advance. A detailed checklist or rating scale is also often used during the structured observation. In an unstructured observation, the researcher must have an open mind when observing and recording interesting phenomena in the research site. A semi-structured observation requires the researcher to have a list of issues written down in advance. However, the process of gathering supporting evidence in the research site must be done with an open mind and should not predetermine the form of data to be collected.

Cohen (2007: 404) also suggests that participant observation be divided into three categories according to the observer's degree of participation: the 'complete participant' is a researcher who takes on an insider's role in the group being studied and may not even require the researcher to declare her or his role; the 'participant as observer' declares her or his role as an observer but still involves herself/himself as part of the social life of the participants. She or he then documents and records what is happening for research purposes; the 'observer as participant' is known as a researcher but does not participate in the activities.

In this study, participant observation was my primary method of collecting data. However, there have been occasions where the other observational techniques were adopted during my data collection exercises in the three schools. This is shown in the following table:

Observational method / Contexts		Observation technique	Researcher's position	Description
Context A:	Beginner class From 12/06/2010 to 18/09/2010	Observed the class while conducting lessons Wrote down fieldnotes after class	complete participant	As the actual teacher of the Beginner class had to go back to China, I volunteered to take over her place in teaching the class.
	Advanced class From 25/09/2010	Observed classroom interaction while sitting at the back of	participant as observer	After few months of teaching, I was able to sit in the Advanced

	to 08/01/2011	the room. Taking fieldnotes Audio record some classes		class to collect data.
	Advanced class, 04/12/2010 and 11/12/2011	Observed classroom while conducting lessons. Wrote down fieldnotes after class Audio recording of classroom conversation	complete participant	As the assigned class teacher was ill, the headteacher asked me to take over the class. This lasted for two weeks until the class teacher came back from her medical leave.
Context B:		Observed classroom interaction Taking fieldnotes Audio record some class	participant as observer	Known as a researcher who is also a friend of one of the teachers, I sometimes participated in classroom interaction.
Context C:		Observed classroom interaction while sitting at the back of the room. Taking fieldnotes Audio recording of some lessons	observer as participant	Teacher and students considered me as a researcher; I observed the class as an outsider.

Table2: Summary of how observation was conducted in the three research sites

While participant observation requires much time and effort, the researcher also needs to be prepared for unpredictable situations. Take the complementary school in Nottingham for example: I had made contact with the headteacher and had my first visit in June 2010. While I requested to only observe the Advanced class, the school, however, told me that it was in urgent need of a teacher for its Beginner class. The headteacher subsequently asked if I could help. I obliged and ended up spending seven weeks at the school as a teacher of the Beginner class. I volunteered my time and expertise then as I was of the opinion that the longer I was able to spend time in the school, the greater the rapport I could develop between myself and the participants, including the headteacher, subject teachers, students and even their parents. They would then accept me as an 'insider' and would be more willing to share their experiences and express their feelings whenever we had the chance to talk.

The observation method allowed me to get close to the research subjects and to collect valuable data by actually being there to witness everyday situations. In the Chinese complementary school, I was able to take on the role of the 'complete participant' in the research field when I was given the opportunity to teach the Beginners class. Although I was the teacher and the researcher at the same time, the headteacher, students and their parents all saw me more as a teacher rather than the latter. In my role of 'participant as observer' in the Advanced class, the class teacher sometimes asked me to assist her during the lesson, for example, by checking on the students' reading and writing tasks. Most of the time however, I sat at the back of the class to observe and record the classroom activities. In the first two weeks of December 2010, the class teacher fell ill. The headteacher then asked if I was willing to take over the class and I agreed. I was confident about doing this because I was familiar with the textbook and had also got to know the students quite well after spending several months in the school. In addition, I had acquired some teaching experience in the past and wanted to add more to this. I actually considered the opportunity to teach as advantageous for my research for of several reasons: 1) I would be able to expand on the content of the curriculum thus providing students with an opportunity to practise new linguistic patterns while observing their responses; 2) I would be able to collect information on how communication with students in the classroom takes place from the teacher's perspective; 3) I would be able to get to know students' language abilities better by personally assessing their homework.

The purpose of participant observation is to develop an understanding of complex social settings and complex social relationships by seeing them holistically (Mackey, 2005: 175). While the researcher has been recognised as a key characteristic of a participant observation (Robson, 2002: 314), to some extent I became a member of the observed group. In my investigation, I aimed to provide rich descriptions of the research field, such as the learner's activities, conversations and other interesting phenomenon. The data I collected from schools comes from a combination of fieldnotes and audio or visual recordings.

Fieldnotes are among the most important sources of data in my ethnographic fieldwork. According to Creswell (2008: 224), fieldnotes are 'text (words) reordered by the researcher during an observation in a qualitative study'. In my fieldnotes, I recorded the interaction between students and the teacher, described specific classroom circumstances, indicated the way in which the teacher introduced new content and narrated how body languages were projected in the classroom. The following is an extract of my fieldnotes taken during one of my observation sessions in the Chinese complementary school in Nottingham. This extract of fieldnote is not displaced here to introduce and analyse data, but rather to illustrate the nature of data and the process of analysis.

Example 1: Fieldnote, Context A, 02/10/2010

The teacher asked S9 to write down '去掉'<remove>on the white board. S9 wrote '掉'. This was in the wrong order as he wrote the right part first. The teacher then corrected his mistake. Qian questioned the teacher and argued that it is not that important which part comes first. She even challenged the teacher: 'You are not (a qualified) teacher, are you? You just guessed'. Some students echoed Qian's sentiments and the classroom became as noisy as a market. The teacher tried very hard to maintain the classroom discipline in English but with little success.

However, a few minutes later, some students of the Beginners class were seen going out to play in the lobby. Qian then declared, ‘It is break time!’ and walked out without the teacher’s permission… (I was surprised at her behaviour).

The teacher became very angry and stopped Qian. She raised her voice and ordered the student to get back to her seat. Qian mumbled to herself but unwillingly followed the order. The rest of the class became quiet.

During the break time, I had a conversation with the teacher. I could see that she was upset by the students’ actions. She told me that the only reason she was teaching in the school was because two of her children were studying there. Otherwise, she would have been unwilling to work there as the salary was low and the students were difficult to handle.

Fieldnotes are useful in helping the researcher present vivid descriptions of the class. In this example of fieldnote, I recorded the conflict between the teacher and Qian. I described Qian’s behaviour, her emotional expression, and the teacher’s reaction. Basically, I portrayed a ‘story’ of what had happened in the Advanced classroom before break time. Although this extract is not a regular incident, it does, however, provide an illustration of the relationship between teacher and Qian in the complementary school. It also reflects the students’ attitude about learning and studying. The use of fieldnotes in my study is helpful to answer the research question pertaining to how students’ and teachers’ backgrounds shape the learning processes.

However, I did face some difficulties when I was taking down my fieldnotes. The participant observation method requires the researcher to participate in the research. I exemplified this when I offered my help in taking up the position of teaching assistant in the complementary school. On other occasions, the subject teacher also asked for my help during the lessons, for example, checking on students' homework, correcting students' pronunciation and supervising group or pair work. While these instances definitely allow the relationship between myself and the participants to be closer, it does, however, prevent me from properly writing down my fieldnotes. During these instances, I was able to jot down my fieldnotes only after the class was dismissed. In addition, at the end of each series of observation exercises, all fieldnotes will be analyzed, refined and categorized in the order of schools and the dates in which the visits took place. From my observations of the classes in the complementary school alone, I produced 16 sets of fieldnotes. Indeed, these fieldnotes have served as a link to the data from my other sources. For example, by the end of the data collection period, I had made many valuable recordings of the classes which I observed. These audio recordings, made up largely of conversational data, last on average about 1 hour per session. However, my recordings of a typical classroom full of teenagers are usually noisy with students chatting, throwing paper or sometimes even singing quietly. It becomes very difficult to understand or decipher valuable information, which may be useful in answering the research questions. Fortunately, I was able to concurrently record these interesting incidences happening in the language classroom in my fieldnotes. Such notations have been very helpful, especially when I needed to identify significant moments in the recorded conversations.

Although participant observation has its limitations, it also has its strengths. Applied in my study, the method has provided me the opportunity to gather first-hand information from the language classroom. Qualitative research design requires the researcher to use more than one method to achieve 'triangulation'. Therefore, participant observation should not be the only method used to collect data in research. In the next section, I will outline the features of using interview as another important data collection method in my study.

3.4.2 Interview

Apart from observation as a research method, interviewing is another technique used in my study to collect data. According to Robson (2002: 269), 'interviewing as a research method typically involves you, as researcher, asking questions and, hopefully, receiving answers from the people you are interviewing'. In ethnographic research, the interview is a 'flexible tool' and 'powerful implement' for the researcher to collect deeper information based on communication between researcher and participants. McNamara (1996) argues that interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences as in-depth information could be pursued around the topic. Interviews have become another important data collection method in my study because they allow me to gather 'in-depth information' such as that relating to the learner's perceptions or attitude, which cannot be gathered from observations directly.

There are three types of interview, which are categorized by their degree of structure: the fully structured interview, the semi-structured interview and the unstructured interview. The fully structured interview, according to Robson (2002: 270), 'has predetermined questions with fixed wording, usually in a pre-set order'. The questions asked are usually 'closed questions' and the interviewees are required to respond according to fixed simple answers for easy coding and analysis (Bryman 2001: 107). According to Mackey, fully structured interviews can be considered to be the equivalent of verbal questionnaires (Mackey, 2005: 173). Similarly, the semi-structured interview comprises predetermined questions. However, the order is flexible and changeable by the interviewer depending on the situation during the interview (Robson, 2002: 270). In a semi-structured interview, the researcher can change, omit or include new questions. Finally, in the unstructured interview, participants are provided with a general topic of interest. However, the conversation is open and participants can contribute to the conversation in whichever way they want, as it can be completely informal (Robson, 2002: 270).

Specifically, semi-structured and unstructured interviews have been employed for gathering data in my study. In both types of interview, I used ‘open-ended’ questions so as to provide participants with the best opportunity to express their experiences and feelings. These techniques have also enabled me to understand my participants better by understanding the ‘stories’ behind their life in school. For the semi-structured interview, I prepared some questions beforehand to act as a scaffold which would enable me to gather the information I required from the interviewee. In addition, because they are ‘less rigid’ than the structured interview, semi-structured interviews will allow me to go beyond the written list of questions and, subsequently, have the freedom to digress and probe for more information (Mackey, 2005: 173). In the case of the complementary school in Nottingham, I used the semi-structured interview method with the headteacher on two occasions and managed to audio record one of the sessions. On one of these occasions, the headteacher did not just answer my questions, she also related her personal experiences and the original purpose of setting up the complementary school. Such data enriched my understanding of the complementary school and the Chinese community in Nottingham. However, I only managed to arrange such interviews after we had got to know each other over several months. This experience tells me that for an ethnographic interview to take place, the interviewer must first develop a good relationship with her or his interviewees. This is helpful in encouraging participants to share their experiences and hence assist the researcher in gathering useful information.

In an ethnographic study, participants' voices provide strong supporting evidence to answer research questions. It becomes valuable regardless of where or when it happened. Unstructured interviews are similar to natural conversations as they can happen anywhere and at any time. Unstructured interviews are, moreover, valuable in my ethnographic study because they offer me an opportunity to develop the participants' answers. It encourages participants to open up and respond to the questions by expressing themselves in their own terms and at their own speed (Mackey, 2005: 173). In addition, I had also managed to conduct several informal conversations with parents and students. These conversations provided much additional information and some have been subsequently recorded in my fieldnotes. However, it has been very difficult to distinguish and extract these 'informal interview' data from my fieldnotes, as the conversations I had with participants (including headteacher, teachers, students and parents) were very casual in nature. As such, the issues which surfaced were less definable. Nevertheless, from a researcher's point of view, these events can also be seen as informal interviews as the conversations occurred between the researcher and participants although, apart from a few occasions, there was no official recording of notes. The following extract taken from my fieldnotes provides an example of such an occasion.

Extract 3.2: Fieldnote, Context A, 09-10-2010

Today is a sunny day. It is nice and warm. I came by car and arrived 30 minutes before school started. I saw my student Ying already sitting in the classroom. I started a conversation with her and she provided me with the following information about herself:

Ying is eleven years old. Her mother is Chinese and her father is English. The reason she arrived early was because she had two hours of German language lessons in the morning at the same grammar school. She says that she prefers to stay in the school while waiting for the Chinese class to begin. Apart from Chinese and German, Ying is also learning French and Latin at school. She says that she has been interested in learning languages since she was a little girl. To be honest, Ying's Mandarin pronunciation is even better than mine. This is because her mother came from the northern part of China where the actual dialect is standard Chinese. I, on the other hand, come from the Guang Xi province which is located in the south. As Mandarin is not the local dialect, my pronunciation of the language more or less does come with some accent.

Ying showed me her study notes from her Chinese class in the previous term: '海上生明月，天涯共此时。'< English translation: As the moon rises above the sea, we share the same moment though we are far apart>. Ying tells me that the curriculum for this term is easier than last year as they are repeating some classical Chinese poems which they had already studied. She has been studying in this school since she was six years old. She tells me that the school always uses the same textbook which makes it sometimes quite boring for her to go through them again and again.

In this extract from my fieldnotes, I summarised the information I collected when I talked to Ying before the class started. The information collected includes her age, her ethnic background, her interest in language learning and her Chinese language proficiency. On this occasion, I was able to build rapport and managed to talk to her as a friend. She seemed relaxed and was even willing to show me her notebook. She also shared her opinions about the textbook used in the curriculum. Although Extract 3.2 is taken from my fieldnotes, I will also consider it as an ethnographic interview as it offered me valuable data, which could not have been collected by direct observation.

In addition, another advantage of the interview method, and particularly in my study, is that the researcher is able to communicate with the participants in their first language. Depending on the research question and the resources available, conducting an interview in the interviewee's first language can remove the concerns about the proficiency of the learner impacting the quality and quantity of the data provided (Mackey, 2005: 174). In the Chinese complementary school, some Chinese teachers and parents prefer to talk in Chinese. In this case, using the first language as a communicative tool has enabled me as a researcher to get more useful information by providing interviewees with a comfortable environment in which to share their feelings. For example, my first interview in the complementary school was with the teacher of the Beginners class. When I asked for her preference in the language of communication to be used in the interview, she told me that she preferred to converse in Chinese, especially when it comes to 'deeper' conversations.

3.4.3 Audio record and video record

Recoding is another important technique which needs to be outlined in this section. According to Clemente (2008: 178), recording enable researchers to 'observe the data somewhat independently', and produce the 'audio and video database', which can be used for 'detailed comparative analysis of bilingual phenomena.' In addition, recording 'capture[s] the immediate context of the bilingual phenomenon' and makes the data 'available to support analytical aims' (Clemente 2008: 178). In this study, I recorded most of the interviews and some classes and subsequently categorized and stored these data along with my fieldnotes. Transcripts of these recordings, as well as other documents collected from observations, can then be presented as raw data to support arguments in this study.

Richards (2003: 175) proposes that there are three areas which need to be noticed in making recordings for research purposes: 'the selection of equipment, ethical considerations and procedures for recordings'. In order to prevent potential technical problems, which may course data lost, I normally use a smart phone along with a digital recorder as recording equipment at the same time. In addition, I always asked the teacher's permission and informed the whole class before I turned on the recording equipment. In terms of the procedures of recordings, there are different experiences in different contexts depending on teachers' attitudes to recording. In the complementary school, I recorded all the classes I taught. However, the other teacher was not comfortable with recording at the beginning. Only a few classes were recorded after we got to know each other. In the community centre class in Birmingham, the teacher was more flexible about recording, and I had permission to record whenever I wanted to. With regards the secondary school in London, although I had to wait a long time to get permission to visit, the request to record was granted from the beginning. In addition, teachers and students there seemed to be used to having visitors in their classes. Goodwin (1993: 194) considers recording as an 'iterative, progressive process', which allowed researchers to discover 'both wonderful things and problems' in what they have done in the research field. Indeed, recording has been a useful method in this study to collect and make data available as supporting evidence for analytical arguments.

Data storage is another important factor which has to be consideredd. Following Goodwin's (1993) advice, I restored my data in logs with schools and times. This was helpful for the data storage and analysis. So far, I have outlined the methods I used in my study and I have explained my rationale for choosing them. The next section will address how collected data is analysed.

3.5 Data analysis

This section will illustrate how data collected from three research sites are analysed to answer the research questions in this study. Robson (2002: 488) proposes three main tasks which are necessary in the data analysis stage of an ethnographic study: 1) Thinking – because 'any thoughts that occur can form the basic memos', and it will help the researcher to link data to research aims. 2) Developing categories – some categories need to be constructed to 'impose some kind of order on the data'. Ways to formulate these categories can be various. For example, categories may be formulated by research sites, how the researcher interacts with data or some theoretical frameworks. 3) Progressive focusing – research questions should be 'developed and clarified'. With the deeper understanding of data, research aims and research questions may be reformulated.

The method I used to analysis my data is ethnographic discourse analysis, which means that all discourses can be used as resources to investigate research questions in this study. Varied data are produced from this study after more than six months working in the research field. Apart from typical data which are requested of an ethnographer, such as interview transcripts, classroom recording transcripts and fieldnotes, the data set also contains some other documents. For example, newspaper cuttings; documents from research fields; hand-outs from classrooms; photographic documents I took during the observations and my personal diaries in my blog. These multiple data resources have provided me with a tool to understand what is going on in the research sites and to explore my research questions from different perspectives.

My analysis procedure always started from looking at original fieldnotes, which are written in A4 notebooks. Before taking notes, I normally fold one third of the paper and leave it blank.

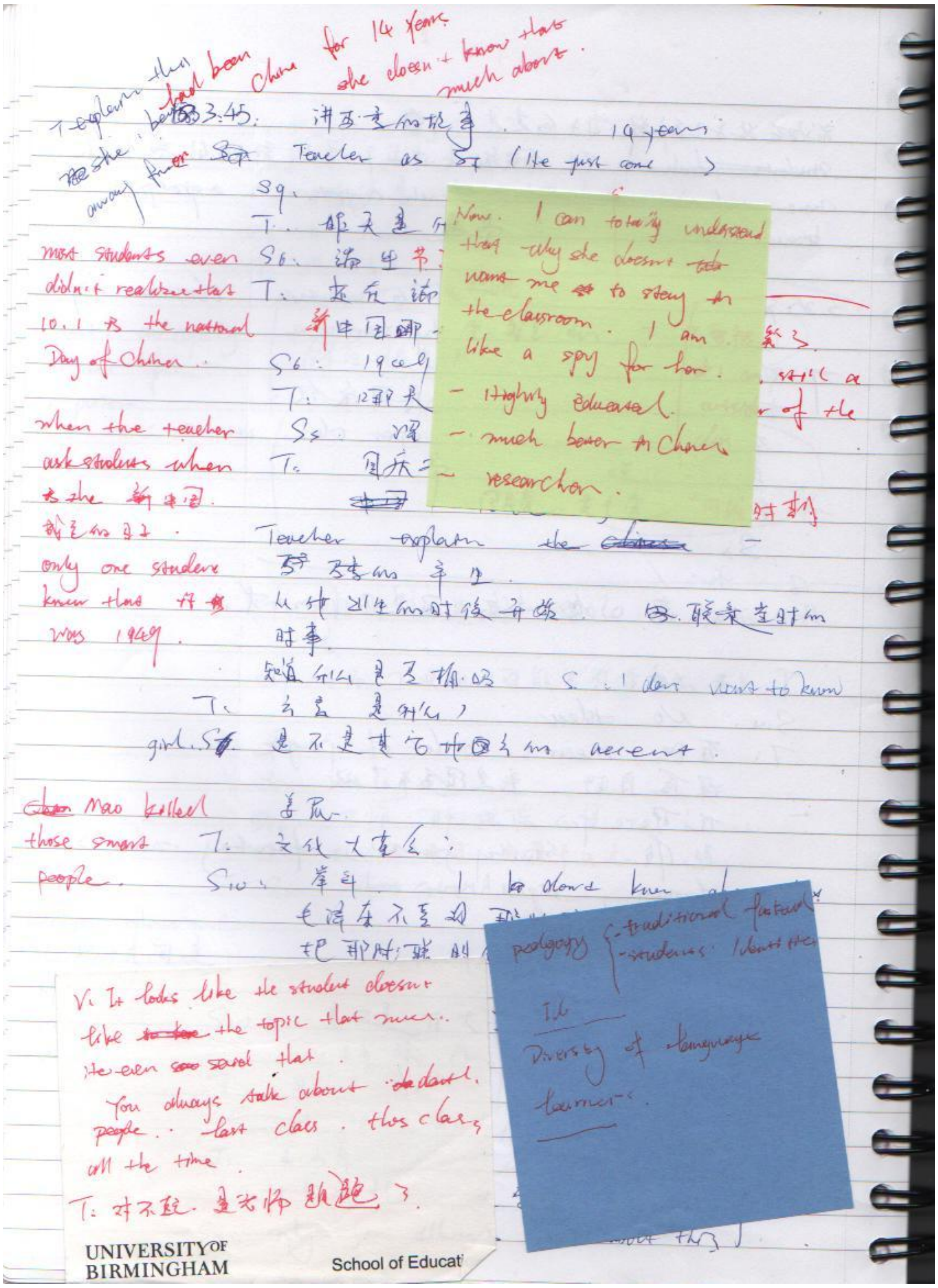
These spaces are saved for the later analysis procedures. The procedures I use to deal with my data are summarised in the following steps.

Step 1: The first understanding of fieldnotes

This step happened right after I had just came back from observation and memories were still fresh. I looked at my fieldnotes again and made comments on the side using different colour pens. If there was not enough space, comments or notes were written on some post-its and posted on the same page of my fieldnotes. The use of sticky-notes allowed me to add comments and thoughts at any time. The following example shows how I analysed my fieldnotes in the first place. Data presented in this section are not for the purpose of analysing but to show how I took my fieldnotes and how these raw data are transcribed into text data.

Example 1:

Fieldnote in written form:


for 14 years
T explained that she had been in China
she doesn't know that much about.
3:45 讲百年前的
19 years
S7 Teacher as S7 (He just come)
S9.
Now. I can totally understand that why she doesn't want me to stay in the classroom. I am like a spy for her.
- Highly educated.
- much better in Chinese
- researcher.
most students even didn't realize that 10.1 is the national Day of China.
S6: 1949
when the teacher ask students when is the 新中国 成立的日子.
only one student knew that it was 1949.
Teacher explain the
时事
S: I don't want to know
girl. S8 是不是其它中国人的 accent
Mao killed those smart people.
T: 文化大革命:
S10: 革斗 I don't know
毛泽东
pedagogy { - traditional factual / - students: I don't like
ID
Diversity of language learners.
V: It looks like the student doesn't like the topic that much.
He even said that.
You always talk about dead people. last class. this class all the time.
T: 对不起. 是老师跑题了.
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School of Educat

Fieldnote in text:

T: 昨天是什么节日?<What festival was yesterday? >
(Students are quiet for a while. Finally one student attempted an answer.)
S6: 端午节？<The dragon boat festival? >(The teacher laughs)
T: 还在端午节呢？都十月份了, 新中国是那一年成立的？要被笑了。<You’re still in the season of the dragon boat festival? It’s already October now. What is the year that New China became independent? You are going to get laughed at if you don’t know this.>
S6: 1949.
(She seems to be the only student who knows the answer)
T: 哪天？<Which date?>

Students keep quiet, the teacher sighs deeply and informs the class that yesterday was China’s National Day She then talks about the Chinese civil war between the ‘国民党’ <Kuomintang Nationalist Party>and the ‘共产党’ ‘<Communist Party>.

Then the teacher goes on to talk about personal experience of ‘Ma Ji’ related to those historical events. She asked if students know what is ‘Fang yan’ (dialect), because the ‘Xiang sheng’ performance sometimes use different dialect to make fun of people. The teacher also talked about the Cultural Revolution of China.
T: 你们知道文化大革命吗？（who knows the Cultural Revolution of China?）
S10<raise her hand>: 举斗， I don't know about that. 好像是毛泽东不喜欢那些聪明的人， 把那些聪明的人都打死。（It seems like ‘Mao ze dong’ doesn't like smart people, he killed those smart people.）

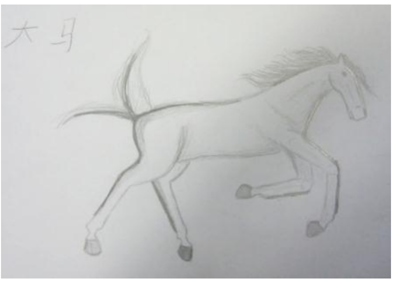
The example shows an extract from my fieldnotes in both original written form and transcribed text from. In the written form, the text in blue was recorded during the observation. This fieldnote was taken on the second of October, following the introduction of a famous comedy actor ‘Ma Ji’, the teacher asked students what festival was yesterday? Then the conversation continued about the national day of China. On the left hand side of the original field note, I used a red pen to make some comments after coming back from visiting the complementary school. For example, I noticed that most of the students in the classroom did not know what date the National Day of China is, which the teacher considered as common knowledge they should have. Furthermore, these contradictions between students' reaction and the teacher's expectation become a key point about young people's identity which emerged from this extract, and it was noted on sticky notes on this page. In this step, I added some comments and thoughts which I noticed during observation but did not have time to write down. These comments and notes became a part of first-hand data when my memory of them was still fresh. In addition, this step allowed me to look back to what had just happened during the observation and to start to think about my analytical themes.

Step 2: Editing fieldnotes

The second step of data analyses in this study is typing and editing fieldnotes. I transcribed fieldnotes from written notes to electronic text. Data are transcribed into Word documents and stored by the label of recording date and school. The using of Word not only allowed me to make my fieldnotes into accessible text, but also allowed me to add some additional resources such as handouts or photos taken from the research fields. The following example will show how the photo which was taken from the research site is added in the fieldnote and contributes to the triangulation of data resources.

Example 2:

After showing the powerpoint and the discussion, the teacher asked students to follow the examples from the PowerPoint slide and use some Chinese characters to draw some picture themselves. Students seemed to really enjoy these activities. They were walking around and whispering in the classroom. The teacher allowed students to break the rules of the classroom as long as they were learning. I was walking around the classroom, and participated in their drawing activities. Some of their work was really interesting and creative. With their permission, I took some photos of their work and show them as follow:



1: 大马 <big horse>

Similar to example 1, this example is not presented here to support my findings but to showing how the fieldnotes are edited. This photo is of the student's work which I took during the classroom observation. The written text is transcribed from the original fieldnotes and the photo is one of a student's production based on the teacher's requirement. It was added to the fieldnote to indicate how students completed the task in the classroom creatively. The actual analyse will be continued in chapter four, in the theme of how cultural elements are used as pedagogy in the complementary school.

Step 3: Coding

In this procedure, I printed out all kinds of available data, including edited fieldnotes, interview transcripts, classroom recording transcripts and some other documents. These data are categorised in the order of date and schools. Then I started to do the coding by using different colour pens to highlight contents. Coding at this stage means searching for key events and patterns which relate to my research aims. Before I started to do the coding, I had three analytical aims as part of my research design: culture and intercultural communication; language ecology and multilingual practices in the classroom. These research aims have gone through all the research procedures, from research design to data analysis. In this data analysis step, they served as a research theme for pattern searching. The detection of patterns always begin with masses of different resources of data, and exploring by listening and looking at the data again and again. Patterns are considered as forms of ethnographic reliability (Fetterman 2009). During the process of pattern searching in this step, I noticed that there are some other patterns, which are not included in my research aims, but which are, however, eminent and caught my attention. For example, as I just mentioned in example 1, I noticed that the issue of identity emerged in the Chinese complementary school again and again. Therefore I decided to make identity another research theme and formulated it into the research questions.

According to Fetterman (2009), ethnographers are advised to keep an open mind during the whole procedure of investigation. In this step, my understanding of the data is shaped by research aims and my research questions are reformulated after I started searching for patterns. After the first two steps of analysis, four analytical themes were formulated: cultural studies and intercultural communication; the understanding of identities and identity development; language ecologies and multilingual practices. I used different colour highlighter pens to code the data, in preparation for further analysis.

Step 4: Further investigations

The process of data analysis in this ethnographic study is iterative and has multiple levels, research questions shaped the data analysis and understanding of data also tested and influenced the existing research themes. After the preparation from step one to step three, there are four analysis chapters in this thesis corresponding to four analytical themes. I started to select some representative data extracts and located them into the relevant chapters for further exploration and investigation. For example, example one in this section will be located in chapter five to investigate participants' identity construction which is based on the theoretical framework of 'imposed identity',' assumed identity' and 'negotiated identity' (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003). Details of data analysis will be continued in chapter four, chapter five, chapter six and chapter seven. In the next section, I will address some other issues which have emerged in my study.

3.6 Other Design Issues

This section will discuss some other important issues relating to the design of my study. This pertains to the areas of validity, reliability and ethics.

3.6.1 Validity, reflexivity and reliability

Validity is a requirement which is imposed for all research work. Without validity, the findings of any research undertaken will be worthless. Ensuring validity in qualitative research has always been a challenging issue. Qualitative researchers need to demonstrate that their research is credible. Researchers need to explain their research procedures and why these procedures are selected and organized in such a way. According to Cohen et al (2007: 133), 'reliability is a necessary but insufficient condition for validity in research; reliability is a necessary precondition of validity, and validity may be a sufficient but not a necessary condition for reliability'. In other words, a valid piece of research has to be reliable, but reliability alone is not enough to make the research valid.

Gronlund (1981, cited in Cohen et al, 2007: 133) argues that validity 'should be seen as a matter of degree rather than as an absolute state' in qualitative research. Like all individuals, the researcher possesses a history and a cultural background. Inevitably, this will have a certain impact on the research during the investigation and when she/he writes the report. Therefore, it is very important to identify the researcher's reflexivity in ethnographic research. Reflexivity in ethnography refers to the researcher being aware of and openly discussing his or her role in the study in a way that honours and respects the site and participants (Creswell 2008: 485). According to Barwell (2003), there should be a reflexive relationship between 'who you are and what and how you see' in ethnographic research. The researcher's cultural background and research motivation to some extent shapes the way in which she/he interprets data. Denzin suggests (1997, cited in Creswell, 2008: 485) that it is also significant for ethnographers to position themselves and identify their standpoint or point of view within their report because reflexivity also exists when researchers make interpretations when writing their report. Ethnographers should do this by talking about themselves, introducing their cultural and educational background, experiences and how these may shape their interpretations about the research setting and their perception of the participants.

With regards reliability, the researcher has to conduct his or her research under the guidelines of the methodology design, and carry these out with utmost thoroughness, care and honesty (Robson, 2002). Careful piloting and re-piloting of the research method will also be helpful in enhancing the reliability of the research. Although it was argued by Cohen et al (2007: 133) that 'it is impossible for research to be 100 percent valid', some precautions have to be taken to minimise the threats concerning validity during the research design stage. For example, carefully selecting an appropriate methodology and methods of data collection as well as selecting an appropriate sample and arranging an appropriate time scale has to be done so as to demonstrate construct validity. In my study, construct validity can be demonstrated through triangulation. This refers to the use of two or more methods of data collection in social research to enhance the veracity of the study (Cohen et al, 2007: 112). My study uses participant observation and ethnographic interviews to collect data. These methods further involve several other techniques such as the use of fieldnotes, audio/video recordings and photography. These multiple sources of data will thus increase the validity and reliability of the research.

3.6.2 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues are one of the main factors that should be seriously considered in social research. There is a set of initial considerations that researchers should address in planning their research. According to Cohen et al, (2007: 51), ethical issues may originate from the social scientists' investigative problems and the research methods they adopt to obtain valid and reliable data. Ethical dilemmas require the researcher to make a balance between their professional research demands and their research subjects' rights (Cohen et al, 2007: 51). As such, for this research project, high standards of ethical care have been considered by abiding with the following procedures: ethical approval from the university, consent from the management of the three research sites and consent forms filled in by individual participants.

Before conducting the fieldwork, ethical approval was obtained from the university following the standard procedures. I also prepared an introduction package which was subsequently sent to each participating school as well as the participants. These included an introduction letter for my research, a supporting letter from my supervisor and the consent forms. This was done to provide participants with a clear idea of the issues under investigation. I also asked for their consent in participating in the study while ensuring them of confidentiality and anonymity. Nevertheless, due to the fact that most of the participants in my research are young learners, I will have to carefully consider the element of 'mental competency' shown in their responses. Young children's decision-making skills may be flawed due to their lack of maturity. In addition, I will have to consult and seek permission for their participation from the adults who are responsible for their care, for example, their parents. Certainly, consent from the young children themselves will not be ignored. Fine, Cohen et al (2007: 53) suggest that researchers must provide a 'credible and meaningful explanation' of their research intentions. Children must be given the choice should they not want to take part. In addition, privacy and anonymity must be ensured in the research in order to protect participants' rights. Once the data have been collected from the research sites, the names of participants will be removed and replaced by pseudonyms (a combination of letters and numbers). When conducting interviews, participants were informed that they had the right not to answer any question if they did not want to, and they could stop the conversation at any time if they felt offended or uncomfortable. Last but not least, all participants were ensured that the collected data would be securely stored for confidentiality.

Cohen et al (2007: 75) also raised the question of the researchers' responsibility to the research community. They believe that researchers should not 'jeopardize the reputation of the research community or spoil the opportunities for further research'. Ethical considerations must exist throughout the whole process of research; 'openness, sensitivity, honesty, accuracy and scientific impartiality' must be considered at all times during the entire period of the research (Cohen et al, 2007: 57). It is furthermore my intention to maintain a good relationship with the participating schools during and after the fieldwork. For example, after I finish this study, I will present a report of my findings to the three research sites as part of my contribution to the organisations concerned.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the three research sites of my study, outlined my research questions and indicated my methodological design. The epistemological position of the study and the methods I used to collect data have also been explained.

So far, the ethnographic design has provided me with detailed knowledge of how to conduct a study on language use in society. This is in line with the core concern of ethnography which is 'to ensure, compare and contrast between what people say and what people do in a given context and across contexts in order to arrive at a fuller representation of what is going on' (Hornberger1994). The selected data collection methods --- participant observation and ethnographic interview fit the research design well as useful data have been collected through these techniques to address the research questions. However, implementing this design has also caused some difficulties for the researcher. Participant observation exercises conducted over a period of six months have created a huge amount of data. These included fieldnotes, research diaries and hours of recording. As such, this is expected to create difficulties for the researcher in sorting out useful information, which will relate to the research questions. Moreover, data such as interview recordings and classroom conversations are in Chinese. Translating and transcribing them into English will require much effort.

Summarily, the chosen methodology and methods of data collection are suitable for my study. Unavoidably they will have their strengths and limitations. This will therefore require the researcher to do her best to make this research as valid and as reliable as possible. In an ethnographic study, the researcher seeks to discover patterns of group members' activities, study symbols of group members' identity, and analyse their language usage and so on. In the following stages of my study, I will organize and categorise the data which I have collected from the research field and subsequently analyse and compare them according to the chosen themes.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis I

Culture and Intercultural Communication in Multilingual Classrooms

4.1 Introduction

This chapter and chapters five, six and seven together serve to present and analyse the data collected from the three research fields in my study. Collected data included classroom observation recordings, interview recordings, and research fieldnotes. Kramsch (1993: 8) argues that 'if language is seen as a social practice, culture becomes the very core of language teaching'. The focus of this chapter is the theme of culture and intercultural communication in multilingual classrooms. In this study, culture is understood as a dynamic process rather than a stable product in the globalised world. Piller (2007) argues that no culture exists in isolation in this world, and that the cultural background participants bring to the classrooms influence, and will be influenced by, the process of language teaching and learning. The connectedness and conflictions between different cultures in the classroom is another focus of this chapter. Intercultural communication between participants in the classrooms is understood as more than just language exchanges in this study. Holliday (1999: 241) proposes the term 'small cultures' to address the 'cohesive process of any social grouping', and argues that the focus of cultural study in the language classroom should be participants' activities emerging from the ground. Holliday (2010a: 175) updated his understanding of culture by offering four terminologies which according to him are 'more appropriate to capture the less tangible, floating, organic, uncertain, yet highly impactful quality' with which individuals identify themselves: 1) 'cultural reality', which refers to the broad cultural meaning happening around individuals; 2) 'cultural arena' which indicates a setting, environment or context; 3) 'cultural universe' which refers to those complex culture realities which can create a bigger cultural environment; 4) 'cultural marker', which refers to individuals' interactions which can signify cultural reality. This study takes the position that both culture and languages are shaped by specific human activities, and that 'cultural' learning takes place when the teacher and students bring their own experience to the conversation (Kramsch, 1998; Goodenough, 1994; Cole, 1998; Fong, 2007). How teachers and students build up their 'small culture' in three different contexts will be investigated along with the description of their 'cultural reality', 'cultural arena', 'cultural universe' and 'cultural markers'.

This chapter is divided into three sections according to the category of the three schools. In the Chinese complementary school, students are considered by their teacher and parents as possessing two or more cultures. Learning the Chinese language and culture for them is learning the heritage of their ethnic group. In the community centre class, Mandarin is taught and learnt as a foreign language; cross-cultural understanding and intercultural communication are embedded in the classroom activities. In the secondary school in London, the teaching and learning of Chinese culture is considered as part of the curriculum. In this study, large culture or national culture existed across the three contexts under different themes such as festival, kinship, Chinese dragon and Chinese decorations. However, they sometimes have different meanings in different 'small cultures'. Teachers and students from the three schools consider knowing Chinese culture as a resource for learning the language. How 'culture' is understood and taught, and how intercultural communication is established in the classroom will be explored and discussed in this chapter.

4.2 The complementary school in Nottingham

Many scholars argue that complementary schools function as institutes to maintain and promote heritage language and culture (Creese et al, 2006; Li 2006; Wu, 2006; Xiao, 2006;

Fong, 2007; Creese and Martin, 2009). In the Chinese complementary school I visited, all parents and teachers I interviewed hold the view that apart from learning the heritage language, understanding traditional culture, such as festivals, foods and arts are also significant for students. The following extract is drawn from the first interview I arranged in the complementary school. Liang is a 28 year old female Chinese teacher originally from China. She was recruited by the Hanban <the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language> for a one year contract teaching in the Confucius Institute of Nottingham University while she was doing her Masters in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language in China. She offered her help teaching in the complementary school at the weekend when the school is short of a teacher and the headteacher asked for support from the Confucius Institute. In the interview, I asked Liang about the Chinese cultural elements in the curriculum, and the students' reaction to these.

Extract 4.1: Interview of Miss Liang, Context A, 27/06/2010

WL:请问教材中会不会有些内容是带有中国传统文化的元素?比如说过节，端午，中秋?
< Is there any Chinese traditional culture element embedded in the curriculum? For example, festivals, such as the 'Dragon boat festival' or the 'Mid-autumn festival? >

Liang: 在我们目前使用的教材，这本教材的内容比较粗浅，文化的因素就比较少。 当然，老师在上课的时候也不完全就按照这个教材来授课，有时候会根据碰到的节日. 比如说你刚才说的端午节，老师就会额外的准备一些补充资料给学生。
<The textbook we are using at the moment is very simple, so there are not many cultural elements. Certainly, teachers are not just simply following the curriculum, they sometimes add something in the teaching materials. For example, like what you just said, the 'Dragon boat festival', the teacher will prepare some relevant materials for the students. >

In this extract, Liang made some comments on the teaching materials they are using at that moment. She considered that this textbook is too simple, it does not have much content related to Chinese culture. In the complementary school, Liang was teaching the beginners class, where the ages of students range between four to seven years. The content of the textbook is simple. Normally there are some basic conversations, such as recognising numbers and greetings. That could be one of the reasons Chinese cultural elements are not found in this textbook. However, Liang also said that normally teachers would not just simply follow the textbook, but would prepare some supplementary materials in their pedagogy so that students can expand their knowledge of vocabulary and their background information of the class content. Liang's answer shows that in order to pass Chinese traditional culture and values on to children, cultural elements have been purposely included in the curriculum of the complementary school (Creese et al, 2006; Creese and Martin, 2009). In particular, we talked about the festivals, which are considered an important aspect in the teaching of culture (Kramsch, 1993). Teachers and parents believe that teaching about festivals, and folk stories related to these festivals, are the conceptualisation and reification of teaching culture in the language classroom, because some essential traditional values and philosophies such as obedience, obligations and family values are fundamental (Byram, Esarte-Sarries, and Taylor, 1991; Cortazzi and Jin, 1999; Creese, et al, 2009). In addition, learning about festivals and related folk stories are considered to be opportunities to develop students' language proficiency. In the following extract, Liang shares her understanding of how to use cultural elements in the pedagogy.

Extract 4.2: Interview of Miss Liang, Context A, 27/06/2010

WL: 当遇到这样的内容时，学生会不会比较感兴趣呢？ <So, when students look at these curriculums, will they be more interested? > Liang: 我觉得会。因为他们多多少少从父母亲人朋友那里或者是其他的一些渠。比如说我们现在正好是端午节，大家都要吃粽子，小朋友文化信息多多少少都会知道，但是可能了解的不是很深，对于在这个文化中涉及到的语言和词汇不是很了解，如果这个时候老

师能够根据实际生活中的情况叫他们一些文化方面的语言和信息知识，我觉得这是个很好的契机，小朋友很也会很欢迎的。

<I think they will. Because students more or less know something about this traditional culture from their parents, friends or some other people. For example, at the ‘Dragon Boat Festival’, they know we will have ‘Zhongzi’ as special festival food. But, they may be familiar with the words, languages. I think that will be a good opportunity for teachers to teach them some new words as well as traditional Chinese culture, and these normally are welcomed by the kids.>

In this extract, Liang considered that students are normally attracted by the topics related to traditional culture, because these are issues they are familiar with in their real life. Students acquire this knowledge from their Chinese heritage background, such as stories heard from their parents or holidays spent in China with their relatives. These phenomena can be considered as their particular cultural markers, which are different from other children’s in other contexts in this study. The Dragon Boat Festival mentioned in this extract is a well-known Chinese festival in the UK, some activities such as Dragon boat races have been held by the Hanban (Hanban online, 2011). Creese et al (2009) indicate that the interaction between teacher and students when they study folk stories creates a positive learning environment for students to develop their linguistic and communicative competence by negotiating meanings in social context. In this extract, the teacher uses the dragon boat festival as an example to explain the relationship between the festival and language teaching and learning in the classroom. She believed it was a good opportunity for the teacher to provide students with some new knowledge, such as new words and information, about the festival.

It is not surprising that teachers and parents try to impose Chinese identity on the students in the complementary school. Ideally, they think that it is natural for these children to inherit Chinese culture from their parents or relatives, because after all they are from Chinese heritage families. However, as Hofstede (1991: 5) argues, ‘culture is learned, not inherited, it derives from one’s environment, not from one’s genes’. As mentioned in the introduction, most of the students in the complementary school were born or came to the UK at a very early age and their education took place in mainstream schools in the UK. For these children, English is the language they use most of the time in their daily life, for reading books, listening to music, taking examinations. For these young people, although they come from a Chinese heritage background, compared with children living in China, they are deeply influenced by the cultural universe of the UK society. In terms of seeing culture as activities in their daily life, this group of children is considered to have a dynamic and multicultural background. According to Wu and Creese:

> *‘While the teachers and administrators of the school believed that teaching ‘language’ and ‘heritage’ was a means of reproducing ‘culture’ identities in the next generation, the imposition of such identities was often contested and renegotiated by the students, as classroom interactions become sites where students occupied subject positions which were at odds with those imposed by the institutions.’*
>
> *(Wu and Creese, 2008: 106)*

Not like their parents being influenced by Chinese culture in childhood, these students have been living in the English cultural universe, and from the students’ perspective, their attachment to heritage culture is not as strong as that of their parents and teacher. The following extract is from an interview of an eleven years old girl call Ying held before the class started. In this extract, Ying answered my question about her preference for traditional Chinese festivals and English festivals.

Extract 4.3: Interview of Ying, Context A, 20/ 11 /2010.

WL: Ying, 那你觉得，你觉得，就是，相比之下，比如说中国这些传统节日，跟英国这些大家都在过的节日，你对哪个更熟悉一些呢？ < Ying , what are your thoughts on traditional Chinese and English festivals? Which one is more interesting to you?>

Ying : 嗯，我好像是对这种，英国的这种节日，像圣诞节，大家都知道圣诞节，圣诞树啊，圣诞礼物啊，这些东西，大家都知道这些东西，跟朋友们也能聊。可是这种像春节，我的朋友，我的英国朋友，他们知道，但是我跟他们谈不了，所以…
<Err, I think I am more interested in English festivals. Like Christmas, everybody knows Christmas - Christmas trees, Christmas gifts. These things we all know. And I can discuss these with my friends. But, like Spring Festival, my friends, my English friends, they do know about it, but not that much. We cannot really talk about it, so…>

This extract shows that compared to the spring festival, Ying is more familiar with Christmas. The reason is that she can talk about this with her friends at school, because they have a common understanding of these festivals and they can share some similar experiences. Holliday (2010a: 175) offers the term of cultural reality to describe cultural characters which 'can form around and be carried with individuals as they move from one cultural arena to another'. He argues that

> *'Being part of one cultural reality does not close off membership and indeed ownership of another. Individuals can have the capacity to feel a belonging to several cultural realities simultaneously.'*
>
> *(Holliday, 2010a: 175)*

In the complementary school, teachers and the administrator try to create an environment in which students can access traditional Chinese culture in a UK context. However, for this group of students who grew up in this globalised world where things in their life become more and more international because of internet and transnational media, boundaries between national cultures are no longer clear. As Piller (2011: 73) maintains 'globalization and transnational migration further throw nation-based approaches to intercultural communication into question'. Culture is software of the mind (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005), and all communication is intercultural (Holliday, 1999; Piller, 2011). It is argued that in the language classroom, culture and language are both considered products shaped by human activities (Goodenough, 1994). A similar story happened in the conversation between me and students in the classroom in the next extract. It was in the break time of the study, I tried to talk to a student sitting next to me, and some other students spontaneously joined our conversation later.

Extract 4.4: Interview with S1, Context A, 15/01/2011.

WL: What do you think of Chinese traditional culture, such as festivals?
S1: I think it is OK… I don't know very much.

WL: What do you think, er, compared to festivals like Christmas and Spring Festival? 你觉得哪一个更重要? <Which festival do you think is more important?>
S1: Christmas. You get more presents.
WL: How about Spring festival? 不是有红包吗? <Don't you get red packets with money?>
S1: 每当我在…圣诞、生日的那个节，我也得红包. <When I… Every Christmas or birthday, I get red packets as well.>
WL: 哈哈, 好吧. <Haha, okay>
S1: I think I get it all the time, like Christmas, birthdays…

This extract is from an ethnographic interview I took during the break time. I asked the boy next to me some questions about what he thought of traditional Chinese culture such as festivals, and some other students joined us while we were talking. In this extract, S1 said he did not know very much about Chinese culture, and he considered Christmas to be more important than the spring festival, because he would get more presents at that time. According to Piller,

> *'As the media broadcast cultural styles and values around the globe and as more and more people travel, intercultural communication itself is best seen as a mobile resource and the question who makes culture relevant to whom in which context for which purposes is ever more important to gain an understanding of the interested nature of communication.'*
>
> *(Piller, 2011: 73)*

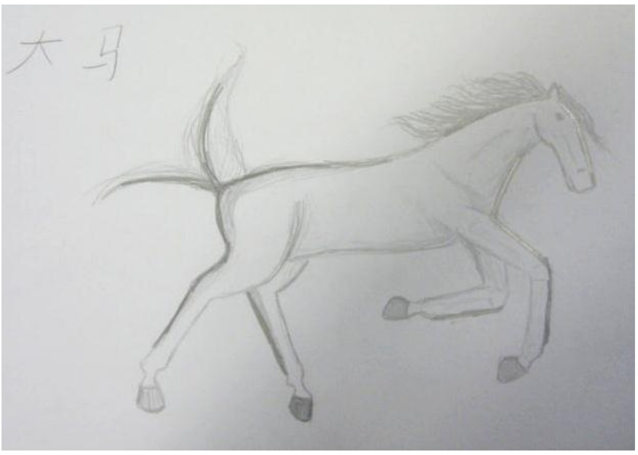
In the interview, I participated as both researcher and teacher, therefore I was trying to convince him about the value of the spring festival by referring to the 'red packet'. The red packet is one of the Chinese traditional customs associated with the spring festival. Normally older people give children a red packet with some money to bless them with good health and good luck. As a Chinese person who grew up in China, this was a really good memory for me. However, S1 did not share my feelings about this red packet, as the cultural universe in which he grew up did not apply this particular meaning to the red packet. Therefore, the value of the red packet did not seem that unique to him in this globalised society. For S1, there is not a clear boundary between Chinese culture and English culture. Intercultural communication becomes a mobile resource for these children to create their own third culture. With this in mind, the functions of culture in the complementary school go beyond just inherited traditions. Students' intercultural communicative competence becomes another focus in the classroom.

Pillar's argument is supported by Holliday (1999), who offers the term of small culture to describe people's behaviours emerging on the ground and argues that culture needs to be understood in a specific context based on participants' activities. To understand how culture is understood and taught in the classroom, the cultural arena in both big context and small context needs to be investigated (Holliday, 2010a; Holliday, 2010b). In other words, small culture in the classroom such as students' interaction and discourse should be explored in detail. In the following extract, an example from a classroom recording will be explored to see how culture has been used in the classroom and how students use these elements to create their understanding of some Chinese characters.

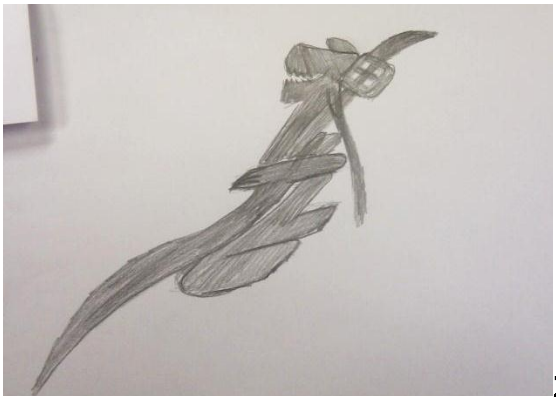
Extract 4.5: Fieldnotes, Context A, 05/01/2011

In the beginning of this lesson, the teacher showed some PowerPoint slides to students. These are pictures of twelve Chinese zodiac animals, and they were written in a way similar to the image of the meaning they presented. The whole class was focused on what the teacher showed on the screen, and the students seemed really involved. They kept raising their hands and guessing what animal the picture was. I looked around, even those students who did not normally concentrate were whispering and discussing with enthusiasm.

After showing the powerpoint and the discussion, the teacher asked students to follow the examples from the PowerPoint slide and use some Chinese characters to draw some picture themselves. Students seemed to really enjoy these activities. They were walking around and whispering in the classroom. The teacher allowed students to break the rules of the classroom as long as they were learning. I was walking around the classroom, and participated in their drawing activities. Some of their work was really interesting and creative. With their permission, I took some photos of their work and show them below as follows:



1: 大马 <big horse>


2: 神龙<Holy dragon >

3: 图 <picture>

This extract is an episode from a lesson at the beginning of the spring term of 2011. Students had just come back from their holiday. The teacher told me that she wanted to do something special to attract students' attention in the very first class of this term. She prepared some pictures which were combined with the Chinese characters of what these pictures mean. She showed some examples on her PowerPoint and asked students to guess and discuss. Later on in the lesson, she asked students to create their own pictures. Compared with those tightly controlled teacher-centred lessons, this flexible activity provided students with more room for their creativity. I wrote in my fieldnotes that young people in this classroom really did a good job in finding a way to connect some characters they know to some images with their creative imagination. For example, in the first picture in this extract, the student drew a big, vivid horse. It can be recognised as it is painted by two Chinese characters '大马<Big horse>'. The student told me that she was struggling with whether to make this picture more like the characters or more like the horse, and she finally decided to show off her painting skill. The second picture is a 'Holy Dragon'. The student wrote this word in Chinese and made it look like the shape of a dragon. The third picture in this extract is made by the Chinese character of 'picture' – 图. The students drew a big one on the paper and doubled the component '口',

and made it into a frame. Then this character itself becomes a picture to achieve the criteria required by the teacher. Heritage culture elements in this lesson become a mobile resource for students to practise their linguistic knowledge. Different from European alphabet-based languages such as English, Chinese is a language which is character based and has some pictographic characters. Inspired by the examples provided by the teacher, these young people recorded some characters they had learnt and used them as resources to show their understanding of these characters by presenting them in a relevant picture. In the cultural arena of this language classroom, students become cultural makers. They used their knowledge and imagination to create a particular 'small culture' of this classroom.

Li (2006) argues that the educational system in a multilingual and multicultural society like Britain should go beyond the monolingual and unicultural. Diversity in the classroom should be encouraged, intercultural communication should be considered as a resource to involve students. In order to involve students in the classroom activities, the teachers reoriented their lessons towards a pedagogy that provides students with more opportunities in a comfortable, cultural context rather than just focusing on classroom content only (Fong, 2007). This flexible pedagogy provided students with an opportunity to establish their own personal cultural realities, which can 'cross national boundaries' in the cultural arena of the language classroom (Holliday, 2010b: 263). In this globalised world, immigrant and mixed-race children have their own globalised understanding of culture. A 'small culture' or 'third culture' is established in the class and it is helpful for students to position themselves in this globalised world. Being a member of one cultural arena will not close the door to other cultural arenas, indeed, participants 'can and do have the capacity to feel a belonging to several cultural realities simultaneously' (Holliday, 2010b: 263).

4.3 The community centre class in Birmingham

In terms of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, learning culture and intercultural communication is undoubtedly important in the community centre class in Birmingham. Kramsch (1993, 2005) maintains that it is necessary to involve learning culture along with learning a foreign language, she proposes that:

> *'...foreign language learning was more than just learning to get one's message across, clearly, accurately, and appropriately or even to interact successfully with native speakers. It was the ability to understand others in their national, historical specificity, and to better understand oneself and one's own culture in the process.'*
>
> *(Kramsch, 2005: 551)*

However, learning a culture does not mean adopting all of it. Instead of accepting the target culture wholesale, a flexible space should be given to the learners to negotiate their understanding of the target culture and associate it with their own cultural background. Kramsch (1993: 23) suggests that when teachers and learners 'are constantly engaged in creating a culture of a third kind through the give-and-take of classroom dialogue', language learning can be conducted more efficiently.

The following extract is drawn from a group interview of the family in the community centre class, (for detailed information about the family please see the methodology chapter). In the interview, I asked the participants about their understanding of culture and the position of culture in their language learning procedure. In the extract, F represents the father, M is the mother and Grace is their daughter, Davie is her older brother.

Extract 4.6: Interview of the family, Context B, 02/06/2011

WL: Well, there is another question I would like to ask. If I say 'culture', what is the first thing you will think about? What is the first thing in your mind about culture?

F: A dish?
M: Food, clothes, languages.

WL: What if I say ‘Chinese culture’?
M: Mandarin.
<We all laughed>

Grace: I think, the ‘Dragon Boat Festival’.
WL: Oh, how do you know about the ‘Dragon Boat Festival’?
Grace: Oh, I did a competition, we did before. We need to beat a lot of questions, and there is lot about it.

In this extract, interviewees shared their understanding of culture with me. The information they brought up is basically related to food, customs, festivals and language. Grace specifically mentioned the ‘Dragon Boat Festival’, and said that she was involved in a Mandarin competition in last year’s ‘Dragon Boat Festival’. The competition was held by Hanban, it normally takes place in some big cities in the UK, such as London. The event aims to promote the Chinese language and culture, and all the Chinese language learners are welcome to participate. Shang, the teacher of this group of students applied for the position for them, as she believed that it was a good opportunity for students to practise what they had learnt and motivate them to study further. From the perspective of participants in this extract, culture takes the position of what Holliday (1999) maintains as ‘large culture’ which is related to specific ethnic and national characteristics. Explorations of these characteristics of the culture of the target language as well as developing students’ cultural competence are understood as essential factors in the field of foreign language teaching and learning (Kramsch, 1993, 2005).

In the following extract, participants in the group told me what they think about the relationship between learning the language and learning culture.

Extract 4.6: Interview of the family, Context B, 02/06/2011

WL: Do you think it is helpful, for you, knowing the culture? Is that helpful for you to learn the language?

Grace: Can be helpful. Like you call the older people ‘aunt’, something like that…
Davie: Er, make it more about spirit and < words missing 15: 34>, not just about learning the word, but how is… what is China all about. What kind of language it is.
F: Guess it is context, I suppose.

In this extract, I asked participants, especially the two children in the group whether they consider learning Chinese culture is helpful for their study of Mandarin. Grace gave me a positive answer and provided an example, she mentioned the different ways people refer to their aunts in English and Chinese. In English, ‘aunt’ can be used to refer to many female relatives in the family. However, in Chinese there are many specific names for an aunt related to her age and whether she is on the father’s side or the mother’s side. Kinship terms in the Chinese language allows speakers to address a person indicating his or her status and the relationship with the family, and this ‘strategic use of the address terms makes the participants’ social and cultural roles and identities relevant to various degrees in different contexts’ (Zhu 2010: 200). According to Zhu,

> *‘The choice, and avoidance, of a particular address term as well as the language the speaker chooses (for example, whether to address someone by his or her English or Chinese name) is highly significant and carries complex cultural meanings.’*
>
> *(Zhu, 2010: 200)*

The example Grace provided here shows the intimate connection between language and culture, cultural awareness of the target language is essential in the processes of foreign language teaching and learning (Kramsch, 1993, Krasner, 1999). To understand this kinship term information is important for a language learner to become an authentic Chinese speaker, the choice the speaker makes will illustrate their identity preference in the conversation. In this extract, Grace’s brother Davie voiced a similar opinion and talked about people’s spirit.

Davie indicated that learning the culture of the target language is helpful for people to understand the spirit behind the language. For example, he believes that learning the Chinese culture will provide more information about China along with the language. Davie's understanding of culture and language learning supports the argument that culture is the 'software of the mind' (Hofstede, 1991).The father made his point clear that language should be learnt in context, which supports the relationship between culture and language that Kramsch proposes (Kramsch, 1993, 2005).

Kramsch (1993) also argues that the understanding of boundaries between two cultures is important, and some space for a third culture should be allowed to be negotiated by participants in the classroom. As mentioned in the literature review chapter, the study of 'small culture' does not mean ignoring the existence of 'large cultures' but need to be investigated between and within 'large culture' (Holliday 1999). Instead of blurring differences, a contextual understanding of large culture is needed. Holliday (1999) indicated that a shift of focus to 'small culture' should be applied in language classroom. He argues that the 'cohesive behaviour in activities' in a particular social group, such as participants in the classroom in my study should be the focus (Holliday, 1999: 241). Grace and Davie shared their understandings of culture and provided examples such as kinship terms in the cultural arena of this language classroom, and contributed to the construction of this 'small culture'.

The following extract is an example that illustrates how the teacher and students communicated with each other and created their own small culture. The topic of this class is about the 'Mid-autumn festival'. After practising the new words in the textbook, Shang tried to explain some customs people do in this festival in China. She also reminded students of some other folk stories they had discussed before, particularly the folk story about a monster call 'Nian' of the spring festival. Grace asked if the monster is a dragon, then the conversation about the western dragon and Chinese dragon began as indicated in the following extract.

Extract 4.7: Classroom recordings, 11/11/2010

Grace: Is it a dragon?

Shang: No, it is not a dragon, it has nothing to do with dragon.

Shang: About dragon, when I am talking about dragon, I'll always mean the Chinese dragon. In the Chinese culture, the dragon is different from the western idea of dragon, completely different. The Chinese dragon is imagination creature, something like, er, the head of deer, the animal, the body of snake, the claw of eagles, the scale of fish and the tail of horse. So, it is like a combination of imagination, a picture. In the Chinese culture, people like it, because it is kind of representation of Chinese idea of braveness and power. It is not like the black dragon in the western culture, being evil...

John: So, you are not trying to kill it?

(People laughing)

Shang: No, we are not trying to kill it.

This extract started when Grace asked the teacher whether ‘Nian’, which is the monster in the folk story of spring festival, is a dragon. The teacher denied it and explained the differences between the Chinese dragon and the western dragon in detail. Most participants in this classroom are European, and their general understandings of dragon are based on the pattern of the knight killing a dragon and saving the princess. It can be seen from what John said in this extract, when he was seeking an answer from the teacher, that Chinese people do not kill the dragon in their folk stories. Gudykunst (1991: 2) argues that ‘if we understand each other’s languages, but not their cultures, we can make fluent fools of ourselves’. That is why the teacher first described the appearance of the Chinese dragon, and she specifically indicated that the meaning it represented is different from that of the western dragon. In this situation, both culture (large culture) and language products are shaped by the specific human activities in the classroom (Goodenough1994). The understanding of dragon in this context is a result of intercultural communication among teacher and students. According to Piller,

> *'Language forms are relative and different languages encode different world views. The inability to engage with, and the unwillingness to acknowledge, different ways of seeing was a central facet of colonialism. Conversely, intercultural competence is characterized by the ability and desire to engage with realities other than our own.'*
>
> *(Piller, 2011:53)*

In the discussion, both teachers and students bring together their own experiences in the conversation. The different representations of the dragon in this classroom require a common understanding of each other. Intercultural communication here builds an 'ideological bridge' between two cultures, and allows students to thus create a temporary, contextual understanding of each other in the classroom (Fenner, 2008). This then contributes to the creation of a 'third culture' (Kramsch, 1993) or a 'small culture' (Holliday 1999) within the classroom. Small culture is rooted in participants' activities and it is an ideal term to describe any particular social context such as the language classroom (Holliday, 1999). In this context, culture can be applied 'not only to the processes that give cohesion to group behaviour', such as Chinese culture or western culture, but can also be applied to 'the processes that give cohesion to behaviour', such as the discussion in this extract (Holliday, 1999:250). Understanding of this small culture can be helpful for language educators to understand the behaviour of participants and the preparation of pedagogy.

4.4 The secondary school in London

In the mainstream school like Kingsford, the teaching and learning of Chinese culture is on the school curriculum. Some after class activities such as Tai Chi, Kong Fu, Chinese dancing and painting are provided for students to experience 'Chinese culture'. The 'Chinese culture' in this context is recognized as a national and ethnic related ‘large culture’. The school is experienced in hosting big national events which are related to promoting Chinese language and culture, and some Chinese cultural activities are prepared as performances for invited guests. For example, it was recorded in my fieldnotes that the school used to host a national mandarin language competition, and a lot of participant teams came from all around the country. During that time, a group of staff and students prepared some performances such as Chinese dancing, Chinese singing and Tai Chi for their guests. The following extract is drawn from the fieldnotes I took when I visited the school for the first time. It was the autumn of 2010, I attended the three day training conference organised by Hanban. In order to provide a real environment of how Mandarin had been taught and learned in the mainstream school in the UK, the administrator brought all the participants to this school to observe. My first impressions of this school are recorded in the following set of fieldnotes.

Extract: Observational fieldnotes, Context C, 2010-10-21

The school has a big front courtyard, the teaching building is new and grand. All students are wearing black uniforms, two boys were standing beside door to open the door for us, and greet us in Chinese with warm smiles on their faces. There are some Chinese style decorations hanging on the wall in the lobby, such as Chinese paintings, Chinese lanterns and students' calligraphy work. In addition, there are some HSBC posters standing at the side of the lobby, showing information about the bank and its relationship with China.

The extract shows how the school decorated their lobby from a visitor's eyes. This extract shows the cultural elements of this school by presenting how the school decorated its lobby and how they distinguished themselves as a special language school, which has a particular interest in teaching and learning Chinese language and culture. The development of students' cultural component is considered as an important factor in language education (Kramch, 1993). In the field of foreign language education, the cultural component generally means the understanding of target culture or large culture, such as knowledge of geography, history, literature and arts of related nations. The cultural decorations along with some Chinese culture activities such as Tai Chi and calligraphy together serve to provide a learning environment for students to learn Chinese language and culture in this cultural arena.

In addition, this extract also shows an aspect of cultural universe, which may influence the Chinese language teaching and learning in this school. According to Pennycook (2001), the development of a language and the culture it conveys has strong connections with the power and politics of related nations. This extract also shows how the political and economic elements from society influence foreign language education in this school. The connection between this school and the Hanban, or more specifically, with China are reflected in some details and the existence of the HSBC poster in the school. It is acknowledged that HSBC has a close relationship with China, and they have sponsored many events which relate to the promotion of Chinese language teaching and learning organised by Hanban or the British Council. For example, the HSBC Global Education Programme and the British Council worked together to support the HSBC/British Council Mandarin Chinese Speaking

Competition in 2012, which it argued was ‘an excellent opportunity to give secondary schools and students the chance to test their Mandarin Chinese speaking skills in front of an audience of a panel of illustrious judges and schools from all over the UK’ (British Council, 2012).

Influenced by the economic and political development of China, the status of teaching and learning Mandarin is changing. The Chinese government is trying to establish governmental agencies all around the world to promote Chinese language and culture. Apart from teaching Chinese language and culture to their own students, the Confucius classroom in this school takes the responsibility to provide courses for other schools or organisations in that region. Culture in this context refers to the ‘large culture’, which has a strong connection with related nations (Holliday, 1999). It seems that students enjoy these activities and their learning benefits from these practices. However, whether these cultural practices are actually helpful for students when they are learning in the classroom requires further investigation. The following extract is from the e-mail interview of Alex, the teacher of a class I visited who had just been promoted to the position of head of the language department in 2011. In his e-mail, Alex defined culture as ‘people’s practices’, and he believed that culture is ‘very unstable and cannot be defined’. His understanding of the relationship between culture and language teaching will be shown in the following extract.

Extract 6.8: Interview, the teacher and director of the language department, Context C.

WL: What is your perspective of the relationship between culture and language teaching? Do you teach culture in your class? If you do, how? Is that helpful for students’ learning?
Alex: Language is embedded in a cultural context. All parts of life are. My best lessons will have the language embedded in a cultural context. If it doesn’t, the pupils find it hard to grasp where the points are coming from. It helps them to get the ‘feel’ for the language if I embed the language in a cultural context

WL: What elements of the curriculum are important to you as a teacher?
Alex: As a teacher, for the exams, the speaking and the writing are

crucial as these form 60% of their final grade. But as a language learner myself I prefer to focus on the cultural elements. However, this doesn't get them through the exams!

In this extract, Alex considered cultural context as an important element for students to learn a foreign language, because it provided students with opportunities to get the 'feeling' of the language. 'Feeling' in this context should be understood as knowledge of the background information of the target language. However, when I asked him about the most important element of the curriculum, Alex's answer provided a dilemma. On the one hand, he considered culture as a significant element in the process of learning from a language learner's perspective. On the other hand, he considered that focusing on cultural learning will not get these students through their exam, because 60% of their exam results are based on speaking and writing. In other words, linguistic practices remained as the priority from a teacher's perspective. Therefore, how to embed cultural elements in classroom pedagogy and linguistic practices should be studied based on classroom activities. According to Holliday (1999), the study of 'small culture', which allows teacher and students to bring their own experiences into the classroom and to contribute to linguistic practices, should be the focus of the cultural study. Although national identity is powerful, it works 'not in institutional practices but in an individual's speech style, behaviours, values and communicative preferences' (Piller, 2011: 69). The following extract is an episode from one transcription of classroom observation. Alex is the teacher and the lesson is about travelling and means of transportation. They were practising how to use some Chinese frequency words to make a sentence, and this is an important linguistic point in the GCSE.

Extract: Classroom recordings, Context C, 22/06/2011

A: Ok any examples? Anybody want to demonstrate what they've achieved … Ok, cause you know the vocabulary items. But really, you need to show that you can operate with the sentence … Any examples? How about

this one? 我每天走路 <*I walk everyday*>. How about this one, S1, 我常常坐地铁 <*I often take the* underground >.
S1: I often take the underground.
T: Ok, Nathan, 你说吧 <*you say it*>.
Nathan: 我很少走路 <*I rarely walk*>.
A: Lazy boy. Take the number 11 bus. Get that? 2 legs. Number 11.
Vivienne, that's one of my favourite jokes during my time in China. 十一路 <*Route 11*>.Where did you come from in China?
WL: Guangxi province.
A: And in Guangxi, do you talk about the number 11 bus or walking?
Student 2: … (words missing, 46:34)
A: How do you say it? Do you say 十一路 <*Route 11*>?

WL: 十一路公车 <*Public bus 11*>
A: I remember asking my Chinese friends once “How are we going to get there?” And they were like ‘我们坐十一路’ <*We will take bus 11*>. And then we just carried on walking... I asked ‘Where is the bus stop?’ … We just carried on walking, walking. Anyway, that was a funny joke.

The extract started by the teacher giving instructions and providing examples of how to use frequency words in the textbook. After some practice, Nathan gave an example in Chinese that he rarely walks. His answer leads to a well-known joke from his teacher about ‘the Number 11 bus’. The joke uses ‘number 11 bus’ and refers to going somewhere on foot, and will normally be a long walk. Alex heard this joke when he was studying in China. I was sitting at the back of the classroom, the teacher called my name and asked me if I knew about this joke. In this situation, I participated in the conversation as a researcher and a native Chinese speaker from China who can provide supporting evidence and became part of the intercultural communication in this cultural arena. According to Piller (2011: 69), ‘cultural and communicative styles and values have become diluted and have acquired a mix-and-match flavor as more and more people travel and migrate, and mediated cultural flows criss–cross the globe’.

In this extract, the teacher brought his own experience into the classroom, and he also involved me as a cultural resource to support his joke. The joke Alex brought into the classroom not only provided students with an example of the linguistic pattern they were practising, but also offered them an opportunity to understand the exact meaning of “number 11 bus” in Chinese culture. This joke became a cultural marker which signified a cultural reality and contributed to the construction of small culture in this classroom. My fieldnotes recorded that the students enjoyed this joke, some children were whispering about telling this joke to other friends.This extract shows that the joke and the conversation between participants formulated a particular ‘small culture’ in this particular environment. The negotiation of this ‘small culture’ should be encouraged because it brings intercultural communication to the level of linguistic practice (Piller, 2011).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter provides some examples related to culture and intercultural communication in the multilingual classroom across the three educational contexts of my study. It is believed that culture and language shape, and are shaped by. each other while participants are involved in the classroom interaction. The term ‘small culture’ (Holliday, 1999) plays an important role from a methodological perspective, since it offers a tool to study culture across three contexts based on the activities emerging on the ground. In the context of the Chinese complementary school, parents, teachers and students need to negotiate an understanding of culture with more tolerance, which allows young people to understand culture from their own perspective. In the community centre class and the secondary school where students are learning Chinese as a foreign language, intercultural communication needs to be specified in the classroom activities to minimise the misunderstandings of teaching and learning. However, as Piller (2011: 69) argues, people’s ‘speech styles, behaviours, values and communicative preference which are the locus of intercultural communication advice are increasingly decoupled from the nation' in this globalised and transnational word. Cultural studies and intercultural communication in the classroom are influenced by the economic and political elements of society. According to Piller (2011: 144), intercultural communication is 'characterized by multilingual practices, is embedded in beliefs about language, and place in the political economy of language'. In these circumstances, language and culture are not tied to any particular nation or ethnicity. In fact, language diversity and cultural harmony should be considered as part of the pedagogical goal.

Chapter Five: Data Analysis II

Identities of Teachers and Students in Multilingual Classrooms

5.1 Introduction

Research focusing on analysing people's identities becomes increasingly important in this fast-changing and interconnected globalised world. Taylor (1992: 25) interprets the term identity to mean a 'person's understanding of who they are', and understandings are continuously being shaped through the social contexts in which they are embedded. As Greer argues, these social contexts are interactional contexts:

> *'By communicating with those around them, people are able to foreground and background identity through interactional practices associated with membership categories. Likewise, those with whom they interact have a role to play in casting them into a certain identity category, which may be subsequently accepted or challenged, again through the details of the talk itself.'*
>
> *(Greer， 2007: 119)*

The membership categories which I will investigate across the three settings comprise the social categories of 'teachers', 'students' and 'researcher'. In addition, other ideological categories such as national identities, heritage identities and gender will be discussed along with these social identities to explore the process of participants' identity development. In the classroom, interactional discourse is one of the key mediums through which students and teachers' identities are constructed. This chapter will discuss teachers' and students' identities across three educational settings by drawing on discursive data from these environments. Researcher's fieldnotes, interview transcripts and classroom recordings will be the main resources of analysis, and several analytical points will be made from both ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ perspectives.See chapter three for the full discussion (Harris, 1976: 331).

This chapter will be divided into two sections based on the identity categories suggested by Blackledge and Pavlenko (2003). Section one will focus on imposed identities of teachers and students. According to Blackledge and Pavlenko (2003:21), imposed (or non - negotiable) identities are ‘the ones that individuals cannot resist or contest at a particular point in time’. For example, some participants from the complementary school in my study, considered English as their first language. However, because their parents viewed them as Chinese, they needed to go to school every Saturday afternoon to learn Chinese, because this was constructed as their mother tongue. A second identity position introduced by Blackledge and Pavlenko (2003:21) is negotiated identities, which refer to ‘all identity options which can be – and are – contested and resisted by particular individuals and groups’.

The negotiated identities reflect the multiple and ‘on-going’ character involved in the various processes of individual identity development. Examples will be outlined and analysed to indicate how these three types of identities has been understood and constructed in my study.

5.2 Imposed identities

According to the three types of identities put forward by Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003: 22), imposed identities make up the unchangeable characteristics of people, such as skin colour, gender and ethnical identity. The following extract from my fieldnotes illustrates my first impression of Chinese being taught as foreign language in a London secondary school. Participants being observed in the classroom included one teacher, one teaching assistant, three visitors and a group of 7th grade students.In this fieldnote description, what I can see in looking back is that I was using some social categories to describe participants in the study.

These imposed categories are based on ethnicity, race, age, gender. I was unconsciously playing my part in constructing my participants in particular kinds of ways. The following chart summarises the identities which I imposed on these participants:

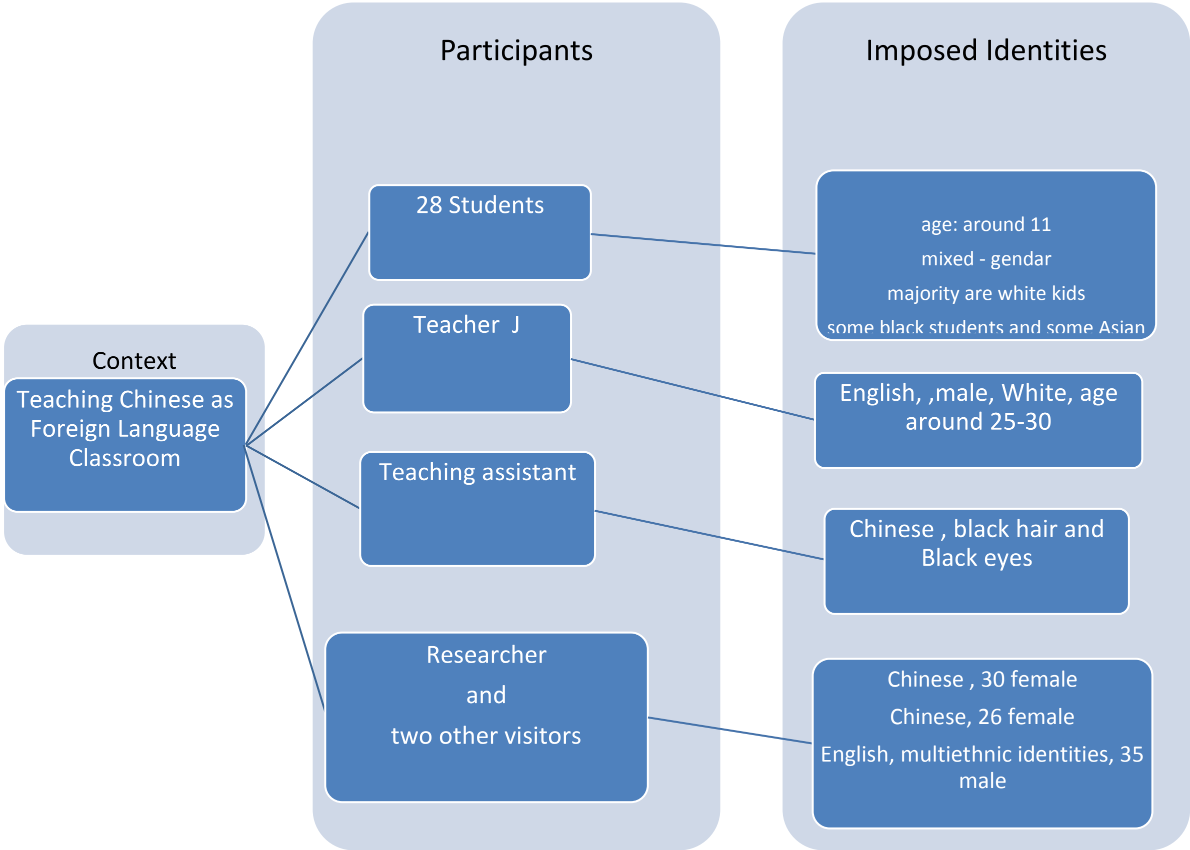


Table 3: Summary of identities in a classroom of Context C

This chart outlines participants' imposed identities in this classroom by way of the categories of their ethnicities, gender, ethnic background and their age, some of which are constructed in my fieldnotes. The identities of the participants can be attributed to their biological make-up, and these characteristics seemed to be 'natural' to me when I imposed their identities on them (Moon Ro and Fredonia, 2010: 3). In the fieldnote description, the researcher categorised students' identities by their skin colour, gender and age. The uniform they wore and the enthusiasm they showed in the classroom reminded the researcher of the Harry Potter films. However, instead of learning magic, they are learning Chinese in the classroom. In this description, some of students' imposed identities, such as ethnicity, play an important part in the processes of identity construction portrayed by the researcher. In addition, the teacher J was described as a 'Westerner' by the researcher in her fieldnotes, and his English ethnicity and his Chinese proficiency unconsciously caused the researcher to construct for him the identity of non–native Chinese teacher. Similarly, an identity was created for the teaching assistant in the classroom who happens to be a young female Chinese teacher assigned by Hanban (the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language) to assist non–native teachers in the classroom. Imposed identities are taken for granted and appear natural, unquestionable and common sense. However, these identities will not be meaningful with just a mere notice, as according to Gee:

> *'natural identities can only become identities because they are recognized, by myself or others, as meaningful in the sense that they constitute (at least, in part) the 'kind of person' I am.'*
>
> *Gee (2000: 102)*

Imposed identities have to gain their own force 'through the work of institutions, discourse and dialogue, or affinity groups' (Gee 2000: 102). In other words, the power of imposed identities need to be fulfilled by the process of identity construction associated with other identities. From the researcher's perspective in this fieldnote, the imposed identities of the teacher J and the teaching assistant point to further constructions. I am interested in the proficiency of 'the non-native speaking teacher and the native-speaking assistant'. These are constructed terms which are used socially and which the school acknowledges as 'making a balance of English pedagogy and Chinese aesthetical pronunciation'. (Interview with the director of Chinese language group of the school, 2010).

Extract 5.2: Interview, the teacher and director of the language department, Context C.

WL: What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of being a non-native teacher teaching Mandarin in the UK?

T: Advantage – we can more easily relate to the British learners, disadvantage – we don't always have a good 'feel' for the language.

This interview shows that the teacher considered he is connected to the language learners through sharing cultural identities. Debates between what is native and non–native is one of the big issues in the study of linguistics, but here I will focus on the discussion of imposed identities. Scholars such as Cook (2005: 57) have described the dangers of constructing people into categories such as NS and NNS. Much of this literature argues against the negativity associated with NNS. The imposed identity of teacher J has been revealed and empowered by his other institutional identity as a non–native language teacher. The teacher's imposed identities as English but able to speak Chinese fluently is a positive example to encourage students who share similar imposed identities.

The following extract is another example of imposed identities from the complementary school. In this school, most of the students possess Chinese heritage background. At least one of their parents is originally from China (including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan).

Extract 5.3: Observational fieldnotes, Context A, 09/10/2010

Ying is twelve years old. Her mother is Chinese and her father is English. The reason she arrived early is because she had earlier attended two hours of German language lessons in the morning at the same grammar school. She says that instead of going home, she prefers to stay in the school while waiting for the Chinese class to begin. Apart from Chinese and German, Ying is also learning French and Latin at school. She says that she has been interested in learning languages since she was a little girl.

To be honest, I think that Ying's Mandarin pronunciation is even better than mine. This is probably because she takes after her mother who comes from the northern part of China where the actual dialect is standard Chinese. I, on the other hand, come from the Guang Xi province which is located in the south. As Mandarin is not the local dialect there, my pronunciation of the language more or less comes with an accent.

This extract explains Ying's background. She is a mixed-race teenage girl who was born in China but came to the UK at a very early age. In this fieldnote, the researcher describes Ying's language proficiency. From the perspective of a researcher who is also a native Chinese speaker, Ying's Chinese spoken language has been evaluated as close to standard pronunciation. In addition, it has been confirmed that Ying's mother is originally from the north part of China in the fieldnote. Ying's mother was a kindergarten teacher in China before she came to the UK, and she is currently in charge of dancing classes for the younger group of students in the Chinese school. In an ethnographic study like this project, the researcher's position is recognised as a part of the data, and thus this provides readers with an opportunity to see what is happening in the research field from an insider's perspective. Ying's mother correctly considered me as her colleague and the teacher of her daughter more than a researcher, and she is trying to build a positive image of Ying as a good student and a talented language learner. She told me that Ying has been able to read Chinese since she was only two years old, and she also complained that Ying's Chinese language capability was actually even better when she was a child. But because of the lack of daily practice, Ying's Chinese has not improved much since then. Ying's Chinese imposed heritage identity has been constructed from this description.

However, a person's identity is concerned with not just 'who we are', but also 'what we might become', and it can be 'achieved, transformed, subverted and negotiated' at a particular time and in a particular environment (Luk, 2008: 124). This extract also portrays Ying as a typical 'good student'. She is normally quiet in the classroom, never late for school, always finishes her homework before the class starts, always answers teacher's questions, and is willing to help other classmates in the classroom. Ying has received formal education from mainstream schooling, and has studied her heritage language at the Nottingham Chinese School for years. She can speak both English and Mandarin fluently. Ying is positioned differently in her two educational contexts according to the descriptions in her interview data. For example, Ying is considered as Chinese in the complementary school but English in the mainstream school.

The following extract is from a transcript of the interview with Ying. This interview is an informal interview which I did not plan in advance. In my fieldnotes it was noted that I arrived at the Chinese school one hour earlier that day, Ying was reading a book in the classroom when I came in. Ying's mother was teaching a group of children dancing in the lobby. The headteacher told me that this extra dancing class is to give younger children the chance to experience Chinese culture by learning Chinese folk dancing. They have to pay a small amount of money (one pound per section), and they are going to perform at the Christmas party. I had a casual talk with Ying before the class started, and our conversation really interested me, therefore I asked for her permission to record this talk. This is an ethnographic interview which has been referred to in the methodology chapter.

Extract 5.4: Interview of Ying, Context A, 20/ 11 /2010

WL: 那，就你自己觉得，觉得学习中文重要吗？
<Err, from your perspective, do you think learning Chinese is important?>
Ying:我以前不觉得，学中文。。。就觉得，哎呀，我为什么需要学呢？
<I didn't think so when I was little. Learning Chinese… I was thinking why I had to do this?>
WL: 是妈妈逼你的，呵呵
<Your mother pushes you!>
(We both laugh)
Ying: 呵呵， 我朋友们都不学中文，为什么我必须来这呢？可是，那个，现在妈妈对我讲道理，就觉得， 我长的就是这样的，黑头发，黑色的眼

睛，总是会看去像个中国人。要是别人一跟我说话说，哎，你会说中文吗？的时候，我说我忘了。 他们就会觉得，可能就像我有点那种，不知道，我总是会看起来像个中国人，所以我就必须得学中文。所以…
<My friends did not need to learn Chinese. So why do I have to be here? But my mother kept explaining to me…So I will think, because I look like this - black hair, black eyes, look Chinese. If somebody asks me if I can speak Chinese and I say I forgot , they may think that I am, kind of… I don't know, I look Chinese, so I have to learn Chinese, so…>
WL: 你会不会觉得不舒服？人家觉得你。。。因为你想想你爸爸是金头发吗？还是？
<Do you feel any uncomfortable about what people think… because your father has blond hair? Or…?>
Ying: 恩，爸爸是那个，现在好像是白头发了〈我们都笑了〉，他好像以前是〈pause〉不知道〈笑〉，金头发或者棕色的，呵呵。。。
<Err…my father, now has white hair (We both laugh). He used to be (pause), I don't know (laugh), blond or (have) brown hair (laugh)…>
WL: 那你自己是想，你有没有觉得为什么你会是黑头发？ 黑头发，黑眼睛？会有这种想法吗？
<How about you? Have you asked yourself why your hair is black and why your eyes are black?>
Ying: 恩，我实在不太介意，你知道，我就。习惯了别人都问我，你是从哪里来的？我就说，我是中，我是从中国来的，因为我是在中国出生的。
<Er… I don't really care, you know, I just... I get used to people asking me where I'm from? I will say I came from China, because I was born in China.>
WL: 主要是你长得很漂亮，所以你不太介意.
<Because you are pretty, so you don't care...>
(We both laugh)
Ying: 谢谢。我就，我就，不知道，我知道我是中国人，我不介意我是中国人，我不会觉得是不想让别人知道。
<Thank you. I just… I am…I don't know. I know I am Chinese. And I don't mind that I am Chinese. I will not do something to hide that I am Chinese.>

For Ying, I am the researcher from Birmingham, sometimes the teacher or teaching assistant in the class, and now I am talking to her as friendly adult. The conversation between us is casual and easy-going. In this extract, we talked about Ying's parents, and several terms of imposed identities have been referred to. For example, Chinese, black hair, black eyes, blond hair, brown hair, white hair and pretty girl. These terms appeared in the conversation and serve as categories to describe people used by both the researcher and Ying. I asked Ying whether learning Chinese is important for her. She did not give me an answer for what she felt at the moment, instead she told me she was unwilling to learn it when she was little. Ying has studied in this school since she was six years old. She has to come to the Chinese school every Saturday afternoon. She told me that she has been forced by her mother to attend.

Ying indicated that her mother is the one who reminds her of her Chinese heritage identity all the time. When I asked Ying how she looks at herself with her black hair and black eyes, she told me that she does not really care about that, she has already got used to being questioned by people as to where she is from, and she tells people that she is from China. Some scholars have argued that young people can benefit from multi-ethnic identities (Piller, 2002; Schwartz, 1998; Greer, 2007). According to Schwartz:

> *'individuals who are socialized as multiracial usually benefit from their heritage. Their families provide them with a cultural education that is broader than that of mono-racial children, giving them both a larger knowledge base and a more well-rounded sense of the world. They have an enhanced sense of self and identity, and greater intergroup tolerance, language facility, appreciation of minority group cultures, and ties to single-heritage groups than do mono-racial people'.*
>
> *(Schwartz, 1998)*

According to the interview extract, Ying's imposed identity as an 'ethnic Chinese' is the reason which motivates her to learn Chinese. This because she felt she ought to be able to speak Chinese, otherwise people might question her Chinese appearance if she is not able to speak the language.

In this interview, I interrupted the conversation, saying that Ying did not care about the colour of her hair and her eyes, and she did not care about people asking where she was from because she is a good-looking girl. From the researcher's perspective, I am imposing an identity on Ying as a young and pretty female here in the UK. The imposed identity of gender has been considered as something beyond what men and women 'are' or 'have' (Takahashi, 2012: 4). Butler (1990, cited in Takahashi, 2012: 4) argues that gender has been regarded as a product of something people ‘do’ and ‘perform’ in and through talk or other discursive means’. Gender as imposed identity can be also reflected in a process of individuals ‘constructing their consciousness and negotiating their being in everyday life in and across various communities of practice’ (Eckert and McConnell - Ginet, 1992). Pavlenko and Piller (2001: 23) indicate that gender, therefore, becomes ‘a system of social relations and discursive practices’ of individuals. At the end of this extract, Ying recognised her Chinese identity by using the word ‘Chinese’ in three sentences: she knows she is Chinese; she has accepted her identity as Chinese; she does not mind people seeing her as Chinese.

Ying’s case shows that this young girl has moved and is moving between a series of social identities and roles during her life. For example, as Chinese, as a child, as a pretty girl and as an obedient girl. According to Norton (2000, cited in Luk 2008: 124), people’s personal identity can be constructed and performed when he or she tries to negotiate and compromise with ‘new sets of ideologies and world views and to establish social membership in a new community’. Ying did not refuse or resist any of her imposed identities, instead, she appears to accept them and behaves accordingly in different contexts. Her identities as a pretty and obedient girl could possibly be more fundamental than her ethnic identity, which is socially constructed through interaction with me as a researcher and appears important in the particular ‘moment’ that I play my part in the conversation.

Moon Ro and Fredonia (2010: 3) use Gee’s framework of identity construction to study identities of young Korean English language learners and argue that there are two ways in which imposed identities can be explored during the process of identity construction (Gee, 2000). They proposed that:

> *‘First, the identities imposed on individuals by others are consistent with the identities achieved by the individuals; as long as individuals talk and behave in the ways expected of them, identities are maintained. Second, when the identities imposed on*

individuals by others are inconsistent with the identities achieved by individuals, these fragmented facets of identities must undergo reconstruction.'

(Moon, Ro and Fredonia, 2010: 3)

In other words, there could be some conflict between the identities individuals want to act on and identities imposed by people. In this section, imposed identities are discussed, and their influences on individuals' daily life are outlined. In the next section, how assumed identities work in the processes of identity development will be discussed.

5.3 Negotiation of identifies

In the last section, some examples of imposed identities of the participants and how they contribute to the process of constructing people's identities have been analysed. It is important to understand that identity positioning is usually contested and negotiated by the individual and the assumption of others through languages (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 249). This section looks at how participants in this study negotiated varied identity positions. Participants negotiate their identities in many ways in classrooms. According to Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003: 20), negotiation of identities is 'an interplay between reflective positioning, i.e. self–representation, and interactive positioning, whereby others attempt to position or reposition particular individuals or groups'. For example, in the language classroom, students may act differently from the expectations imposed by the teacher. The following extract is an example to illustrate this difference observed in the complementary school.

Extract 5.5: Observational fieldnote, Context A, 02 /10/2010

T: 昨天是什么节日？ <What festival was yesterday? > (Students are quiet for a while. Finally one student attempted an answer.) S6: 端午节？ <The dragon boat festival? > (The teacher laughs)

T: 还在端午节呢？都十月份了，新中国是那一年成立的？要被笑了。
<You’re still in the season of the dragon boat festival? It’s already October now. What is the year that New China became independent? You are going to get laughed at if you don’t know this.>
S6: 1949.
(She seems to be the only student who knows the answer)
T: 哪天？
<Which date?>
Students keep quiet, the teacher sighs deeply and informs the class that yesterday was China’s National Day She then talks about the Chinese civil war between the ‘国民党’ <Kuomintang Nationalist Party>and the ‘共产党’ <Communist Party>.

This extract is part of my fieldnote which was taken on the 2nd of October, the day after the National Day of China. In China, National Day is a big event, and people are given seven days holiday, which is as long as the Spring Festival. This is a season of celebration and travelling. However, none of students in the complementary school class was able to provide the correct answer when the teacher asked ‘what festival was yesterday?’. In addition, S6 made a guess that it was the ‘Dragon Boat Festival’, which is in the middle of June. The teacher was surprised, she carried on asking if anybody knew the national day of ‘新中国’ <the New China>, and only S6 knew the answer. The teacher then said they would be laughed at if they did not know the National Day of China. Perhaps she was talking about me because I was the only ‘outsider’ in the classroom and she was afraid I would judge them by this. In this situation, the teacher used the term 新中国 <New China> to indicate the People’s Republic of China after it independence in 1949. This is the term normally used by people from mainland China. She has lived in the UK for 14 years; however, she spent most of her time in China before she got married. The discourse she used here indicated that her experience in China has become a part of her identity mark and she imposes this identity on her students and her own children. In this language context, I participated as a researcher sharing the common ethnic identity; therefore, the teacher said that students might be laughed at by me or people like me.

In this extract, the teacher assumes that students will have certain historical knowledge and national allegiances due to their heritage. This is an example of nationalism, language and ethnicity which are assumed by the teacher to be connected unproblematically. However, the teacher's expectations of this group of children encountered their reaction. Palumbo-Liu argues that:

> *'we expect certain types of behavior from certain people, and these expectations may well persist despite any evidence to the contrary. Indeed, evidence to the contrary may be dismissed as aberrational and kept from view by the predominance of those assumptions.'*
>
> *(Palumbo-Liu, 2000: 767)*

It was assumed and expected that this group of children would have different reactions to the National Day of China because of their Chinese ethnic identities. However, ethnic identity is not necessarily equal to National identity. Therefore some negotiation is going on between the teacher and students in the classroom. These children are all have British national identity, and they have grown up in the UK and received British formal education. They are British, and the results of this encounter actually reinforce their British identity. The following extract will continue to explore the negotiation of understanding of ethnic identities and national identities form this group of students.

Extract 5.6: Observational fieldnote, Context A, 02 /10/2010

T: 你们知道文化大革命吗？ <Who knows about the Chinese Cultural Revolution?>

S10 raises her hand and say: 举斗<Justice>， I don't know much about that. 好像是毛泽东不喜欢那些聪明的人， 把那些聪明的人都打死。<But it seems that 'Mao Ze Dong' doesn't like smart people, he killed the smart people.>

T: 那文化大革命是什么时候结束的？<When did the Cultural Revolution end? >

S10：是不是还有 人举着牌子说: 小平你好？ <Was it when somebody

held up boards that said: Hello Xiao Ping?>

T: 那是什么时候？1989年是不是？多少年？十年动乱是不是？大学被封闭，学生都到街上游行。当时还有上山下乡，毛泽东时期，只要有人写一点对社会不满的话，第二天就被抓了。老师的地位很低下，学生都没有课上，要上山下乡去帮农民种地。人民都很反抗…

<When did that happen? Was it in 1989? How many years ago? There was ten years of civil disorder, wasn't there? Universities were closed. Students all protested. During the time of 'Mao Ze Dong', if people complained about the government, they would be in jail next day. Teachers' social positions were very low. Students had no place to study. They had to go and work in the farms. People were resisting…>

S: What is that relevance of this to the topic?

S14： Why do you always talk about this?

T: 对不起，老师跑题了。在那个年代，他们都过着很艰苦的生活。

<Sorry, Teacher digresses from the main topic. During the period, people were living very difficult lives.>

This extract goes on to illustrate a further example of a clash between different identity positions with teachers assuming the children are ethnically and perhaps nationally Chinese, while this appears challenging to the young people. This lesson is about '相声 [xiàng sheng]', which is a type of traditional Chinese performance of comic dialogue based on Mandarin. The teacher asked students to do the research and prepare a '[xiàng sheng]' to perform at the Christmas party. However, the teacher spends about ten minutes talking about 'The Cultural Revolution' in China. She says that there are quite a lot of books that provide different perspectives on this issue. She suggests that the students borrow some and read them in their spare time. It seems that the students are not really interested in these political topics. S14 complains that the teacher should not talk about these 'dead people' all the time, while the teacher said a lot of people lost their life during that time.

There are three political issues raised in this extract: The Cultural Revolution, 'Hello, Xiaoping!', and the year 1989. Firstly, The Cultural Revolution was 'a decade-long mass movement, unleashed and, at least initially, orchestrated by Mao Zedong and his agents', which started in 1966 and ended in 1976 (Deng and Treiman, 1997: 391). Secondly, the phrase 'Hello Xiaoping' refers to the event in which a group of young students of Beijing University showed their gratitude for the economic development to the top leader of China by unfurling a banner of greeting during the 1984 National Day parade. Thirdly, 1989 is the year in which the Tiananmen Square protests took place. The teacher remembers these important events which happened when she was still living in China, and she seems to hold a negative opinion about them. Palumbo-Liu (2000: 767) argues that:

> *'Identity posits a certain set of actions and behaviors, a presumed set of characteristics and dispositions that are to be reiterated. Identity is manifest in its constancy, in the fact that the person or thing in itself always expresses the contents of its identity by acting in certain ways.'*
>
> *(Palumbo-Liu, 2000: 767)*

Compared with students who are growing up in the UK, the teacher was an 'insider' when these big events happened in China. When the teacher explains these issues to students, she actually mixed these issues and the time they happened. It seems that she did not plan to talk about these topics in this class, and that they just slipped out. For the teacher, these historical issues are important to her since her understanding of China was constructed at that time, and this contributed to her identity development. It does not matter where she lives now. These experiences become a part of her identity mark, and she believes that these historical events are also important to her children and her students. Therefore she imposed these identities on students in the classroom and expected them to have a certain knowledge about this Chinese cultural and historical background.

However, sometimes students actions do not fit well into the identities imposed by teachers. According to Gee (2000:109), they ‘accept, contest, and negotiate’ these imposed identities in the classroom. The following extract is an example from my observational fieldnote about Qian in the Chinese complementary school in Nottingham.

Extract 5.7: Observational Fieldnotes, Context A, 09-10-2010

Group 1: 情，清，倩，靓
捉到，促进，请客，清楚，倩女，靓丽
<These words are written downwards in the left hand corner of the white board.>
The teacher asks Qian: 知道这个字吗？
<Do you know this character?>
Qian: No.
T: Are you sure? 倩，是美好的意思。<‘qiàn’, which means ‘beauty’.> 我的女儿的名字叫靓妮 <My daughter’s name is ‘Liang Ni’>.
Actually, I can see that Qian knows this character. This is because the character is in her Chinese name. She wrote it on the front page of her text book.

In my fieldnote, Qian is a 13 year-old girl whose parents are both Chinese. She looks like those ‘cool girls’ in the school. She does not talk to her other classmates that much, and she is normally late for school, at least she was late the three times that I observed. This extract is a part of the fieldnotes on the activity of new character recognition. The classroom was quite noisy at the time, and the teacher had to maintain classroom discipline by talking in English. She projected several similar looking Chinese characters on the screen and instructed the students to distinguish those characters by making new words. The teacher tried to attract students’ attention, and she asked Qian if she knew the character ‘qiàn’. She probably assumed that Qian would give her a positive answer, because ‘qiàn’ is one of characters of Qian’s name. The teacher also reminded Qian by saying her own daughter’s name, which also includes one of the characters on the screen. However, Qian did not cooperate, she simply said ‘No’, even though her name was written on the cover of her text book. In this example, Qian did not act the way teacher expected to, and her identity, which was assumed by the teacher, did not fit into the classroom activities in the way the teacher expected.

The following extract is also about Qian. She was about 15 minutes late again that afternoon, and the teacher asked me to help her finish reading after she had sat down, because the other students were already in the middle of practising something different. We had a conversation after we finished the task given by the teacher while we waited for the other students to finish their project.

Extract 5.8: Observational fieldnote, Context A, 16/10/2010

WL: Maybe you can make you own notes. Like me, when I started to learn English, I made my own notes about similar words, and reorganised them into categories. When you write it down, practice, you will remember it better. Are you learning other foreign languages?

Qian: Well, I used to learn French and German.

WL: do you like it?

Qian: A little bit. I found it very difficult. It is hard to learn foreign languages.

WL: How about Chinese? Do you speak Chinese at home? 你还是有中国血统，会讲不是更好吗? <You are Chinese ethnically; won’t it be better if you can speak Chinese?>

Qian: I speak it at home. The funny thing is if I speak Chinese, people will assume that I can write it. Normally they’re gonna find out that I can’t. I don’t know Chinese like…

WL: What do you want to do in the future?

Qian: Well, I really want to be a lawyer. I don’t know if I can do that, because all people said it is really hard.

WL: Nothing is easy, trust me!

(We both laugh)

Qian: People said being a lawyer is really hard because…

WL: Just try your best, if you really want to do it.

Qian: I really do... I don't know… my parents really want me to do some professional job, like a lawyer. And I thought ok, I don't really care what you want of me, but I want that for myself.

This extract shows the conversation between Qian and me as a researcher and teaching assistant at the same time in the classroom. We started by talking about language learning, and I shared my experience as an English learner with her and raised the topic about her Chinese learning. In this context, I encouraged Qian to learn Chinese by emphasising her ethnic identity as Chinese. The imposed identity of Qian is reflected and the researcher/teacher assumed that she would pay more attention to learning Chinese. In the second paragraph, Qian told me that she speaks Chinese at home with her family, which means that her Chinese language proficiency has reached a certain level in speaking. However, she thought that it is 'funny' when people 'assume' that she should be able to write Chinese too. Yasuko Kanno (2000: 1) argues that monolinguals often assume that bilinguals can do 'everything' in two languages. Kanno also cites Baker to describe the consequences of such an assumption for identity performance:

> *'Rather than doing everything in both languages, most bilinguals live some aspects of their lives in one language (e.g. schooling) and other aspects in the other language (home and community).'*
>
> *(Baker 1996, cited in Kanno, 2000: 1)*

In the case of Qian, perhaps she does not consider Chinese as the language to be used in school or for communication with her peers, even in the complementary school. Qian reports using different language when she has to act in different identities. Perhaps her reaction of refusing to speak Chinese in the complementary school is the way she tried to negotiate her identity as a teenage girl who does not want to come to study Chinese in Sunday afternoon. Davies and Harré (1990: 48) propose an analytical concept of 'positioning' to indicate how identities are shaped, produced, and negotiated. According to Davies and Harré, positioning is:

> *'the process by which selves are located in conversation as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines. Interactive positioning assumes one individual positioning the other, while reflective positioning is the process of positioning oneself'.*
>
> *(Davies and Harré, 1990: 48)*

The process of positioning identities has been considered as 'largely a conversational phenomenon' (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 249). The extract shows that when Qian has to position herself in the Heritage language classroom, she faces a 'tension between self-chosen identities and others' attempts to position her differently'. Therefore, the further negotiation of identities is required in the process of her identity development.

The following example illustrates how a student (Qian) from the complementary school negotiated with her teacher when she was late for school.

Extract 5.9: Classroom recordings, Context A,16/10/2010

T：Qian下午好！<Good afternoon Qian!>
Qian：下午好！ <Good afternoon!>
T: 换位子了. <We changed the seat>

(The girls sit in front of me)

T: 为什么迟到？ <Why are you late?>
Qian：My home is far away…
T: 我住得比你还远. <I live further than you.>
Qian：But you are teacher.
T: 为什么teacher 都不迟到你却迟到. <How come the teacher is not late but you are late?>
Qian：You have more responsibility…
T: You are not coming here for me, and you keep coming late. If you are in China, you will be considered as very rude.
Qian：But I am not…
T: 你进来的，迟到了，最起码要说：老师对不起，我迟到了！ <You came in, and you are late, at least you should say: sorry teacher, I am late!>
Qian：Sorry, I am late.

This extract shows the conversation of what happened between the teacher and Qian when Qian arrived at school about 15 minutes late. In my fieldnote, Qian walked in the classroom without saying anything to the teacher, and the teacher stopped her in front of the whole class then they had this conversation. The teacher started the conversation by greeting her, and asked the reason why she was late. In this example, both the teacher and Qian have their own identity position, and both of them have expectations of the other. On the one hand, the teacher considers that Qian is coming to the school for her own good, and thus she should be more responsible in her behaviour. In addition, the teacher used the phrase 'if you are in China' to remind Qian's heritage identity and suggests that Qian should respect her as a teacher in the class. In Chinese culture, students are not encouraged to challenge the authority of the teacher, and are required to respect their teacher as they respect their parents. On the other hand, Qian thinks that the teacher should take more responsibility because she is the 'teacher'. The institutional identity of teacher means she is the one who has to teach the students well and who is in charge of the whole class. Within this conversation, the interplay between their self-reflected identities and how they attempt to position each other becomes a point which needed to be negotiated. Eventually, the conversation ended with Qian apologising to the teacher. The power of the institutional identity of the teacher may have had an influence on the process of identities construction. Castells maintains the importance of social power in the process of negotiated identities as follow:

> *'The construction of identities uses building materials from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations. . . . [T]he social construction of identity always takes place in a context marked by power relationships.'*
>
> *(Castells, 1997: 7)*

The issue of power is shown in the example of this extract. However, the effect of the teacher's institutional power should not be ignored. The following extract will be another example to further explain the influence of social power in the classroom.

Extract 5.10: Transcription of observational data, Context A, 16/10/2010

T: Excuse me, Yang Huiyuan. This is your seat from now, (students sigh) You... know why I put it in this way.
Ss: Why? Why? Why? <Students whispering>
T: Listen to me, you will be (...) ... Listen to me, you talk… listen to me, you'll talk in the class when I asked you to talk, you will get the minutes to talk. You don't shout over me, over the others. That is rude. If I ask you questions, put your hands up, and I will ask you to answer. If you don't want to answer, I will point to the person who needs to answer, ok? You will get permission to talk, I don't want you shout over me, over others.
S5: (...) But we are all friends...
T: Yes, you are friends. I know, but all the class least year, you just come and have fun. (...) This class, I don't feel comfortable with the noise (...) You can talk at the break time. If you don't disturb me, interrupt me, I will give you five minutes, for a longer break time, OK? If you want to say something, put your hands up now, then I will let you speak. Otherwise, I will carry on the class...

This extract shows the verbal interaction between teacher and students. Heap (1992) maintains that the speakers' institutional identities within the context normally have a strong influence on the negotiation. For example, the teacher has the right to ignore students or to give orders in the classroom. Before the class started, the teacher placed some stickers on each table with the students' names written on them, she then asked the students to sit on a particular seat. She told me that this action was for maintaining classroom discipline. Students complained for a while, but they finally sat in the seat the teacher had asked them to sit in. This action separated the students who normally whispered together, and the classroom discipline seemed much better after this dislocation. Again, the process of identity negotiation here demonstrates the power of the teacher's institutional identity and the way this power influences classroom interaction. However, this power is not always safe since it may have to face challenges from students in the classroom.

The following extract shows an example of how students challenged the teacher in the classroom in the complementary school.

Extract 5.11: Observational Fieldnotes, Context A, 09-10-2010

The teacher asks S9 to write down '去掉' (remove) on the white board. S9 writes '掉'. This is in the wrong order as he wrote the right part first. The teacher then corrects his mistake. Qian questions the teacher and argues that it is not that important which part comes first. She even challenges the teacher: 'You are not a <qualified> teacher, are you? You just guessed the answer'. Some students echoed Qian's sentiments and the classroom again turns into a 'market'. I heard Qian talking to her friend: I don't understand Chinese food. I don't understand Chinese, OK? The teacher tries very hard to maintain the classroom discipline by speaking in English but with little success. However, a few minutes later, some students of the Beginner class are seen going out to play in the lobby. Qian then shouts, 'It is break time!' and walks out without the teacher's permission… <Even I was surprised at her undisciplined behaviour>. The teacher becomes very angry and stops Qian. She raises her voice and orders the student to get back to her seat. Qian mumbles to herself but unwillingly follows the teacher's instructions. The rest of the class becomes quiet. During the break time, I initiate a conversation with the teacher. I can see that she is upset by the students' actions. She tells me that the only reason she is teaching in the school is because two of her children are studying there. Otherwise, she would have been unwilling to work there as the salary is low and the students are difficult to handle. From the conversation with the teacher, I can see that she regretted that I had to see the students' bad behaviour in the class.

Bernstein (2000, cited in Luk, 2008: 124) introduced a model which summarised the 'multi-perspectives and multi-layeredness' of a person's identities in detail, and argued that identity can be formed by understanding the resources from 'past grand cultural narratives retrospectively or prospectively by responding to cultural, economic and technological change'. The negotiation or awareness of identity becomes stronger and more obvious when people are in the situation of using a different language as the medium of learning a new language or literacy (Gee, 1996). Although Putonghua is not a new language for this group of students, the identities of Qian and other students are reflected through their reaction in the classroom. There are certain orders in which a Chinese character has to be written and students have to remember these orders, otherwise writing will be considered incorrect. However, Qian challenged the teacher when she corrected a student's mistake in the order of writing, and this challenge was supported by the other students, because they think as long as they can write the character, it is not important to remember which stroke comes first. Qian even challenged the teacher's qualifications. In this example, the power of the teacher's institutional identity did not play well in the process of negotiation. In that case, the teacher had to adjust her own identities to maintain the classroom discipline. According to Morgan (2004: 172), teachers' professional and personal identities both 'shape and are shaped by the processes of instruction and interaction that evolve within specific sites of bilingual and second/foreign language education'.

Gee (2000: 102) indicates that people's institutional identities are not natural, or part of the identities of 'who am I'. The power of institutional identity has to be recognised by other members in the group. In other words, it cannot be accomplished by the subject him/herself. Apart from the students, the teacher's identities are also reflected by another member in this context – the researcher. In this fieldnote, I see myself as a researcher to observe the class and understand the participants: 'I' was surprised by Qian'e behaviour; 'I' had a conversation with the teacher; ‘I’ saw the teacher ‘upset’. In this context, the teacher had an opportunity to reflect another identity of hers within the school, that of a mother of two children. In addition, the teacher’s voice as to why she teaches in this school is reflected through the negotiation between her and me. According to Morgan (2004: 175):

> *‘(the) micro-interactions between educators, students and communities are never neutral; in varying degrees, they either reinforce coercive relations of power or collaborative relations of power’.*

The identity negotiation of this teacher does not just happen between her and her students. It also happens within the negotiation between her institutional identity and her social identities as parent, and as a member of the community. The following example will continue to explain the interaction between the teacher and Qian.

Extract 5.12: Classroom recording, Context A, 09-10-2010

T: Qian
Qian: what?
T: Put that down, last time I say it.
Qian: I didn't hear anything
T: 安静一点 <Be quiet!>
Qian: What?
T: Tell you to put it away!
Qian: What do you hear?
T: I don't want to see it, put it down!
Qian: But why don't you want to see it, come on, why does it bother you?
T: You are still holding it!
Qian: I didn’t do anything right now!
T: Put it away, last time, please!
Qian: I don't want to put it away. I am not talking at all.
T: I told you…
Qian: Why?
T: Because it is class time!
Qian: What is wrong with holding it. I am just holding it, I am not doing any at all. Oh my god, should I… waste your own time though.
T: You are wasting the class time. You are really do this to me, don't you?
Qian: I am not doing anything.
T: I already told you to put it away. I’ve told you like ten times.
Qian: Why do I have to do what you tell me!
T: Get out!
Qian: Why?

<the teacher walks to stand next to the door>
T: One, I am counting three. One.
Qian: What are you gonna do?
T: Two.
Qian: What you are gonna do when you count to three?
T: Would you get outside, please?
Qian: What you gonna do when you count to three then?
T: You challenge me again?
<the teacher walk out to the classroom>
Qian: What? You are gonna go outside?
Qian: I just want to know what she is gonna do, just can't wait.
<the teacher brought the headteacher>
S 6: Oh, crap!
Headteacher: 你跟我来一下好吗？ <Could you please come with me?>
Qian: Why? Why?
Head teacher: Come on, come on, come with me.
Qian: I really don't want to go.
Headteacher: Come on, come on, or you want me to call you mom? Your mom is outside.
Headteacher: Come with me.
Qian: Fine
<Then they walk out the door, and the teacher starts the class again>

This conversation happened before the second class began. Qian was playing her musical instrument, the ukulele during the break time, and she was still playing it at a low volume when the teacher began the class. The conversation shows that the teacher was very angry about her behaviour and brought the headteacher to remove her from the class. Complementary schools have been considered as a 'safe place' for these children to learn the heritage language. In this school, students are expected to be learners of Mandarin as heritage language and to understand some Chinese culture. However, the conflicts between the teacher and students show that the classroom sometimes is a social and cultural place where 'power politics and ideological conflicts are in constant interplay' (Kumaravadivelu 1999, cited in Luk 2008:121). While parents and teachers insist on the significance of learning and practising heritage language, emphasising the importance of children's heritage identities, several students in the classes I observed actively resisted coming to school and taking part in lessons by challenging the teacher and breaking the rule in the class. Howard (2003: 6) argues that 'things actually inherited do not become heritage until they are recognised as such'. Students with a Chinese heritage identity cannot be taught or just forced to learn the heritage language or culture; however, it has been 'contested and re–negotiated' by the students and teachers during the process of teaching and learning in the class (Blackledge and Creese, 2010: 178).

Their rejection of the need to attend school, rejection of using Mandarin in the classroom, rejection of writing the Chinese character in the right order, and their behaviour of challenging teachers in the classroom all 'became instances of students negotiating subject positions which contested those imposed by the institution' (Blackledge and Creese, 2010: 178). The reason for this 'rejection' might be multiple. In next extract, some more information can be seen.

Extract 5.13: Classroom recording, Context A, 2011 12 11

WL: 好了，不要讲话了，我真是不想发脾气。你看，本来想说，大家好好的上课不好吗？上课为什么要一定要讲话，要吵来吵去呢？（Alright, stop talking, I really don't want to be angry. Look, why can't we just be having the class quietly and nicely? Why are you so noisy? ）
S5: 我们在讨论。(We are discussing.)
S1: Because I don't like to go to school.
S8: On the Saturday.
S1: Yes, on the Saturday.
WL: I know, I can understand.
Ss: I don't want to go.
Me too.
<Students are talking loudly about their attitude to go to school on Saturday.>
WL: How about me? 我还从伯明翰开车过来呢（I have to drive over from Birmingham）。
S5: You get paid.
S8: You do get paid.
S5: Well, you do get paid. If I got paid, I will come to school every day.

The teacher left for holiday and I took over the class for three weeks. This episode shows the conversation between students and me as their teacher and a researcher at the same time in the classroom. After break time, the students were talking, joking with each other, the classroom was very noisy. I tried to maintain the classroom discipline by talking to them gently and nicely but this did not work. A similar story happened as in teacher Chang's class when I tried to talk to them more seriously. Students complained that they have been made by their parents to come to the school. In addition, they thought teachers should take more responsibility because they get paid. As Luk proposes:

> *'An understanding of how such politics and conflicts come into being requires an understanding of teachers' and students' identities as a dynamic, (re) negotiable, and powerful factor in the process of interaction, which, in turn, affects ways of teaching and learning. '*
>
> *(Luk, 2008:121)*

In this episode, students' heritage identities as Chinese have not been shown. On the contrary, their identities as teenage children who do not want to study on the Saturday afternoon have been overwhelmed by their 'Chinese identities'. The negotiation about who had made more effort and who gained more from the school happened between students and me. From these students' perspective, the reason their teachers come to the school to teach them is for economic benefits. They did not realise the importance of learning the heritage language and culture as their parents expected. In fact, the payment from the school is low, less than ten pounds per hour. Most teachers and staff in the school are parents of students, money is not the main motivation for them. The following two extracts are drawn from the interview with teacher C of this class and the headteacher of the complementary school. The head teacher has been working for the school for free since the first day the school was set up. These next examples will explore children's heritage identities from the perspective of teachers and parents.

Extract 5.14: Interview of the Head Teacher, Context A, 08/01/2011

The Head Teacher: Yes, he was part of the first 10 kids. They are all in their 20s now, my son is actually 22 now. A lot of them are either in the university now or have graduated from university. For the first few years, there was a kind of belief that I wanted to do something for my son and for others. Then actually, 3 years after I sent my son to the Chinese school, one thing that my son said which stayed with me for a long time is he was telling some other people, “my mom was forcing me to go to the Chinese School, but now I want to go to the Chinese School”. For me that was a huge difference that made all my efforts worthwhile. Because if he saw the need and saw that it makes him feel good to go to Chinese School after 3 years, I just had to continue.

The headteacher told me the original reason why she and other parents set up the school is to offer their own children a place to learn and practise their heritage language. Moreover, her son acted like most of the other children in this classroom, holding a negative attitude of coming to the school on Saturday afternoon. However, he changed his mind after he grew up, and appreciated his mother’s effort.

Extract 5.15: Interview of the Teacher C, 15/01/2011

The teacher C: Oh definitely, I think the older ones understand why they’re here, or the younger ones definitely are pushed by their parents like I do. I push my children, they don’t want to, they don’t want to do homework. Parents think they should. (……) I know the war, the tears, and some parents sort of give up. The children kind of left then to understand the culture or the language, how to speak. It’s sad, when they come back, there was this student in his twenties, he told me in his own words ‘I wish my parents had pushed me’. That’s kind of strength that gives me to push for my children. I know for some parents, it’s easy to give up anything. My son, in the morning would go ‘I don’t want to do homework. Do I have to? Why should I?’ I think end of the day, he’ll get something from it although it’s from the classroom. He’ll learn from me, fine. He’s quite happy- he’s got 100 percent dictation today and he folded a little origami frog. You can see his face he’s happy. He wants to be there in school.

This episode is from the interview with teacher Chang. She has a ten year old son and a six year old daughter who also study in this school. The teacher admitted that she is the one to push her children to come to the school every weekend. She insisted that this is for their own good because after all they have Chinese heritage background. Her husband (English) also studies in the elementary level class with her daughter.

Both the teacher and the head teacher insist that it is the right thing to do to make their children study in the complementary school. They think it is parents' responsibility to make the decision for their children when they are too young to understand, and they believe that these children will realise the importance of learning the heritage language. For this group of children, the understanding of their heritage identity is part of the development processes of personal identities. Norton (2000, cited in Pavlenko 2001: 319) maintains that the process of teaching and learning in contexts where 'certain identities may be rendered inaudible', may lead to the negotiation and development of new identities or subject positions. It is because participants sought to gain opportunities to speak for themselves and 'the power to impose reception' (Bourdieu 1977, cited in Pavlenko 2001: 319). The language classroom provided teacher and students opportunities to negotiate their reflective identities and identities imposed or assumed by others. The processes of negotiation are interactive, and new understandings of identity construction emerge during these processes.

The negotiation of identities did not just happen in the classroom between teachers and students. It also happened within the processes of individuals' identity development. The following extract is data collected from a classroom recording in the community centre class in Birmingham **(Context B).** It shows how the teacher negotiates and makes a balance between being a Chinese with traditional Chinese culture and a religious person who believes in the one and only God.

Extract 5.16: Classroom recordings, Context B, 11/11/2010

1. Shang: Some people, they are religious in the Chinese style, not Christian of course. In the old time they don't have that many Christians. They will worship the moon, and they will burn incense, very romantic and emotional moment.

2. Shang: Because I am a Chinese Christian, So, in these festivals, such as Spring festivals, Mid-autumn festival and Dragon boat festival, I always pray for my own people, because they are worshiping fake God, not real God... Anyway, let's carry on.

3. Shang: Some Chinese Christians seeing Chinese dragon as fake God, because people worship it. I don't worship it at all, not even when I was young. I see it as a signal, as a picture, to show the, kind of character of people. They want to be strong. In the history, China has been invaded by different counties, and people want to be strong...

This extract is combined as three paragraphs of the transcript of the same class as an extract in chapter 4. The reason I put them in together here in the same extract is because they are all teacher Shang's words and they are relevant to Shang's negotiation of her own identity in this transnational world. At the beginning of this class, Shang was explaining about some Chinese festivals such as the mid–autumn festival and the spring festival. Some background information needed to be provided here. Traditionally, Chinese people will burn incense and prepare some food and fruits during the mid–autumn festival to worship the moon and celebrate the festival at the same time. In the first paragraph, Shang raised the term of Christian here to distinguish herself from those 'Chinese people' who worship the moon, and she considered such acts of worship as a 'very romantic and emotional moment'. In the second paragraph, she emphasised her identity as a Christian again, but put Chinese in front of it. She also showed her attachment to Chinese people by 'praying' for them because she considered that they are 'worshiping fake God', which is considered inappropriate from her perspective as a Christian who believes in only one God. The third paragraph was recorded when Shang talked about the Chinese dragon; she was explaining the differences between the western dragon and the Chinese Dragon at that time. Again, she considered the Chinese dragon as a 'fake God', and she said she had not worshipped it since she was young.

In this extract, Shang showed her identity as a Christian. We know each other from the conference in London. She offered her help when I told her that I was doing a research project about teaching Mandarin in the UK and would like to visit her class if it were possible. Apart from talking about teaching and learning the language, sometimes we discuss religion. Personally, I do not have any particular religion, but I am willing to know more about my friends and to discover something I do not know. From our talk, I understood that Shang is a sincere and devoted religious person, and that she considers our meeting as a blessing from God, which means I should be thankful to God and not to her for the help she gave me. Shang's belief in religion becomes an important part of her identity construction, which has influenced her teaching in the class. Meanwhile, her ethnic identity as Chinese also contributed to the way she spoke. She was sympathetic to the fact that 'China has been invaded by different counties' and the hope that the Chinese people can be strong. Apart from seeing the dragon as a 'fake God', she also interprets the dragon as the representation of power and strength. The negotiation and compromise of this 'interplay between reflective positioning' as Chinese and Christian becomes an important part of her identity construction (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2003: 20).

5.4 Conclusion

Pavlenko (2001: 319) maintains that language should be viewed as 'symbolic capital and the site of identity construction', language acquisition should be considered as 'language socialization', and language users should be recognised as 'agents whose multiple identities are dynamic and flexible'. This chapter aimed to apply the existing literature on identity in multilingual contexts to data from three school contexts. It focuses on the central research question of identity of teacher and students in the process of language teaching and learning. In particular, it emphasises the understanding of imposed and negotiated identities.

Luk (2008: 130) argues that 'when plurality of identities, differences and alternatives are celebrated, teachers and students representing different forms of discourse have been shown as competing to articulate voices from which tensions and conflicts often arise'. In language learning classrooms, discourse is 'both the means of mediation as well as the object of study' (Luk, 2008: 130). The analysis shows that students' identities are not always fixed in a given conversation. The interactions of identity negotiation became a very important part of the processes to understand 'who they are'. These negotiations enable the students to position themselves in a flexible location which can be embedded in their identities in different contexts. For example, Ying's understandings and acceptance of her multi-ethnic identities have provided her with a broader vision of culture and language. In addition, her ability to proficiently alternate between Chinese and English will enable her to participate in various discourse functions. As Hall maintains,

> *'members of minority groups are not simple inheritors of fixed identities, ethnicities, cultures, and languages but are instead engaged in a continual collective and individual process of making, remaking, and negotiating these elements, thereby constantly constructing dynamic new ethnicities.'*
>
> *(Hall 1988, cited in Leung, Harris, and Rampton 1997: 547)*

In a world where people have different layers of identities, it is worth considering the question of how an individual positions him/herself in different conversations or contexts without becoming confused. In the language classroom, teachers will provide students with opportunities to access to another language, and consider this an additional communicative resource that helps language learners achieve pedagogical goals. However, students' abilities to understand and tolerate their different identities in the classroom will be one of the most important factors to affect the teaching and learning processes. Therefore, it is important to explore how bilinguals practise more than one language in simultaneous conversations. The language usage of bilingual students and the language ecology of the classroom will be profiled in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Data Analysis Ⅲ

Language Ecology of Multilingual Classrooms

6.1 Introduction

This chapter serves to present and analyse data relevant to language ecology across three educational contexts in my study. Van Lier (2004) has argued the importance of studying ecology in educational system contexts:

> *'In our educational systems, language does the educating, language organizes the educational activities, and languages supervise, controls and evaluates the educational process. And language, in a significant sense creates education, perpetuates it, and reproduces it.'*
>
> (van Lier, 2004: 1)

This quotation indicates that it would hardly be possible to accomplish any educational activity without the association of language. It is language that builds a bridge between individuals and the world around them, and it is the language practices of individuals that create ecology of language in educational contexts. Language ecological study considers the social constructions of languages as, shaping environments. In addition, there are some rules and a hierarchy of existing languages in a particular environment, which is related to the bigger society. Haugen (2001: 57) argues that the study of language ecology is actually 'the study of interaction between any given language and its environment'. He further explains the link between the environment and the ecology of language as follows:

> *'The true environment of a language is a society that uses it as one of its codes. Language exists only in the minds of its users, and its only function in relating these users to one another and to nature, i.e. their social and natural environment. Part of its ecology is therefore psychological: its interaction with other language in the minds of bi- and multilingual speakers. Another part of its ecology is sociological: its interaction with the society in which it functions as a medium of communication. '*
>
> *(Haugen, 2001: 57)*

Haugen (1972: 325) considers the environment from both sociological and psychological perspectives. In my study, the investigation of language ecology also is also twofold. One is from a social perspective of the relationship between the language and the bigger social environment. Wang (2008)'s study of the ecology of the Chinese language in the United States has provided a practical theoretical support. The other aspect is from a psychological perspective, to study the language linguistic interactions among participants within these environments. Multilingual practices in the classrooms such as code–switching and translanguaging will be discussed in chapter seven.

Ecological linguistics view language as 'relations between people and the world', and consider language learning as 'a way to relate effectively the people to the world' (Ziglari 2008: 374). Van Lier (2004: 80-105) proposes two fundamental concepts of language learning from an ecological perspective. The first one is 'emergence', which refers to the development of linguistic abilities. The other one is 'affordance', which considers ecology of language learning as the relations between people and the world. The concept of affordance is defined by Van Lier (2000: 252) as: 'a particular property of the environment that is relevant to an active, perceiving organism in that environment'. To be more specific, affordance means:

> *'a relationship between an organism and the environment [which] includes all physical, social and symbolic affordances that provide grounds for activity. The notion of relation permeates all the topics discussed in the book: language, learning, action, curriculum.'*
>
> *(van Lier, 2004: 4)*

Ziglari (2008: 374) echoes that affordance is the central concept of ecological linguistics and interprets it as 'a relationship between organism (learner) and the environment that makes an opportunity for or inhibition of action'. From a sociological perspective, my study focuses on the relationship between the organisms, which refer to participants in language classrooms, and the factors in the bigger environment, for example, the Chinese community, the Hanban, the British council. In addition, the cultural universe of teaching and learning of Mandarin Chinese in the UK which has been currently influenced by the economic and political development of China. In developing the notion of language ecology, Haugen (1972) argued that the ecology of a language is partly psychological, partly sociological, and is determined primarily by the people who learn it, use it, and transmit it to others. This investigation of teaching and learning Mandarin from an ecological perspective is important in this study, it brings together the three contexts to present a picture of how Mandarin are taught and learnt in different contexts in the UK and how they are influenced by the other social powers.

6.2 The Chinese complementary school in Nottingham

After more than six months, I was able to build a good relationship with participants in this school, which included students, some parents, teachers and the headteacher. The following extract is drawn from the interview with the headteacher which shows when the school was built, and how the Chinese community contributed to its establishment.

Extract 6.1: Interview of the head teacher of Context A, 08/01/2011

> LW: First of all, could you please tell me something about the history of school?
>
> H: Basically, I came to Nottingham in 1998 and I became the Chair of the Chinese Student Scholar Association from the summer of 1998. It was around the end of that year that we realised that there was no Chinese School for the children whose background is that they are from China and have Mandarin as their mother tongue. And three of us, Dr. Ke Fei Zhang, Dr. Jing Ping Zheng and me, three of us, decided to try and see if we can do something for the Chinese society and most in particular for our own children.
>
> What we realised is that as always, it's the parents can't teach their own children. So, that's when we started. Three of us, we put effort together and

we put an email to all Chinese students in the Chinese Student Scholar Association and asked if anybody was interested. That was in early 1999 and then we got some good responses, So, we hired a man in the Beeston community centre and formally started 20th of March 1999 with about ten children.

This interview took place in the headteacher's house; she invited me to have dinner with her after we finished school that day, and we had this recorded conversation after dinner. In this extract, the headteacher introduced the history of the school and explained how the school had been founded. She is a single mother with a son. She got her first PhD in China and came to UK in 1998 as a visiting scholar. In order to provide her son with an opportunity to learn and practise his mother tongue which is Mandarin, the headteacher set up this school in association with two other scholars from the University of Nottingham. It should have been called a 'class' rather than 'school' at the beginning, because they had only ten children. However, the school developed year by year, and there are more than two hundred children studying in the school now. This example has much in common with Wang's studies of the role of Chinese in the language ecological system in the US:

> *'numerous factors in the environment shape, enable, or impede the evolution of an ethnic community language in a hosting society; these include the language orientation of the dominant society toward the particular language and the real or perceived need for the language by its speakers and the society.'*
>
> *(Wang 2008: 178)*

These interview data show the close connection between this complementary school and the Chinese society in the Beeston area of Nottingham, especially with the Chinese community of the University of Nottingham. The 'Chinese Student Scholar Association' which the head teacher mentioned in the interview is a spontaneous organisation of Chinese overseas students from mainland China, which has been established in many big cities across the UK. The function of this organisation is to provide overseas Chinese students with opportunities to get together and organise events such as performance of the Spring Festival. The head teacher emphasised the efforts made by this organisation for the school, and, up until now, most of the staff of these schools are scholars from the University of Nottingham. Looking back to the previous quotation of van Lier (2004), the Chinese community, and especially the 'Chinese Student Scholar Association' has become the affordance which created opportunities for Chinese learners in this complementary school. The status and function of Chinese as a heritage community language in the UK has been affected by the Chinese community. Firstly, immigrant parents have come to understand the importance of learning Chinese and in turn Chinese has become more recognised by the 'dominant society' (Wang, 2008: 178).

Apart from taking responsibility for teaching Chinese language and culture, the complementary school is also connected to the society in other ways. It provides a platform for the local Chinese community to organise social activities. What follows is an example of such a role of the school from the same interview, the headteacher carried on explaining the function of the school.

Extract 6.2: Interview of the headteacher, Context A, 08/01/2011

> H: Well, that is one of the things that I have seen in the other Chinese Schools. The school is not just a place for the language; it's a platform for the Chinese language, culture and the community, the communication between the parents and their children. Actually, I know some of the families I've met at Chinese School and their children have become friends because of that, and that is something that I really enjoy.

As we can see from this extract, the headteacher emphasised the social function of this school and considered that as another reason motivating her to work for the school in the last decade. My fieldnote shows that there is a big common room prepared for parents and visitors in the school. Normally, parents are talking and sharing information in this room while their children are having classes. Coffee and tea are provided for free, but there is a jug next to the tea table for anybody who would like to donate some money for the school. The school has a big common playground where parents can also play volleyball or badminton. This example shows that the Chinese community in Nottingham has built up a social environment for the establishment of this complementary school while the complementary school provides the community with a place for social activities. As Portes and Rumbaut argue:

> *'the 'fate' of an ethnic community is closely tied to who their members are; that is, race, ethnicity, national origin, education level, occupation, manner of entry, and the size of the group, to name some examples.'*
>
> *(Portes and Rumbaut, 2001, cited in Wang, 2008: 178)*

There has been a great development of this complementary school within the last ten years. Members have increased from no more than twenty at the beginning to more than two hundred today. Moreover, the teaching setting has changed from one classroom in the shopping centre to the whole building for the school. In addition, the diverse backgrounds of members from various places across China, or even worldwide, have transformed this organisation from a classroom for children from mainly Mandarin speaking families into a language ecology with multiple dialect speakers. The extract below shows the diversity of parents and students in the school. They come from different ethic and language backgrounds, and this diversity affects the language ecology of the school.

Extract 6.3: Interview of the headteacher, Context A, 08/01/2011

> H: The parents, in the beginning, were mainly of the Chinese people coming from Mainland China who stayed here working in companies or in a university. But gradually, especially now, we have very mixed backgrounds. We still have this group of parents; they are those who came from Mainland China and settled here. At the same time we have quite a lot of people from Hong Kong. They are originally from Hong Kong and traditionally they would send their children to learn Cantonese.
>
> However, in recent years, they realised the importance of Mandarin and they started to send their children to our school for Mandarin studies so

> that's another group. Also, in the last few years, we've had a lot of families who are from mixed-race backgrounds – one side, be it the husband or the wife, will be a westerner.
>
> The last group of students will be those who have Chinese connections but are not Chinese anymore, let's say the people from Malaysia, or Singapore, all those Asian countries. Those parents like their children to have a Chinese background.

This extract shows how the school has developed from a small Mandarin community to a diversified organisation. The school was a Mandarin teaching complementary school at the beginning and the majority of parents and students are from mainland China. During the expansion of the last ten years, more and more students and parents have come from different Chinese dialect backgrounds such as Cantonese. For example, it was recorded in my fieldnotes that I met an 'Indian lady' when I was teaching the beginner's class. She can speak perfect Cantonese but not Mandarin. She told me that she had grown up in Hong Kong and just moved to the UK a few years ago. She comes to the school and is giving her two daughters accompany the opportunity to learn Mandarin every Saturday afternoon. After talking with the headteacher, teachers and parents, I understand that the young people in the school are sent by their parents to learn Mandarin for many reasons, for example, the school has a good reputation in the area. There are some experienced teachers working in the school; and the school is run by some scholars from the University of Nottingham and also receives support from the city council and Hanban. However, I learnt through talking with some parents, such as the Indian lady who can speak Cantonese, that the reason they send their children to study Mandarin is because of the political and economic influence of China They consider that knowing Mandarin Chinese will be an advantage for their children. This example provides evidence of how these social factors have been played out in this complementary school. According to Wang:

> *'Immigration laws, political power and relations between the home and host countries, and the socio-cultural and economic impacts of the group as perceived by the dominant society also play important roles.'*
>
> *(Wang, 2008: 178)*

Many community languages try hard to find a position in their host countries. This involves challenges which vary across different ethnic communities. But there are also some opportunities waiting to be explored. Wang (2008:178) argues that such a community can not only 'create a space of its own in the dominant society' to engage in intergenerational transmission of its heritage language and culture, but also explore some new paths to contribute to the language education of host countries by 'pooling the community's resources'. With the development of China, and the support of the Chinese government, the complementary school is not the only context that has been influenced by the impact of globalisation. There are some other educational contexts established in the UK. The community centre Chinese class in Birmingham that I visited is one of these.

6.3 The community centre class in Birmingham

This class is acknowledged by the teacher as a complementary school (class), but is different from the Chinese complementary school in Nottingham since most of students do not have any Chinese heritage background, they are learning Mandarin as a foreign language. The following extract will explain when this school was set up and how it was affected by the dominant society. In addition, it also shows how this class functions as an agency to connect the language learner to the big environment and how it offers affordance of teaching and learning Mandarin in the UK.

Extract 6.4: Interview of Teacher Shang, Context B, 02/12/2010

> WL: As for your students, how did you meet them?
>
> Shang: Basically, I knew them through different classes. I didn't put out any advertisement for them. I just knew them from classes. The original class, we set up – you know in Birmingham University we got a module called Summer Course. It's an 8-week course, after Easter. So, that course, we used the textbook *Chinese For Today*; and um, we started from Lesson 1 of that book, Chapter 1 of *Chinese For Today*. But after 8 weeks, the learners in that group were so keen to learn Chinese and they like learning Mandarin Chinese. But you know, for the open access module in Birmingham University, we've got 21 weeks. Which means it takes 21 weeks for students to finish Level 1 for *Chinese For Today*. Level 2 starts from the 22nd week, basically like that. But in our group, they only study 8 weeks, so it is difficult for them to enrol in the Level 1 or Level 2. So that time we decided we could use the time of the summer holiday to finish 21 weeks of lessons so that they can go to Level 2.
>
> WL: Which year is this in?
> Shang: In 2008. So my original plan was to help them finish 21 weeks of Chinese For Today so they can go back to the Birmingham University to take Level 2 of Open Access Learning.

Teacher Shang is an experienced Chinese Teacher who got her PhD. in Chemical engineering many years ago. Instead of working in the field of her academic profession, Shang has worked in the field of teaching Chinese as a foreign language for years. She told me that this is a job she really wants to do. Apart from this class, she also teaches in the University of Birmingham and a girls' school in Edgbaston. All members of the community class have participated in her classes somewhere else. These organisations in the society become 'affordances' which provide grounds for the establishment of this class.

As we can see from this extract, this class was set up in 2008. The original purpose is to facilitate a group of students from the University of Birmingham to finish the curriculum they cannot finish within the school term. The class is established to meet students' demands. The class used to take place in the students' house in the university, but it is difficult for the family, therefore they rented a classroom in the local community centre. Although there are some students who come and go, the majority of students have known each other well after meeting for two years. The atmosphere of the classroom is warm and relaxed.

Extract 6.5: Interview of Teacher Shang, Context B, 02/12/2010

> WL: I like to come here very much. It's always very warm!
> S: Thank you very much!
> WL: It's really like a family here. Can you talk a bit more about this family? That is interesting. They come as father, mother and siblings. The interaction within this family is really interesting.

This extract shows my impression of this class. Here I am making a point about ecology, but it is also relevant to the point I made in chapter 5 about how researchers make a place a part of constructing contexts. This extract shows the relationship of this language environment, and their acceptance of me as a member of this environment. In the other words, my own speaking also becomes a part of this language ecology.

This class is small, members of this group came from different backgrounds and age groups, but most of them are learning the language with enthusiasm. The father of the family I mentioned in the interview is a member of staff of the University of Birmingham. The following transcripts are an extract of approximately twenty minutes of an audio-recorded group interview of the family made in the classroom after class. 'WL' represents me as a researcher and 'F' means the father of the family.

Extract 6.6: Interview of the family, Context B, 02/06/2011

> WL: Do you mind telling me about your family, for example how old are you? Your nationality? And what do you do?
>
> F: Oh, ok, that is a lot of questions. Well, I was born in Britain, er… 1993, I was in Poland, and I met my wife-to-be, Mazana. My children Davie, who is 14 years old, and Grace 12, was born in Poland. I am a lecturer of Birmingham University, and I teach science, Chemical Biology. We came to UK at the year 2000.

In this extract, the father explains the background information of the family. He was born in Britain and set up his family in Poland. The mother is in her third year of doctoral degree at the moment. Their daughter, Grace is one of Shang's students from her Chinese class in the girls' school. David, her brother, has to join the class because he needs to wait for his family to go home together. They live in a town which is about one hour away by car from where this class usually takes place. The family compose the majority of this class, and they come basically every Thursday after a long day of working or studying. The rest of members of this class change constantly. Apart from the teacher and me, there is another girl from the same school and the same Chinese class as Grace. A young couple aged between twenty-five to thirty work in the library of the University of Birmingham. Katerina is a Greek research student from the University of Birmingham, and John is a retired lecturer also from the University of Birmingham. In addition, there are a few participants who only appear once or twice who I did not have the chance to meet. The teacher told me that this is the normal situation in this class. An ecological approach to language in this classroom requires investigation of not only the languages, but also the speakers of those languages, and their social structures in the environment where the languages are spoken (Blackledge, 2008; Creese and Martin, 2003). In this classroom, Mandarin is the target language. However, due to students' Chinese language proficiency, English is the dominant language in this cultural arena.

This introduction illustrates the multiple backgrounds of students, and it is helpful to explore the nature of interaction in this multilingual environment. The following extract will portray how the class has been built up and how that is related to the university from the family's perspective. The relationship between organism (learners) and the environment will be outlined through 'the ways in which languages are used, and in social actors' attitudes to, and beliefs about, languages' (Blackledge, 2008: 27).

Extract6.7: Interview of the family, Context B, 02/06/2011

WL: How did you know about the class, this class with Mrs. Shang?

M (the mother): Because... it was advertised on the Birmingham university, the e-mail, I think everyone has received the e-mail…This class sort of started from the university class… and, we are willing to continue as a class...

F (the father): The class started at the Birmingham University, and how they continue the class at the Birmingham university… people are split up into groups depending on different teachers…The group wanted to maintain the excellent standard of the teacher...

(We all laughed)

F: So, the group decided to start the class, and we 'FORCED' Mrs. Shang… she would like to escape, but …

(We all laughed)

WL: It is really nice, I personally really like this class. People are really nice here. I feel like I am welcomed here. It feels like a family.
F: I am sure you do, you need our help now…
(We all laughed)

This extract explains how the class has been set up. It also explains how the relationships between languages speakers, relationships between languages and societal factors become affordances that provide grounds for language teaching and learning. As shown in this interview extract, the 'Centre of Modern language of the University of Birmingham' has provided students and staff with some open access courses to learn new foreign languages. These courses are aimed at developing students' ability to use the language for practical communication and to provide students with opportunities to have an insight into the relevant culture. Chinese is one of these languages. The mother of the family, who is a research student from the Biochemical department of the University of Birmingham, explained that the information about the Chinese class is circulated by university e-mail, and they first joined the Chinese class in the university. Van Lier (2004: 4) argues that study of language ecology focuses on 'language as relations between people and the world' and on 'language learning as a way of relating more effectively to people and the world'. In this context, Mandarin as a foreign language becomes the connection of this group of people and the reason this class was set up. Moreover, learning Chinese in this environment can also motivate students to become more interested in other aspects of China such as culture, politics and economy. According to what the father said, this class has been set up on the students' demand. In other words, the existing class results in the perceived need of Chinese in the UK – a developed English speaking country. The next extract will further explain why the father wants to study Chinese, and the relationship between Chinese and his social identity based on the social, political and historical backgrounds.

Extract6.8: Interview of the family, Context B, 02/06/2011

> WL: There are some other schools teaching Cantonese. Do you know Cantonese?
> M: Yes.
> WL: Why did you choose to learn Mandarin instead of Cantonese?
> F: Cantonese? No way.
>
> (We all laughed)
>
> Shang: Too hard, anyway.
> F: We need to go back to the original question where we started. I saw a job advertisement at the university, en… and, one of the requirements of the job was willingness to learn Mandarin. So, we started the class, that enables me to fill 'I am willing to learn Mandarin'.
>
> (All people laugh)
>
> F: Obviously, Cantonese is fine if you'd like to go a Chinese restaurant in the UK. But Mandarin is chosen for a more important reason in term of the economical statues. Therefore it is the language that more (shafted). It is a bit like foreign people learning English. The language business, if you come to Britain, you really want to learn English, because that was that will be…

In this extract, the father told me the original reason he decided to take the Mandarin class is to get a job advertised at the university. This job position requires candidates to at least have the intention to learn Mandarin. In my fieldnote, the father is doing his own work with his laptop most of the time. The teacher also told me that he is not learning Mandarin any more after the open class in the university. The reason he is here now is to keep his family company and to go home together. Therefore, the father did not learn Chinese for his own interest from the beginning. He is doing this with the purpose of developing his career. Moreover, when I asked the family's opinion about another dialect of Chinese – Cantonese, and why they chose Mandarin instead of Cantonese, the father used a funny tone to say 'No way'. In addition, he put Cantonese in the position of a dialect of Chinese which can only be used on casual occasions such in the restaurant. According to Blackledge (2008: 27), 'relationships between languages and their speakers, and languages and societal structures, are subject to their social, political and historical contexts'. The father also confirmed that the reason he chose to learn Mandarin is because of the consideration of its 'economical status'. Hornberger (2003) maintains that the language ecology movement places a practical role in language planning, and the relationship between languages in an ecosystem will reflect their socio-political, economic and cultural environment. Some languages might become 'endangered' without an adequate environmental support for them in relation to other languages in the ecosystem (Blackledge, 2008: 28). In this section, the community class in my study has been investigated and explored from a sociological perspective. The next section will draw attention to the secondary school in London, seeking to explore the relationship between the classes I visited and their social and local environment.

6.4 The secondary school in London

This is the mainstream school I visited and collected data from. I had to make a big effort and wait a long time to get permission to access this school, because of the strict policy on visitors observing classes. With regards the language ecology in this school, I would like to start with two quotes in the booklet I got from the language director.

> *'Tomorrow's school leavers will travel the world, live in different places and work with people from all round the globe'.*
>
> *'Knowing other languages is a distinct advantage in helping people to succeed'.*
>
> *Kingsford (2007)*

These two quotations indicate the attitude and language policy of Kingsford School. The school intends to build its language policy based on the understanding of the globalised world. In particular, bilingualism is considered a big advantage for students' success. Students are encouraged to learn other foreign languages, and Chinese is one of them. Woolard and Schieffelin have argued:

> *'The topic of language ideology is a much needed bridge between linguistic and social theory, because it relates the microculture of communicative action to political economic considerations of power and social inequality, confronting macrosocial constraints on language behavior. It is also a potential means of deepening a sometimes superficial understanding of linguistic form and its cultural variability in political economics studies of discourse.'*
>
> *(Woolard and Schieffelin,1994: 72)*

Understanding of the language ideology of the school is important, because it connects the activities of teaching and learning in the classroom to the bigger social environments. The language ideology of this school has been influenced by its own individual language policy and the ecological factors within and outside school. The quotations from the school booklet show the school's determination to educate students from the principle of the global world and the importance of their workplace in the future. The school believes that knowing one or more foreign languages will become a 'needed bridge' for their students into this globalised world. Therefore, taking into consideration the economic development of China and the influence of Chinese internationally, the teaching and learning of Mandarin has become an outstanding point of this school. The following extract, which is part of my fieldnotes after visiting the school will provide more evidence.

Extract 6.9: Fieldnote, Context C, 24/11/2010

> After observation of two lessons in classes, Mrs. Liu (the director of Chinese language group) brought us to the teacher's common room. We had a group meeting or I would like to say as a group interview with other two visitors. Mrs, Liu is originally from mainland China. She is graduated from the Xi'an Normal University in TEFL. She has been working for the school for more than ten years. The school was founded in 2000, and became a Specialist language college in 2004. It is one of five schools which was chosen to set up Confucius Classroom in 2007.
>
> Mrs. Liu told me that the school has received a lot of support from some international organisations such as Hanban. The Office of Chinese Language Council International provided the school with Chinese language teaching materials and native Chinese speakers teaching assistants. Mandarin course is compulsory for all year seven students. The school intends to provide students with opportunities to 'taste' some new foreign language.
>
> Mrs. Liu told me that the school only allows visitors to visit the school in the morning, because students can behave better in the morning.

This extract summarises some notes of the ethnographic interview with a female Chinese teacher, who is also the director of Chinese language teaching group in this school. The information teacher Liu provided shows the relationship between the school and some other international organisations in the society. The school has built a good relationship with these organisations. Take Hanban for example, it is not just simply providing teaching materials but also helping the school with human resources. The school has a group of teaching assistants who are employed and organised by Hanban. These teachers are either experienced teachers or new university graduates with a language teaching background from Mainland China. Normally, they sign a contract with Hanban, and agree to work abroad for at least one year. Apart from the language policy made by the school leaders, this group of teachers themselves becomes another factor which makes a connection between the language classroom and the larger society.

They brought their life experience, their attitude to language teaching, their political opinions and their cultural elements into the classroom which will have an influence on the teaching and learning. The teaching assistant who I mentioned in Chapter five is one of them.

This extract of fieldnote also shows the language planning of Mandarin in this school which makes the Mandarin course compulsory to all the year seven students. Language planning has been included in the concept of ecology of language (Hornberger, 2002; Blackledge, 2008). Hornberger (2002) maintains that the ecology of language metaphor has influenced a multilingual approach to the schools language planning and policy making. Under this orientation, language diversity becomes significant in the pedagogy and curriculum. The school is trying to build itself as a multilingual school, which is understood by García et al (2006: 14) as 'exert[ing] educational effort that takes into account and builds further on the diversity of languages and literacy practices that children and youth bring to school'. This language ideology had made a significant impact on the teaching and learning in the classroom. Examples will be shown on the recordings from classroom practices in a later section of this chapter.

Blackledge (2008: 29) argues that study of language ecology has drawn attention to 'the social positioning, partiality, contestability, instability and mutability of the ways in which language uses and beliefs are linked to relations of power and political arrangements in societies' (Blackledge, 2005; Heller, 1999; Woolard, 1998). The significance of these social elements can also be seen in my study. The following extract is an episode from my fieldnote, which presents my recordings and understanding of how the political and economic power in the big environment influences people's language ideology and language choice in the school.

Extract 6.10: Fieldnote, Context C, 20/06/2011

After observation, on the way back to the Euston station, I saw two interesting posters in the underground nearby Tower of London. They are big, and they are placed on the wall which people can see from the entrance.

(what is written on the poster 1) **China Is A Friend To The West** China makes a fifth of all the world's goods. It kits out the West's consumers and finances the West's borrowers. China goes out of its way to emphasise that it wants a "peaceful rise". No other great power in history has done that. China is the world's biggest investor in green technology. WHERE DO YOU STAND?	(what is written on the poster 2) **China Is A Threat To The West** China spends about $100 billion on defence, almost three times as much as a decade ago, and nearly twice as much as Britain. China cracked down on minorities in Tibet and Xinjiang and persecuted campaigners like the Nobel laureate, Liu Xiaobo. China's hunger for raw materials is exhausting the earth and bolstering corrupt regimes in the developing world. WHERE DO YOU STAND?

These photos are placed in a very obvious position, and it is difficult to ignore them. As a research student from China, I could not take my eyes away from these while I was waiting for the underground. Therefore I took some photos. The photo of the poster 1 is a little bit vague, because I was shy and somebody was looking at me when I was taking the picture.

Two photos in this extract are posters of 'The Economist', and I took them on the way back from visiting the Kingsford School in London. 'The Economist' is an English world famous weekly newspaper which focuses on international politics and business news and opinion. These two posters display two opposite arguments on the Chinese influence in the West based on the article published in the Economist at the end of June 2011. There are two images of pandas occupying one third of the poster. Apart from the Chinese dragon which is referred to in chapter four of this thesis, the panda is considered as another symbol of China in the modernised world. The two pandas are printed with two different expressions to represent different aspects of China to the Western world. The one printed on poster 1 is a panda with a friendly look, which refers to three points made from the perspective of 'China Is A Friend To The West'. For example, the contributions China has made to the world economy, the effort China has dedicated to the development of green technology, and the friendly diplomatic policy China has pursued. The phrase of 'peaceful rise' is used by the Chinese government to describe her foreign policy. It has a deep root in Confucianism which recognises harmony as its philosophical core. With this principle, China has been committed to its own soft power and has sought harmony within society as well as among other countries. On the poster, a panda with an evil expression represents the negative impression of China in the eyes of the West, such as military threats, human rights abuse and the huge demand for raw materials. As a research student from China, I have discussed these issues with my friends and colleagues from different countries. Based on understanding of and respect for each other, we normally reach a compromise, although we start from different points of view. It was interesting and educational for me, but it is out of range of this thesis and I do not intend to discuss more here.

These two posters show the economic and political influence of China on the western world. They also imply the language ecology of teaching Chinese in foreign countries. Hornberger (2003) maintains that the language ecology movement puts a practical role in language planning, and the relationship between languages in an ecosystem will reflect their socio-political, economic and cultural environments. As a researcher from China, I have been living and studying in the UK for seven years. Most British people I know are from the University or other academic fields, and they are nice and friendly. However, these two photos made me think about how the Western world thinks about China and the teaching of Mandarin, the so called 'Putonghua' - 'the standard Chinese' - in their countries. In addition, for students who are learning Chinese as a foreign language in school, information about China in the public environment, such as these posters, could be affordance in a way of helping them with critical thinking about China and the learning of Chinese language and culture. Heller (2010: 20) argues that the globalised new economy has moved 'from a discourse of rights to a discourse of profit, from the state as protector to the state as facilitator of the producer'. Instead of focusing on the influence of the economy, the focus of language allow us to 'follow social processes across time and space, and to see how agency and structure engage each other under specific political economic conditions' (Heller, 2010: 10).

Moreover, the United Kingdom is a country with diverse ethnic groups. Some languages might become 'endangered' without adequate environmental support for them in relation to other languages in the ecosystem (Blackledge, 2008: 28). The focus on the language with a strong economic and political background is necessary; however, the investment in other minority languages should not be neglected. According to Wang (2008: 179), language educational policies need to be re-evaluated in a comprehensive way in order to build the foreign language capacity for a country to fit into the twenty first century educational paradigm. By doing this, Wang (2008: 179) emphasises an essential principle that takes into account the language needs of all children and of the nation to avoid creating conflicting policies.

The understanding of language ecology from the sociological perspective has been explored through the relationship between research contexts and the powerful structures in society.

The following section will seek to investigate language ecology from a psychological perspective, such as language ideology and language alternations of participants in the language classroom environments.

6.5 Conclusion

So far, the data drawn from three educational contexts in my study are presented and analysed from sociolinguistic perspectives to investigate language ecology of these schools. Language teaching and learning in the classroom are also influenced by both micro-factors, such as pedagogy, and macro-factors, such as the development of the Chinese economy. Studying language from an ecological angle has provided me as a researcher with 'a rich holistic framework' for studying the phenomena of teaching and learning Chinese as a heritage language and a foreign language in three different contexts (Kramsch and Steffensen, 2008: 26). This chapter highlights the crucial role of affordances in the social environment which have strong influences in language teaching and learning in classroom. The emergent natures of switching between languages in classrooms across the contexts have been investigated from their social functions. It brings back into focus language diversity in the educational enterprise. According to Baker:

> *'In the language of ecology, the strongest ecosystems are those that are the most diverse. Diversity is directly related to stability; variety is important for long-term survival. Our success on this planet has been due to an ability to adapt to different kinds of environment over thousands of years. Such ability is born out of diversity. Thus language and cultural diversity maximises chances of human success and adaptability.'*
>
> *(Baker, 2001: 281*)

The value of variability in language education has been emphasised, and the globalised world and the political and economic influence of China have an impact on the development of teaching and learning Chinese in the UK, which will contribute to this variability. However, the realisation of this variability has to be considered in terms of pedagogical practices in the classroom. In other words, language practices and interaction are embedded in the existing linguistic ecological system (Muhlhausler, 1996, 2000). With this in mind, the tolerance of language usage in the classroom is significant. Hornberger (2005: 607) maintains that 'bi/multilinguals' learning is maximised when they are allowed and enabled to draw from all their existing language skills (in two or more languages), rather than being constrained and inhibited from doing so by monolingual instructional assumptions and practices'. In the language classroom, macro-social categories such as gender and ethnicity are not the only way individuals position their identities. The 'sequential contexts of particular instances of interaction' which individuals use to 'accomplish temporary roles' are another approach of their expression of identity (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, cited in Greer 2007: 159). Some scholars argue that multilingual identities of teacher and students should be considered as positive elements, and it is worth exploring bilingual strategies based on ecological perspectives in the language teaching and learning environments (Hornberger, 2002, 2005, 2008; Creese and Blackledge, 2010; Creese and Martin, 2003).

The teaching and learning of Chinese in the three educational contexts is investigated from an ecological perspective in this chapter. It presents a picture of how Chinese – an ancient Asian language has been studied in a Western developed country – the United Kingdom in this 'global age when the world's population is constantly and continuously migrating' (Wang, 2008: 179).

Chapter Seven: Data analysis IV

Multilingual Practices in Bilingual Classrooms

7.1 Introduction

In the previous section, language ecologies of three educational contexts were discussed and related to the influences of power in society. The metaphor of ecology has been applied to discuss language planning, teaching, and learning in multilingual settings. This chapter will be dedicated to investigating micro multilingual practices in the three research contexts. The focuses of this chapter will be 'code-switching' and 'translanguaging' as it happened among teachers and students in the classroom. As argued in chapter 2.4, switches between different languages were considered as negative elements in language classrooms, and some scholars claimed that L2 should be used as much as possible and L1 should not be allowed in the classroom. However, this assumption has been challenged. There are now arguments stating that the use of different languages should be allowed in language classrooms to facilitate language teaching and learning (Creese and Blackledge, 2011; García, 2007). According to Creese and Blackledge (2011: 1197), language is 'a fundamentally social phenomenon, and linguistic practices are not separate from the beliefs and attitudes relating to languages in societies'. They use the term 'flexible' bilingualism to interpret what García refers as 'translanguaging'. As was mentioned in the Literature review chapter, 'translanguaging' means 'multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds'.

Both 'flexible bilingualism' and 'translanguaging' are used to describe the phenomena when bilinguals use language alternation as a strategy to make sense of the social worlds. This argument is based on Gafaranga's view of bilingualism, which maintains that language use is ‘for all practical purposes’ (2005: 288). Translanguaging and flexible bilingualism consider language as a social resource (Heller, 2007a). Li (2011a, 2011b) proposes the notion of ‘translanguaging space’ which emphasises how speakers use languages creatively and critically in the conversation and how they use their social cultural background as resources to contribute to the conversation. As Creese and Blackledge (2011: 1197) maintain, ‘participants’ awareness of ‘language’ or ‘code’ is backgrounded, and ‘signs’ are combined and put to work in the message being negotiated’. Practices in bilingual interaction are considered in terms of speakers’ own code rather than the grammarian’s notion of language (Gumperz, 1982).

García (2009) proposes that becoming bilingual is a dynamic process, and that individuals have different levels of proficiency in different languages at different points in their lives. She speaks of a dynamic bilingualism. She maintains that code-switching is incorporated into translanguaging. According to García (2008), and García and Sylvan (2011), translanguaging includes code-switching but goes beyond it. Because it refers to ‘the process in which bilingual students make sense and perform bilingually in the myriad ways of classrooms’ (García and Sylvan 2011: 389). Garcia retention of code switching in her model of translanguaging is important as it suggest that at times a focus on the code is still useful and relevant in describing social practice. In my study this is useful because I argue that the empirical data at times pointed more successfully to a translanguaging analysis while at other times data pointed more productively to a code-switching analysis. This distinction is made around proficiency.

In my study, participants from the three educational contexts used English and Mandarin along with other languages such as Cantonese, to negotiate messages in their school life. However, the ways in which individuals switch between languages are different in these three contexts, due to their different linguistic proficiency. Translanguaging happened more frequently and easily in the Chinese complementary school, where students have a higher linguistic proficiency in both English and Chinese and the social context approved of such flexible bilingualism. In the other two contexts, where students were trying to learn Chinese as a foreign language, switches between languages were more fixed and lent themselves to a code-switching analysis. Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012) also note that proficiency is a factor in the pedagogic use of translanguaging. While like Creese and Blackledge, they acknowledge that code switching comes from a linguistic paradigm while translanguaging comes from a sociolinguistic and ecological paradigm, they argue that as a pedagogy, translanguaging is more suitable for those who are more proficient than those who are not.

This thesis is not aiming to make a distinction between code-switching and translanguaging. However, in the processes of data analysis, evidence shows that tralsnaguaging is more suitable to describe high linguistic proficiency students while code-switching is still of value as an analytical term when the teacher is focused on the linguistic separation and differences between languages. That is, the teachers in the community language class and the secondary school classroom retain a pedagogic separation of langauages and endorse a code switching approach to focus their students on the differences between langauges. It is therefore worth retaining a code-switching analysis as this is emically connected to what the teachers do in class. In other words, a code switching analysis allows a focus on the code which be used to explain the teachers social practices in the classroom. Therefore, I will use both code-switching and translanguaging in this chapter to investigate the multilingual practices across the three contexts, and study how participants broke down boundaries between languages and used them as their own code in classroom activities (Creese and Blackledge, 2011). This chapter is divided into three sections according to the three research fields, and each section has more than two examples from classroom recording transcriptions. Analyses will be made within the theoretical framework of code-switching, translanguaging (Garcia, 2007) and translanguaging space (Li, 2011a, 2011b).

7.2 The Chinese complementary school in Nottingham

In the Chinese complementary school, the Chinese language proficiency of bilingual students in the class I visited was generally better than that of the learners in the two other educational contexts. Most students are able to speak Chinese, either Mandarin or other dialects such as Cantonese at home with their families. However, in the context of the complementary school where parents send their children to study Chinese as a heritage language, a contradiction of language ideology between teachers and students emerged frequently in the classroom. On the one hand, Chinese is the language the teachers normally use to conduct classroom contexts, and the students are also required to answer questions in Chinese. On the other hand, English is the language the students prefer and feel confident in communicating with their classmates and teachers. In this condition, switching between languages sometimes occurs in the classroom, and the students use languages as their own ‘code’ to deliver their message in their own way flexibly.

The following extract is an episode from the class in the complementary school I visited. The target of this lesson is to provide students with some Chinese characters, which were written in a way similar to the image of the meaning they present. The teacher started by showing a PowerPoint slide of the twelve Chinese zodiac animals, which people use to represent the rotating cycle of twelve years in China. Students seem interested in this activity. It was recorded in my fieldnote that the whole class was focusing on what the teacher was showing on the screen, and the students were discussing with enthusiasms. For example, the picture in this extract is the Chinese character of snake 蛇[shé] <snake>, and it was made up shaped like the body of a snake. In this extract, Teacher C represents the teacher Chang of this class, Ss represent students, Tom is an eleven years old boy, S10 is a twelve-year-old girl and Ying is the eleven year old girl whose name has already appeared in the previous chapters.

Extract 7.1: Classroom recording, Context A, 15/01/2011

1. Teacher C: 蛇字，你看那个 ‘虫’ <The character of snake, look at the character of ‘insect’ on the left> ...那一点，横撇竖弯，每个笔画 <That dot, those strokes>...对不对<Right>?
   (The teacher was explaining strokes of this character to students)
2. Ss: Ooooh...
3. Tom: Can you write the words down, so we can see?
4. Teacher C: Can you write? Come on write it down...
5. S10: It’s like ‘白’ <character for ‘white’>, but felt down ...
6. Tom: Why can’t you write... now?
7. Ying: 它的那个...它的那个 ‘撇’…<Its ... its ‘leftfalling stroke’...>
8. Teacher C: 撇横撇, 竖横折横 … <leftfalling and horizontal stroke, vertical and horizontal stroke… >
   (The teacher was explaining the character strokes again)
9. Ying: and then 一个 ‘横折横’ <a ‘horizontal and vertical stroke >, 就是那个<That is the one>...
10. (Yingwas writing down the strokes in the air with her finger)
11. S 10: This is ‘‘它’<the character of ‘it’>， isn’t it?
12. Teacher C: 它，这是一个 ‘‘它’< It, this is the character of ‘it’> ... Now you can see, 它们两个的相似之处 <you can see their similarities>...你看他每一个字的笔画 <Look at every strokes >...

This extract started with the teacher explaining the strokes of this character to the students in detail in Chinese. In line 3, Tom asked the teacher to write down this character in a normal way in English, but the teacher did not do what he asked, instead, she switched to English to ask Tom if he can write it down, and she was encouraging him to write down this character in front of the whole class. The teacher′s switching between English and Chinese here shows ‘two constructions of bilingualism’ (Creese and Blackledge, 2011: 1201). On the one hand, it indicates the separate ideologies around language teaching. The teacher told me in an interview that she intends to insist on using the heritage language to instruct classroom context and encourage students to answer the questions in Chinese. On the other hand, the teacher used both Chinese and English flexibly to communicate with students and organise the teaching and learning process in this extract. This phenomenon is common in the complementary school because students do not always cooperate with their teacher’s insistence on the heritage language. Therefore sometimes the teacher had to follow students to use English to negotiate with them. In the study of flexible bilingualism, the speaker is the essential focus of analysis. According to Creese and Blackledge (2011: 1197) flexible bilingualism:

> *‘... stresses individual agency and understands language use as predicated on using all available signs (themselves socially constituted) in the performance of different social subjectivities.’*

In this case, the teacher changed her position from separate language teaching, when she insisted Chinese should be the language everybody used in the classroom, to the position of flexible bilingual teaching where she used both English and Chinese as her own ‘code’ to maintain the classroom process.

In line 5, S 10 expresses her own opinion about this picture. She thought that this picture looks like the Chinese character ‘白 [bɑ́i] <white>’ but in a falling position. In line 10, she realised that it is actually the character of ‘‘它 [tā]’ in the picture. In both of these sentences, she used English as the main structure of her speaking, and each sentence contained a Chinese character which she used to describe the picture. García (2008: 32) maintains that ‘language is not fixed codes by themselves; they are fluid codes framed within social practices’. S 10 used all available signs to maintain her performance here. Both English and Chinese are her own ‘code’ to express her understanding of this picture. Similar examples can be found in Ying’s speech in line 7 and line 9. In line 7, Ying responded to the teacher in Chinese, she initiated a description of the strokes of this character in Chinese to stress the ‘leftfalling stroke’. In line 9, Ying switched to English conjunctions and then repeated the combination of last three strokes that the teacher had mentioned in the previous sentence. In her speech, Ying as the ‘agency of individuals in a school community’ is ‘using, creating and interpreting signs to communicate to multilingual audiences’ – her teacher and classmates in the classroom (Creese and Blackledge, 2011: 1197). Whether the conversation is mainly in Chinese or mainly in English is no longer important here. Ying broke down boundaries between English and Chinese, and used these linguistic recourses in her performance of classroom content description. All participants in this extract used both English and Chinese as their own code to interpret and explain their ideas. This phenomenon happens very often in the complementary school context, and it seems helpful to engage students in the classroom activities.

The following extract is drawn from one of the classes I taught. Students were required to stand up and read out some words from their test paper from last week one by one. In the test, students were required to fill the gaps of missing words, in order to remember and distinguish similar characters. In the transcriptions, ‘WL’ represents me as the teacher in the class. Aisha is an eleven-year-old girl, and both of her parents are Chinese working as university lecturers. It is Aisha’s turn to read the character ‘盛’ which has two different pronunciations and meanings. When it is pronounced as [chéng], it is a verb meaning filling up something. When it is pronounced as [shèng], it is an adjective, which has the meaning of ‘flourishing’ and ‘prosperous’. The following extract will show the language alternation used by participants to explain their understanding of this character.

Extract 7.2: Classroom recording, Context A, 04-12-2010

1. Aisha: 盛[chéng], 盛[shèng]… Wait, er… (pause) 盛[chéng]了 <fill it>…
2. WL: 盛[chéng]满<fill up>.
3. Aisha: 盛[chéng]满<fill up>.
4. WL: 盛[chéng]满是什么意思？盛[chéng],跟 盛[shèng]有什么不一样？<What does the word mean? What is the difference between [chéng] and [shèng]? >
5. Richard: It is like…
6. Aisha: er…
7. Ss: It is like…
8. Ying: 盛[chéng], it is like to… 像那个<it is like >…我给你盛[chéng]一碗饭. <I will fill and serve you a bowl of rice>.
9. WL：是动词，对不对？然后茂盛[shèng]的盛[shèng]，形容词。<It is a verb, right? Then the [shèng] of the word flourishing, adjective >.汉字里面有许多一样的字，有不一样的意思。所以我觉得学的时候，要把他们放在一起， 是很有用的。<There are many Chinese characters which have different meanings. I think it is helpful to put them together and compare them when we learn. >

Aisha initiated this conversation by reading out both pronunciations of this character because she was not sure which one was the right pronunciation in this situation. In line 4, I asked the students if they could distinguish the two different pronunciations and meanings of this character. Students were whispering but nobody provided a proper full answer until Ying raised her voice. She started by reading out the character with the right pronunciation in this context, and switched to English phrase ‘it is like to’. She was trying to explain how to use this character in this condition in English at first, but paused for a few seconds and switched to the same phrase in Chinese. In this situation, switching between languages is not the main focus, the speaker – Ying’s preference of languages in this situation becomes the centre of this language alternation. In this example, Ying broke the boundaries between Chinese and

English, using them as resources to express her understandings about new content in the classroom context. The language alternation here is ‘fundamentally about intertextuality, the ways that talking in the here-and-now draw meanings from past instances of talk’ (Bailey, 2007:272). There is a ‘translanguaging space’ Ying constructed here, which allowed her to use her language resources creatively and answer the teacher’s question critically.

In this extract, I took the position as a teacher and a researcher at the same time. I spoke mostly in Chinese while I was teaching. One reason is that I felt much more comfortable using Chinese, as I am not a native English speaker and I was trying to avoid making mistakes in front of my students. Another reason is that I was holding the position of separate language teaching and learning. As Creese and Blackledge (2011: 1197) maintain, complementary schools ʻexist in relation to, in response to, and perhaps even in spite of, a strongly felt public discourse of monolingualism and homogeneity in the multilingual, heterogeneous stateʼ. The relations between ʻlanguageʼ and ʻideologyʼ in the classroom have been influenced by the original function of this school, which is to maintain Chinese heritage language and identities. I thought these students should be able to speak and write Chinese properly, because they were from Chinese heritage families. Therefore, I encouraged students to use Chinese as much as they could. I believed that it is important for them to practise the heritage language in the classroom since they do not have much opportunity to practice outside the class. I even made a decision to use only Chinese myself in the classroom. However, as argued by Creese and Blackledge (2011: 1201), ʻinstitutional ideology of separate bilingualism was often at odds with the multilingual practices of the teachers, young people and parents, who found ways to neutralise and avoid such stricturesʼ. When I started to listen and analyse the recording of my own lesson, I did speak English sometimes, especially when I needed to maintain classroom discipline and explain classroom content to students. In fact, sometimes I had to use English to engage students in classroom activities.

In the complementary school, the way participants use English and Chinese is not like a ‘bicycle with two balanced wheels’, but more like ‘an all-terrain vehicle’ (García, 2008: 45). They manipulate these languages flexibly ‘in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds’ (García, 2008: 45). According to Atkinson and Heritage (1984: 270), when bilingual speakers need to choose which language to formulate a particular utterance, they will ‘commit themselves to a range of beliefs about themselves, their co-participants and their relationships’. García (2008) uses the term translanguaging to describe these kinds of switching between languages which goes beyond code-switching as well as any other kinds of bilingual language use and bilingual contact. In this extract, Ying uses available linguistic recourse to create a translanguaging space for herself and also for the whole class. This translanguaging space allows Ying to ‘achieve specific communicative effects in daily social interaction’ (Li, 2011a: 1225). According to Li (2011a: 1225), multilingual speakers should be considered as ‘active agents not only reacting to the agentive forces of higher level societal structures but also intentionally constructing their own systems which will in turn be constructive of the broader systems and structures’. In this example, Ying is the active agent who was using translanguaging as a strategy to answer questions from the teacher and provide examples in the classroom. In addition, translanguaging may allow Ying to build her own systems, which in turn allow her to communicate with people more efficiently. The following extract is an episode from the ethnographic interview of Ying before the school time started. In this example, Ying shared her experience about the multilingual practices in her life outside the complementary school with me. This extract will provide an example of how code-switching or translanguaging influence bilinguals like Ying in their life with their own words.

Extract 7.3: Interview of Ying, Context A, 20/ 11 /2010

WL: 那有没有哪种情况，比如说你在北京，在商店里面卖东西，然后，就讲着讲着中文，然后一不留神，不知道怎么表述，英文就出来了，有没有？
<Have you ever experienced such a situation, for example, when you went into a shop in Beijing, you've been speaking in Chinese, but there was something you wanted to describe but you couldn't find the words to say it in Mandarin, then English just come out unconsciously?>
Ying: 唉，有有有，有说过. <Yes, yes, yes, I did that>.
(Yi yi raised her voice and became excited, and we both laugh)

Ying: 我那个，我跟姥姥打电话的时候，有时候，我就哎呀哎呀这个怎么说呀，怎么说。我就说出来就英文，我就还不知道我是说英文呢。姥姥就问我: 'Ying，你说什么？我听不懂'。
<And sometimes, when I talk to my grandmother through phone, and I couldn't find the right words to explain, I just automatically begin speaking in English without even noticing it. Then my grandmother will asked me 'Ying, what did you say? I don't understand'.>
(We both laugh)

Ying: 还有，在学校我也有那样的时候，有时候说出来中文…有的时候…<And sometimes, when I'm in school, I speak Chinese.. Sometimes...>

WL: 在学校也会这样？还会说中文？<Oh, in school? Speak Chinese?>

Ying: 有的时候，就有点那个, 那个，哎呀，我做什么东西，那个，不懂，我就：老师，这是什么意思？老师就说：what do you mean? <Yes, sometimes. When I'm doing something, some work I don't understand, I will just ask my teacher in Chinese "Teacher, what does that mean"? Then the teacher will say 'What do you mean?'>
(We both laugh)

WL: 太酷了。同学是不是都挺开心的？<Ha ha. That is cool. Do your classmates enjoy seeing that? >
(We both laugh)

Ying: Yeah, 然后我也不知道我自己，说什么说错了还是什么。<and I didn't even realise what I did.>.然后我就说 <then I said>，Pardon? I mean, what did I say? 同学就说 <My classmate said>：I think you just put Chinese again.

WL: 就是，下意识的是吗？<So, does it happen unconsciously?>
Ying: 哎，是的。<Err, yes.>

In this interview extract, Ying shared her story about how she switched between Chinese and English in her life outside the class. When I raised the question about switching between languages, Ying showed her interest in the topic and answered in an excited voice. In the interview, Ying provided two examples, one is the case when she switched from Chinese to English when she was talking to her grandmother in China by phone. The reason is that she could not find the proper words to explain what she wanted to say in Chinese. The other example happened in the mainstream school. Ying said she sometimes mixed some Chinese words or sentences with English sentences when she speaks in the classroom. In both examples, Ying switched between Chinese and English unconsciously, she did not realise what she had just done until listeners reminded her of this unusual speech. In her speech, Ying did not consider this switching between languages as an embarrassing or negative thing. Instead, she shared these stories with me as an interesting experience. Both English and Chinese are her own code to make sense in the contexts. Ying is considered to have a 'balanced bilingualism', which was defined by García (2008: 44) as 'a picture of children and adults who are equally competent in two languages in all contexts and with all interlocutors'. In addition, the switching of language itself is meaningful because it indicates Ying's identity as a bilingual who can speak both English and Mandarin fluently (Mesthrie et al, 2000). For example, the interview itself is an example to show how Ying switches between English and Chinese to tell her story in the mainstream school. In this extract, Ying speaks Chinese mainly as I started the conversation in Chinese at the beginning, and as a teacher, I also encouraged her to use Chinese as much as possible. Ying spoke both English and Mandarin flexibly in this interview and used them as resources telling her story about her life.

This extract shows that translanguaging happens naturally in Ying's life. Languages 'serve as a vehicle through which thinking is articulated and transformed into an artifactual form' (Swain, 2006: 97). Translanguaging is used by Ying as a tool to 'gain knowledge, to make sense, to articulate one's thought and to communicate about using language' in her daily life (Li, 2011a: 1223). The translanguaging space she created primarily in her mind and 'the construction of the space is an ongoing, lifelong process' (Li, 2011a: 1223). This example indicates that translanguaging is not just a particular case in the classroom, but a normal phenomenon in Ying's life. As I stated in chapter five, language plays an important role in the processes of individuals' identity development. The use of translanguaging and the attitude of gaining information and knowledge through translanguaging contribute to Ying's identity construction in a long-term way. In terms of the study of translanguaging, García (2008: 60) considers that heritage language learners have advantages which should be focused because they are recognised as 'the fluidity of bilingual language use, the possibilities of bilingual acquisition and the potential of accessing a full range of expressive and communities now and in the future'. As Li (2011a: 1223) argues 'the enhanced contacts between people of diverse backgrounds and traditions provide new opportunities for innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity' in this modernised and routinised world. With this in mind, a tolerant attitude towards multilingual practices should be encouraged in the language classroom and careful consideration of using translanguaging should be embedded in the pedagogical exploration.

7.3 The community centre class in Birmingham

In the community centre class, social relationships between participants are casual and friendly. Instead of their institutional identities as teacher and students, participants in this context are more like a group of friends. My fieldnote shows that language practices taking place in this context also contain these characteristics. Since the linguistic proficiency of students is limited in this class, the multilingual practices which happened among them are simpler than those of the students in the complementary school. According to Lewis, Jones, and Baker (2012a: 644), 'there are boundaries when translanguaging can operate in the classroom that are less to do with age and nothing to do with a specific language, but about a child's dual language competence'. The linguistic proficiency of participants in the context B is not advanced enough to allow them to conduct conversations which contain translanguaging in the way that the students in the Chinese complementary school do. Therefore, I will use the term code-switching here to study the functions of these multilingual practices and the social meaning behind them. Auer (1988) proposed that the conversational analysis should focus on 'Why that now?' and 'What's next?'. This approach uses the speech 'turn' as an analytical unit and focuses on 'the way language is both shaped by earlier interaction and shapes further interaction' (Greer, 2007: 39).

In the class in which the following extract is drawn from, I met Katerina, a friend from university. She is a research student from the Biochemical department, the same as Mary, the mother of the family. Katerina is Greek, and one of the students following Shang from the Chinese class at university. She is interested in learning languages; apart from Chinese, she has also studied Spanish because her boyfriend is Spanish. The following extract shows how the teacher switches between Chinese and English to facilitate classroom pedagogy in this language environment.

Extract 7.4: Classroom recording, Context B, 06/11/2010

1. Katerina: Shang, what is 热 [rè] <hot>？
2. Shang: 热 [rè] <hot> is 'hot'. Where? Which question? Which page and, 第几页< Which page >？ 第几个问题< which question >？ which page and which question?
3. Katerina: I think it is better to have some English because it is all Chinese. The second page of that (hand-outs).
4.Shang: The second page is 一百一十二页 <page one hundred and twelve>， 一百一十二页<page one hundred and twelve>. 第几个问题 < which question >？

5. Katerina: Exercise 5.
6. Shang: 第五个问题 <the fifth question>. 第五个问题<the fifth question>，第几个 <which one>？
7. Katerina: Number 7.
8. Shang: 第七个< Number 7>，第七个<Number 7>…

This extract started by Katerina who asked the teacher what the meaning of 热 [rè] is in English. The switch she made here is discourse-related code switching, which provides ‘cues for the organization of the ongoing interaction’ (Auer, 1984: 12). This sentence was mainly English structure but contains a Chinese character, Katerina used this to raise the question of linguistic knowledge in the classroom, and the Chinese character she brought out here became a key point of the following discussions. In this sentence, code-switching functioned as introducing new content into the conversation. The teacher answered her question and they discussed where this character is located in the exercise. The teacher asked questions in both English and Chinese. These switches worked as teacher′s instruction to maintain the teaching in the classroom, and are considered as discourse-related purpose of code switching, because it is used by the teacher to conduct teaching, and functions as content transmission in the classroom. Meanwhile, these switches could also be considered as participant-related because these numbers of pages are learnt knowledge, and the teacher expected her students to know what she was talking about. According to Cromdal and Aronsson (2000), the distinction between participants-related code-switching and discourse-related code-switching is not always clear-cut, because all the actions are ′procedurally consequential for the ongoing talk-in-interaction′ (Greer, 2007: 171). The phenomenon that the teacher switched between languages provided limited-L2-proficiency students with access to some language content they had learnt before by ‘reformulation across codes, saying the same thing using a different language’ (Merritt et al, 1992: 114). In line 3, instead of answering the question directly, Katerina spoke in English to complain that the hand-out she got was mainly in Chinese which is difficult for her to understand. From line 5 to line 9, the teacher and Katerina continue to discuss the location of the character. The teacher used Chinese to ask the question because she was expecting Katerina to be able to understand what she said. These numbers were also previously learnt knowledge. In this situation, code-switching was used as a part of pedagogy to conduct classroom content.

According to Williams (2002, cited in Lewis, Jones, and Baker, 2012a: 644), 'translanguaging is more appropriate for children who have a reasonably good grasp of both languages, and may not be valuable in a classroom when children are in the early stages of learning and developing their second language'. Although there is some overlap between code-switching and translanguaging, the former concept is more suitable to study less proficient speakers where the 'code' is central, while the latter term is more favourable wen investigating highly proficient speakers. Instead of 'initial teaching of the second language', the use of both languages can be developed as a 'strategy for retaining and developing bilingualism' (Lewis, Jones, and Baker, 2012a: 644). In this extract, the discursive practices about where the character is located became a part of classroom pedagogy. In this case, which language students use most is no longer the primary concern for the teacher. Instead, what she aims to do is to provide students with more input and a better environment for learning. Code-switching, which is planned by the teacher to 'enhance the students' cognitive skills', and 'to clarify or reinforce lesson material' (García, 2009: 299), is considered as 'responsible' code-switching (Lewis, Jones, and Baker, 2012b: 658). Code-switching is used as a 'scaffolding technique' by the teacher in the classroom, and it makes classroom content more comprehensible. Students have less linguistic proficiency in this context, but 'affordance', which is defined by van Lier (2004: 4, also see in van Lier, 2000) as the relationship between language learners and the learning environment 'that signals an opportunity for or inhibition of action', is made. This 'affordance' function is a similar function to translanguaging space. Although students respond mainly in English, the code switching offered the teacher opportunities to build some previously learnt knowledge into the pedagogical practices and allow students to gain knowledge by tolerating the use of a variety of languages. García (2008: 301) argues that this code-switching is helpful to develop individuals' 'metalinguistic understandings' and 'metacognitive awareness'. Bilinguals in this globalised world are required to use languages flexibly. Although the code-switching in this extract is limited to repeating some simple sentences, it functioned as an 'instrument' to develop students L2 along with L1 (García 2008: 301).

The following extract is drawn from the same class as this extract. The teacher and Katerina already have a common recognition of where the character is located, and their conversation moves on to the text in the hand-out. The conversation becomes deeper as related to the character of 热 [rè] <hot>.

Extract 7.5: Classroom recording, Context B, 06/11/2010

1. Katerina: 每瓶<each bottle>，牛奶<milk>…
2. Shang: 每瓶 <each bottle>…
3. Katerina: Yes, that is what I mean.
4. Shang: 每瓶牛奶都不热<each bottle of milk are not hot>. 热[rè] <hot>，hot, not very hot…
5. Katerina: Hot.
6. Shang: Hot, not warm even …
7. Katerina: 热 [rè] <hot>, and cold is…
8. Shang: Hot, 冷 [lěng] <cold> is cold.

This extract started with Katerina reading out two words from the handout and the teacher repeating them again. In line 3, Katerina switched to English to confirm what she meant. In line 4, the teacher read the whole sentence in Chinese and explained it in English. Code-switching in this situation is discourse related and functions as translation and explanation in classroom pedagogy. There are some overlaps when they were negotiating about the content of text. Both the teacher and student repeated the character they discussed previously and switched between Chinese and English to negotiate its meaning. Code-switching here is used by participants to explain the classroom content and make sense of the sentence to communicate with each other effectively in the multilingual classroom.

This extract illustrates how the teacher and Katerina broke down the barriers of Chinese and English to communicate with each other and discuss the classroom content. Considering the language classroom from an ecological perspective, the development of new language should be embedded in existing languages (van Lier, 2008). Code-switching here created an 'affordance' for the teaching and learning in the classroom. 'Affordance' is defined by van Lier (2004: 4, also see in van Lier, 2000) as the relationship between language learners and the learning environment 'that signals an opportunity for or inhibition of action' is made. Although the limitation of students' language proficiency caused the lower level of using L2 in the conversation, an 'affordance' which the teacher and students constructed together through interaction appears.

Classroom pedagogy benefited from code-switching and translanguaging in terms of its tolerant attitude of language usage among participants. Therefore, it is suggested that language learners should be given more freedom of what languages they prefer to use, and classroom pedagogy should not be tied to only one particular language. In the next extract, the conversation between the teacher and Katerina shows how code-switching has been used by the teacher to engage students in classroom activities and provide further L2 input.

Extract 7.6: Classroom recording, Context B, 06/11/2010

1. Shang: Ok, let's go through these questions together. Have you all got your sheets?
(the teacher is walking around and checking students' homework)
2. Shang: No… you didn't do your work.
3. Grace: No.
4. Shang: I didn't do as well, I didn't do, so you don't need to feel bad.
5. Ss: I did mine…
I did mine…

6. Katerina: I didn’t do but I am still good.
7. Shang: Fine.
(All people laughing)
8. Shang: I am really hot, 我很热<I am hot>…let’s go through that question together. Oruinia, 谢谢你<thank you>，非常好<very good>. This question is 非常<very>, is very useful, 非常有用<very useful>.
9. Katerina: I have it here.
10. Shang: Very good. You can put on a sticker, Katerina. Very good, because you work hard.
11. Katerina: thank you, yes. Because all the rest are not.
(All people laughing)

This extract began while the teacher was checking the students’ homework, and Katerina was making fun in the classroom. The temperature in the classroom is warm, and the teacher brings up the Chinese word ‘热 [rè] <hot>’ which they had just discussed before (line 8). She also used some Chinese phrases to express her appreciation to Katerina for her contributions to the class. In this extract, translanguaging is used by the teacher to make sense of the sentence and offer further L2 input. In addition, this extract provides an understanding of the social environment where this class is conducted. It shows the friendly atmosphere in the classroom, and explains that translanguaging here is based on the participants′ holistic understanding of each other. Language should be studied with the understandings of its natural surroundings, such as the relationships between participants, and the situational, cultural, or societal factors which are essential in the study because ′language is not studied as an isolated, self-contained system′ (Kramsch and Steffensen, 2008: 18). Translanguaging here is used by the teacher to conduct classroom content and also to maintain the social communication with this group of students. The teacher used both English and Chinese as linguistic resources and switched between them flexibly to create a translanguaging space in the classroom. The translanguaging space constructed by participants in this class brings the concept of creativity and criticality, which are considered as ‘fundamental but hitherto under-explored dimensions of multilingual practices' (Li, 2011a: 1223). Translanguaging in this extract is used by the teacher creatively to bring what they have just discussed into her conversation. According to Li (2011a: 1223), this is about 'pushing and breaking the boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging'.

The concept of bilingualism goes beyond two monolinguals, in the language classroom, 'language practices of all bilinguals are complex and interrelated; they do not emerge in a linear way' (García and Sylvan, 2011:388). The conversation continued by Katerina shows her exercise paper, which she had just finished with the teacher's help, and the teacher is going to give her a sticker as a prize. These stickers are normally used by the teacher to encourage and reward students who work well in the class. The whole class was cheered up by their conversation. Although the teacher is the one who speaks Chinese in this extract, the translanguaging she uses and her tolerant attitude to Katerina, who uses English in the class, create a leaning environment for all participants. It is considered a scaffolding technique in language classrooms, is the teacher facilitate students with comprehensive L2 input by switching between languages and allowing students to respond in L1. Separate language teaching is no longer suitable in a multilingual class like this in the 21st century, therefore teaching should focus on 'communicating with all students and negotiating challenging academic content with all of them by building on their different language practices, rather than simply promoting and teaching one or more standard languages' (García and Sylvan, 2011: 386).

7.4 The secondary school in London

Multilingual practices also happened frequently in the mainstream school I visited. It occurred when students practiced new phrases, or when the teacher tried to provide classroom input. It also took place when participants negotiated classroom contexts. Similar to the community centre class in Birmingham, students' language proficiency in this context is not as good as those students in the Chinese complementary school, who have a Chinese heritage background and are able to use both English and Chinese fluently for communication. However, this group of students are learning the Chinese language for their GCSE in a classroom within the formal education system. Their motivation and purpose of learning the language are different. There are certain requirements within the curriculum they have to achieve. Participants' multilingual practices in this context contain such marks. The following three extracts in this section are examples from a Chinese class I visited in the secondary school in London. I audio-recorded the whole class and took fieldnotes during the observation. The topic of the unit studied in this class was holiday, and, in particular, the lesson focused on transportation. After some drilling practice, the teacher provided some names of vehicles and asked students to practise expressing in Chinese that they were going to a place by using these means of transport. The first two extracts offer examples which documented a detailed account of how the participants accomplished a target of L2 practices during roughly three minutes of conversation between the teacher and the students in a multilingual classroom. In the transcriptions, T represents the teacher. Phoebe, Sheena, Yabba and S plus number are names of participating students.

Extract7.7: Classroom recording, Context C, 22/06/2011

1. T: Ok guys, let me put the picture on the spot. Phoebe. … How about this? 你去哪<Where are you going>? 2. Phoebe: Beckton. 3. T: 你怎么去 'Beckton'? <How do you go to 'Becton'?>

4. Phoebe: 我骑自行车去 Beckton <I ride a bicycle to Becton>.
5. T: 我骑自行车去 Beckton <I ride a bicycle to Becton>... 好，非常好 <GOOD, very GOOD>. Sheena, give me another one. 你去哪 <Where are you going>?
6. Sheena: 我去电影院 <I am going to the cinema>.
7. T: 电影院，好, 你怎么去电影院 <Cinema, good, how do you go to the cinema>?
8. Sheena: 我坐火车去 <I will take the train >…
9. T: 坐火车，好，好 < Take the train, GOOD, GOOD >.

This extract shows that multilingual practices become the means by which the teacher demonstrated moment-by-moment knowledge of new phrases, not only with simply drilling new phrases, but also expanding those phrases into sentences related to their real life. The conversation started by the teacher drawing students' attention to the photos of a vehicle and asking Phoebe where she is going in Chinese. The English name Phoebe provided in line 2 is the train station near this school, which the teacher as well as most of the students knows about. The teacher carried on asking her to say in Chinese what kind of transportation she would use. Instead of a simple word, Phoebe said the whole sentence and used the phrase which is one of the key contents of this lesson. In this extract, the teacher switched between languages to allow students who have limited L2 proficiency the opportunity to practise classroom content in an artificial language environment. These practices let students translate, explain, or exemplify L2 academic content related to their life experience. For example, what Phoebe and Sheena said to the teacher was what really happened in their life. Drawing on their familiar life experiences may be helpful for them to remember the phrase use, and, furthermore, they will be able to use it again in other contexts. Gibbons (1998: 99) comments on classroom pedagogy that builds on context – embeddedness as 'children's current understanding of a curriculum topic, and their use of familiar 'everyday' language to express this understanding, should be seen as the basis for the development of the unfamiliar registers of school'. The linguistic patterns of what Phoebe and Sheena said are similar following the routine of Language-Focus-IRF (Lin, 1999): the teacher used L2 to initiate the question of ‘where are you going?’ and the students responded in L1/L2, then the teacher gave feedback in L2 or initiated in L2 again until the students responded in L2. In these patterns of classroom discourse, the teacher is trying to facilitate students with L2 input by asking questions and giving feedback.

This extract demonstrated a typical drilling excise in a language classroom of a mainstream school where examination is the most important means for outcome assessment. Code-switching is used by the teacher and students to practise linguistic patterns. This kind of discourse practice allows participants to use both L1 and L2 as resources and interlock their life experience with the language focus of the lesson. Students can practise classroom content via the use of the language-focus-IRF intertwined with the experience of their life. As long as the teacher can ‘check both the quantity and quality’ of switches embedded in the classroom talk, code-switching can be used as a ‘scaffolding technique’ to enhance language learners’ L2 comprehension (Lewis, Jones, and Baker, 2012b: 658). The following extract will continue to illustrate how bilinguals use code-switching to negotiate classroom content and make sense of their conversation in the multilingual classroom.

Extract7.8: Classroom recording, Context C, 22/06/2011

1. T: Right, Peter, 你去哪 <Where are you going>?

2. Peter: 我开车去汽车站 <I will drive to the bus station>.

3. T: 汽车站 <bus station>, ok (paused)… You are driving a car to go to the bus station? Ok. (Students are laughing) … driving a car to go to the bus station (the teacher laughs). Right …

4. T: S1, 你去哪 <Where are you going>?

5. S1: 我, 我，我坐飞机去…<I, I, I will take a plane to… >

6. T: 坐飞机去...<take a plane to... > 好, 你去哪<Ok, where are you going>?

(Paused for a few seconds)

7. T: Taking a plane to go to?

8. S1: Oh, Spain…

9. T: 西班牙 <Spain>. You could have said … (in Chinese, not clear

34:37) thank you.

10. T: S2, 你去哪 <Where are you going>?
11. S2: 我...去中国 <I …go to China>
12. T: I beg your…你再说一遍<say that again>, say that again.
13. S2: 我-走路-去-中国 <I'm – walking – to – China>.
14. T: 走路，走路< walking, walking >…You are walking all the way to China? (Students laughing)

This extract started by Peter answered the teacher's question in a full sentence, which was correct grammatically. However, after a few seconds' pause, the teacher repeated what Peter had said twice in English and the whole class laughed. They perhaps thought that it was a little funny: Peter driving a car to the bus station. The translanguaging the teacher used here serves to bring humour into the conversation; it is the process of teacher and students making sense of and communicating in a multilingual classroom (García, 2008; García and Sylvan, 2011). From line 4 to line 9, the teacher and S1 were negotiating how to say taking a plane to Spain in Chinese. When S1 stopped in the middle of the conversation, the teacher switched to English to explain again and gave him a hint to continue. According to Cummins (2000: 71), 'language and content will be acquired most successfully when students are challenged cognitively but provided with the contextual and linguistic supports or scaffolds required for successful task completion.' Translanguaging here constructed a space for the teacher to instruct classroom content and offered S1 a space to use multiple discursive practices to finish the sentence. In these multilingual practices, translanguaging is used by the teacher as a pedagogic tool that supports learning in the present but evokes what students had learnt in the past.

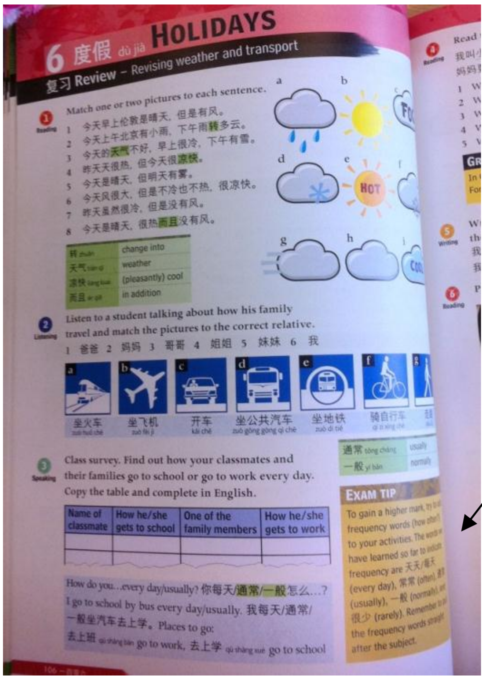
This extract also shows that translanguaging normally happens when the high linguistic proficiency speaker is involved in the conversation. Although there is not a clear cut between code-switching and translanguaging, the teacher who is sophisticated in both English and

Chinese conducts all the translanguaging in the dialogue in this classroom. The teacher switched to English to ask the question again in line 7 to make sure S1 understood the question and switched to Chinese to repeat what S1 had just said to facilitate L2 input. A similar example can be found in the conversation between the teacher and S2. The teacher uses translanguaging to conduct the classroom activities. The fact that S2 said he is going to China by walking is not only an example of practice for the linguistic pattern, but also brings some humour into the class after being repeated and emphasised by the teacher again in English. Translanguaging becomes a tool for participants to make sense of the linguistic practices and communicate with each other. As García and Sylvan (2011) argue, this language alternation is the product of participants' border thinking and knowledge from their real life. These multilingual practices go beyond IRF patterns by focusing on 'impromptu, and momentary actions and performances' of the teacher and students. A translanguaging space established here allows students to bring their own knowledge and use available linguistic resources creatively and critically in the classroom (Li 2011a: 1223).

In this transnational and globalised world, people are no longer tied to one place geographically. Therefore multilingualism should also be seen as going beyond the geographical boundary (Li 2011a). In this extract, the construction of translanguaging space allows students to bring their geographical knowledge into the language classroom. Relating to the principle of language policy in this school, which is already shown in chapter six, the school encourages students to travel around the world and considers knowing other languages as one of the keys that can help them to succeed in their career. In the multilingual classroom, the use of translanguaging and the establishment of translanguaging space is not only helpful for students to learn the target language creatively and critically but also contributes to their on-going, lifelong identity development, helping them to position themselves in this globalised world.

In the mainstream school, classroom pedagogy has to connect to examinations such as GCSE. In the following example, the teacher is trying to draw the students' attention to the exam tip which is printed in the right-hand corner of the text book.

Extract 7.9: Fieldnotes, Context C, 22/06/2011.



The teacher was asking students to look at the EXAM TIP in the right corner of this page (the yellow box):

EXAM TIP

To gain a higher mark, try to add frequency words (how often?) to your activities. The words we have learned so far indicate frequency are 天天/每天（every day），常常（often），通常（usually），一般（normally），很少 (rarely). Remember to put the frequency words straight after the subject.

After some drilling practices, the teacher tried to highlight the exam tip on frequency words by asking students 'what is missing in these sentences'? He wanted a student to point out frequency words, and he was trying to hint to them by voicing examples of sentences and providing pauses at the position where frequency words are to be inserted.

However, his elicitations did not work and he finally resorted to pointing out the exact number (in Chinese). Then he asked Peter to read out the EXAM TIP in front of the whole class. The teacher repeated almost every frequency words Peter read, and sometimes explained further by providing examples in English. Most of students carefully listened to what the teacher said, and the girl sitting next to me was taking notes.

This extract is taken from my fieldnote, the picture on the left is the photo of text book I took from the observation which the teacher and students were working on. The exam tip in the box is the exact text printed in the yellow box in this page. The frequency words are written in both simplified Chinese and English. I present it here as background information of the following transcription. In the following extract, Peter was reading out the exam tip, and other students were involved in the conversation while he was reading.

Extract 7.10: Transcription of classroom recording, Context C, 22/06/2011.

1. Peter (boy): To gain a higher, sorry, to gain a higher mark, try to add frequency words，how often? to your activities. The words we have learned so far indicate frequency are 天天<every day>…
2. T: 天天<every day>.
3. Peter: and 每天 <every day>
4. T: 每天<every day>.
5. Peter: Err, every day,
6. S1 (girl): 常常<often>.
7. Peter: 常常<often>，and…err…
(paused)
8. T: Alright, the next one is 通常<usually>.
9. Peter: 通常<usually>…Have we done that one before?
10. T: No, 通常<usually>…. What is the last one?
11. Ss: 一般<normally>.
12. Peter: 一般<normally>.
13. T: 一般<normally>.
14. S2 (girl): one.
15. T: 一般<normally>.
16. Peter: Which is ‘normally’.
17. T: Normally, yes. And …很少<rarely>.
18. Peter: Rarely.
19. T: Rarely.
20. Peter: Remember to put the frequency words straight after the subject.
21. T: Remember to put the frequency words straight after the subject.
22. Peter: So you put ‘train’ and you put ‘often’?
23. T: No. The ‘train’ is not the subject. In this phrase, guys, what’s the subject? ‘I take the bus’. The subject is the person doing the action. So ‘I everyday take the bus’, ‘I often take the bus’, ‘I sometimes’, ‘I rarely’, ‘I normally take the bus’. So what I want you to do is to note down. There are 6 adverbs of frequency there. Note them down quickly. In the yellowy box, note them down. If I could put them right here for you.

The episode started with Peter reading the exam tip word by word slowly in both Chinese and English. The teacher repeated after Peter when he read out Chinese frequency words such as 天天 <everyday> and 每天 <every day >. Participants in language classroom normally have different language abilities and communicative repertoires. In order to enhance the comprehensive input and make sure students understand classroom content, code- switching is used by the teacher to repeat some key words in both L1 and L2 (Lewis, Jones, and Baker, 2012b: 658). These frequency words are important knowledge for the GCSE examination, therefore the teacher always repeats them again and sometimes explains in English to make sure all students understand important key notes. It is also shown in my fieldnote that students are also taking this exam tip seriously by making notes of that. In this extract, code-switching also occurred when Peter was reading out the exam tips. For example, in line 9, Peter switched to English to ask the teacher if they had learned this word before, and in line16, he explained the meaning of the word he read in English. Code-switching here served as a communicative tool for Peter to use both English and Chinese as his own code for multilingual practices in the language classroom. It is difficult to distinguish whether this switching between languages is code-switching or translanguaging, however, an 'affordance' which 'signals an opportunity for or inhibition of action' is made (van Lier 2004: 4). Li (2011a, 2011b) argues that the investigation of translanguaging space needs to go beyond linguistic patterns and focus on the spontaneous and momentary actions and performances of the speaker. A translanguaging space is established here through the moment-by-moment interaction between the teacher and students.

The tolerance of using different languages in the classroom is helpful for students to get more involved into the conversation and encourages them to discuss classroom content. Hornberger (2005: 607) suggested that 'bi/multilinguals' learning is maximised when they are allowed and enabled to utilise all their existing language skills (in two or more languages), rather than being constrained and inhibited from doing so by monolingual instructional assumptions and practices'. In this extract, translanguaging is also used by the teacher to instruct classroom contexts and maintain classroom procedures. For example, at the end of this extract, the teacher used English to answer Peter's question about the usage of frequency words. The teacher provided examples such as 'I everyday take the bus', which is not in the normal English grammatical order, but follows the Chinese grammatical expression. The teacher used this as an example to show the students how to use the frequency words. A translanguaging space is built when the teacher constructed some English words into a sentence, which follows a Chinese grammatical order to indicate the usage of Chinese frequency words. As Li (2011a, 2011b) proposed, translanguaging space allows speakers to learn the target language not only creatively but also critically. In this situation, translanguaging enables the teacher to provide input, correct students' mistakes, lead students to more systematic and insightful study of a linguistic pattern and supervise students' practices in speaking such a pattern.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter investigated participants' multilingual practices across the three educational contexts in my study. Code-switching and traslanguaging occurring among teachers and students are explored based on their moment-by-moment talk-in-interaction. In the language classes which I visited, although the level of participants' linguistic proficiency varied, language alternation happened frequently in all three settings. From the investigations of examples in this chapter, I think it is difficult to draw a line to distinguish between code-switching and translanguaging. However, code-switching is more suitable to describe low linguistic proficiency speakers, while theories of translanguaging are more fixed in the situations which have high linguistic proficiency speakers involved. Having said that, similar to the linguistics proficiency continuum formulated by Hornberger(2008), code-switching and translangauging can also be considered as within a continuum. With the development of speakers' linguistic proficiency, their ability in translanguaging will also develop.

Therefore, code-switching and translanguaging in the language classroom are considered to have a positive impact on classroom pedagogy, They have been used by the teachers in my study as a pedagogical tool to facilitate classroom input and engage students in classroom activities. According to Li (2011a: 1234), 'the consequentiality of translanguaging cannot be underestimated', because it allows speakers to play different roles and make sense of the connectedness with other participants in the environment. In my study, translanguaging and the translanguaging space participants constructed in the classroom allow students to practise linguistic knowledge creatively and critically under teachers' supervision. García and Sylvan (2011: 389) maintain that apart from being 'a way to scaffold instruction and to make sense of learning and language', translanguaging is also 'part of the discursive regimes that students in the 21st century must perform, part of a broad linguistic repertoire that includes, at times, the ability to function in the standardised academic languages required in schools'. Therefore, instead of insisting on the attitude of separate language usage, teaching dynamic bilinguals in multilingual classrooms today should focus on developing their ability to use different languages flexibly, encourage students to negotiate and challenge classroom content by tolerance of language diversity.

Chapter Eight

Discussion and Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The last chapter of this thesis will summarise the findings of the study and discuss the contribution it has made towards research into the fields of teaching and learning Mandarin from a sociolinguistic perspective. In addition, some implications and opportunities future research will be addressed. At the beginning of this thesis, I outlined some research questions which set up the goal of this study. To this end, I would like to restate them here.

1) How do the teachers and students across the three educational contexts understand culture?
2) How can culture and intercultural communication be used as teaching resources in the different language classrooms?
3) How are participants' identities constructed?
4) How do participants use languages to negotiate their identities?
5) What is the language ecology of the three educational contexts?
6) How is multilingualism used as a teaching resource for teaching and learning Mandarin in the three contexts?

With these research questions in mind, I conducted an ethnographic study of teaching and learning of Mandarin in three educational contexts in the United Kingdom. The study drew extensively on ethnographic data such as fieldnotes, interview transcripts and observational data collected from the research sites. Four analytical themes are formulated based on the research questions, and each of them constructed an analysis chapter in this thesis. Findings about different contexts will be discussed under categorises of research questions

8.2 Summary of the findings

How do the teachers and students across the three educational contexts understand culture?

How culture is understood by participants in three contexts and also how the intercultural communication happened among teachers and students in language classrooms is discussed in chapter four. Holliday (1999) proposes that the study of culture should focus on the interactions emerging from the ground among a small-scale group of people. Although 'small culture' is emphasised whenever I refer to culture in this study, most of my participants across the three research fields understand culture from the 'large culture' perspective which is related to nations and ethnicities. In other words, as Holliday (1999) maintains, the reorganisation of 'large culture' cannot be avoided in the study of 'small culture'. However, the understanding and exploration of 'small culture' in different contexts remain significant in this study. The positions of 'Chinese culture' are different in the three contacts.

On the one hand, in the Chinese complementary school, culture is considered as a part of the heritage identities of students, and parents and teachers insist that it is necessary to impose this identity into their life. This assumption is sometimes contested by the students. For example, compared with traditional Chinese festivals such as the spring festival, something they can share with their peers such as Christmas or Halloween is more welcomed. In a culturally diverse society like Britain, young people are exposed to an environment where culture is dynamic. Their understanding of culture is influenced by this environment and they build a small culture or third culture for themselves. However, the position of Chinese culture in the complementary school is significant. The school is trying to maintain Chinese heritage for the community and to establish a cultural affiliation with the younger generation.

Therefore, apart from being the 'fifth skill' of language teaching and learning (Kramsch, 1993), culture also serves as the agent of maintaining the heritage identity for the community.

On the other hand, the position of culture and how the culture has been delivered in the other two educational contexts is different from the Chinese complementary school. Chinese culture in these two contexts takes the position of offering the teaching and learning of the Chinese language with some background information. Students are more like 'tourists' experiencing Chinese culture, or trying to participate in some activities to 'taste' Chinese culture. For example, in the community centre in Birmingham, apart from some Chinese festivals, the teacher tried to teach some Chinese customs, such as drinking hot water in the class, to facilitate students' background knowledge of the foreign language. In the context C where the school has better facilitators and resources, some Chinese extracurricular activities such as Tai Chi and calligraphy are prepared for students to have some experience of Chinese culture.

How can culture and intercultural communication be used as teaching resources in the different language classrooms?

Although the affiliations with Chinese culture are different in these three contexts, all the teachers across the three contexts agree with the principle that 'culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill' (Kramsch, 1993: viii). Cultural elements are used as pedagogical tools to involve students and deliver classroom content. For example, some cultural themes such as the dragon boat festival have been noticed in my study across the three contexts, and it was recorded in the fieldnote that these cultural topics are normally helpful in engaging students in the class.

However, the requirements of cultural awareness are different in these three contexts. In the complementary school, students are required not only to learn Chinese culture but also to establish their sense of heritage ownership towards Chinese culture. Intercultural communication in the Chinese complementary school sometimes occurred among students when they need to make a balance between their heritage culture and the dominant culture. In the community centre class in Birmingham, the teacher delivered the knowledge of Chinese culture by introducing some conversations about the Chinese life style. She also endeavoured to distinguish some contentious terms such as the different meanings of 'dragon' in Chinese culture and European culture. In the secondary school in London, Chinese culture is considered a supplementary part of the curriculum. Some after-class activities are organised for students to have a chance to 'taste' Chinese culture. In terms of classroom pedagogy, although the teacher recognised the importance of cultural awareness, he also agreed that students' proficiency in reading and writing are more important, because they make up sixty percent of the examination scores.

How are participants' identities constructed? How do participants use languages to negotiate their identities?

How do participants use languages to negotiate their identities and how their identities are constructed is discussed in Chapter Five. Data drawn from three educational contexts are analysed in the theoretical framework of 'imposed identity' and 'negotiable identities' (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003). Although there are some interesting examples which emerge from context B and context C, I noticed the issue of identity becoming more eminent and pronounced in the Chinese complementary school. Tensions and conflicts often arise when the teacher and students have different conceptions of each other's identities. Language is used as a tool for the students not only to answer questions and communicate with their peers, but also to contest and negotiate their identity in the classroom. This may be because of the length of the visiting time and the imbalance of the data set collected from the different sites. I spent more than six months in the Chinese complementary school as a researcher and teacher at the same time. My position allowed me to know these young people from different perspectives such as their parents, teachers and friends.

In this transnational and globalised world, individuals' identity is no longer categorised only by their national or heritage identities. Identity development is a dynamic and lifelong process. Apart from the national identities, heritage identities and the cultural identities, the development of individuals' identities is also influenced by a wide range of concepts such as gender, religion and social status. In order to better communicate with young people in the classroom, perhaps a more flexible understanding of their identity and tolerance attitude is needed on the part of the educator.

What is the language ecology of the three educational contexts?

The teaching and learning of Mandarin in the three given environments is discussed from the ecological perspective in Chapter Six. According to Creese and Martin (2003: 161), the investigation of language in society from an ecological perspective requires 'an exploration of the relationship of languages to each other and to the society in which these languages exist'. This relationship includes 'the geographical, socio-economic and cultural conditions in which the speakers of a given language exist, as well as the wider linguistic environment' (Creese and Martin, 2003: 161).The Chinese complementary school was established by some Chinese scholars from the University of Nottingham 15 years ago, and has grown from a classroom with no more than ten children to an educational institute currently having more than one hundred pupils. The function of this school is to provide children from Chinese heritage backgrounds with an opportunity to learn their heritage language and culture. During these years, the school has received some funding and support from the local Chinese community and some organisations such as Hanban and the British Council. Apart from teaching and learning Chinese as a heritage language, the school also functions as an arena for the local Chinese community to communicate with each other, organises some events for traditional Chinese festivals and maintains Chinese heritage. In addition, with the economic and political development of China, more and more children from other Chinese dialects such as Cantonese and Hakka are sent by their parents to learn Mandarin instead of their own family heritage language. Therefore, the development of this school in the past 15 years is not only about size but also diversity.

The community centre class is organized by a Chinese teacher who also teaches Mandarin in the University of Birmingham. Therefore, some of the participants are staff or students from the university. This is a mixed-age class, with students coming from different backgrounds. They are learning Mandarin for various purposes. For example, some of them are learning the language for job opportunities, some of them are learning for personal interest, some of them are encouraged by their parents to learn the language for their future career plans. The teacher established a relaxed and friendly environment for these learners to learn Mandarin as a foreign language in this English dominant country. The existence of this school, to some extent, illustrates the demand for teaching Chinese as a foreign language outside the formal educational system.

The secondary school in London is the first school-based Confucius Institute in the world. Mandarin is one of the required courses for the year seven students in this school. The school has a reputation of promoting the teaching and learning of Mandarin not only to its students but also to other citizens and local communities. When conducting this study, I noticed that the Hanban (the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language) has somehow become involved in all the three contexts and has influenced their development. In the Chinese complementary school, Hanban has provided teaching resources and financial support; the teacher in the community centre class is usually invited to give a lecture in the conference organised by Hanban. in the secondary school in London, the Confucius classroom itself is co-organised by Hanban. Although the three educational contexts in my study are distinct and separate organisations, taken together, they do present vivid pictures of how the development of teaching and learning of Mandarin in this country has been influenced by the power of society.

How is multilingualism used as teaching resources for teaching and learning Mandarin in the three contexts?

Chapter Seven in this thesis turns the focus on the multilingual practices in the classroom. This chapter explored the phenomena of code-switching and translanguaging and how they contribute to classroom pedagogy. According to the data drawn from all three schools, multilingual practices are valued across the three contexts. Teachers used their own multilingual ability as resources to conduct the class in two languages and provide students with authentic linguistic input. However, due to the different linguistic proficiency of the students, the levels of multilingual practices are different in these three contexts. In the Chinese complementary school, although the teacher encourages students to use Chinese as much as possible, translanguaging occurred in the classroom spontaneously. Young multilinguals are able to use Chinese and English as their own codes to communicate with the teacher and peers. These language practices of bilinguals are 'complex and interrelated', and go beyond two autonomous languages. This type of bilingualism is described as 'dynamic bilingualism' (García and Sylvan, 2011) or 'flexible bilingualism' (Creese and Blackledge, 2011).

On the other hand, in context B and context C where Mandarin is taught and learnt as a foreign language, most of the switches between English and Chinese happened in the drilling activities. Apart from some simple conversation such as greeting people, translangauging and code-switching rarely happened in the classroom. However, I would like to argue that if one's linguistic proficiency is considered as being within a continuum (Hornberger, 2008), equally their ability to use translanguaging as a resource to make sense of the social world is considered as having a parallel continuum. Perhaps with the development of their language proficiency, students in the contexts B and C may be able to achieve a higher level of translanguaging and use languages as their own codes for efficient communication. Following what happed in the three contexts in this study, the tolerance of multilingual practices and language diversity in the classroom is considered to have a positive influence in language classrooms.

8.3 Possible limitations of the research

This section attempts to examine the weaknesses in the research process which may challenge the validity of findings in this study. The rationales for accepting these limitations then will be provided.

The first difficulty I faced in this study is the imbalance of my data set across the three educational contexts. I travelled to Beeston almost once a week, and spent more than six months at the Chinese complementary school in a position as both teacher and researcher. By observing classes and communicating with participants, huge amounts of data were collected. In the community centre class in Birmingham, I was able to visit the class eight times. Therefore I was able to communicate with participants and observe what was going on in the classroom. However, compared with the other two contexts, my experience in the secondary school in London was not so lucky. Due to the strict visiting policy, the number of school visits I made did not match my research plan. In addition, there was a technical accident which caused the loss of some interview data making this situation worse. This is considered a limitation, especially for an ethnographic study. However, this is part of my research journey, and it makes this study into ethnographic research not only in three small school contexts, but also in a bigger social environment.

The second limitation of this study is the “lost in translation” issue. According to Jagosh and Boudreau (2009), the problems of equivalency of meaning always emerge during the process of transcribing and translation of collected data in a cross-cultural research. This study also encountered this challenge. The transcribing and translating sometimes come with unclear voice and missing words. Nevertheless, the quality of presented data could be optimised by repeating the recording, and making the transcriptions with the same guidelines and standards.

8.4 Implications and suggestions

While the study has limitations, the findings have some contribution to make to the field of teaching Mandarin worldwide. This section will outline some possible applications to both fields of teaching Mandarin as a foreign language and a heritage language from a sociolinguistic perspective.

It is recognised in this study that cultural elements such as festivals can be used as teaching resources in both fields of heritage language classrooms and foreign language classrooms. However, the small culture in the given environment should be considered when the teaching materials are applied. Classroom pedagogy can be designed based on a consideration of students' age, gender and ethnicity. Students will be more involved in the activities which embed some cultural elements related to their own life. For example, in the Chinese complementary school where heritage culture has been contested by young learners, some assignments such as 'Comparing the Chinese festivals and English festivals' can be given to students. These assignments are something they are familiar with and have the advantage of knowledge on both sides. In context B and context C, where the Chinese language is taught and learnt as a foreign language, perhaps teachers can ask students about what they want to know about China or the Chinese language in advance and embed this information into the classroom pedagogy. To sum up, in terms of cultural awareness in the language classroom, how culture is formulated and delivered is not the most important thing but how the teaching of the target language can benefit from culture is.

Another suggestion I would like to make is the use of translanguaging as pedagogical resources in the language classroom. This argument follows some existing studies (Creese and Blackledge, 2011; Li, 2011a; Li, 2011b). However, it is testified again in this study where a new researcher was working in the field as both teacher and researcher at the same time. I held the position of separate language teaching and learning at the beginning of my research, but I changed my position at the end of this project, because I realized that switching between languages is inevitable, and I witnessed how code-switching and translanguaging are used as pedagogical tools in the classroom. As a product of 'broader thinking', the use of translanguaging can bring knowledge from language alternation of bilinguals (García and Sylvan, 2011: 389). Translanguaging allows students to bring in their existing knowledge and to contribute to the construction of translanguaging space which not only provides them with a tolerance space for multilingual practices, but also influences their lifelong identity development in their mind. It is worth repeating again the importance of language diversity in both the society and the language classroom in this transnational and globalised world. Young language learners need to be equipped with the ability to use different languages flexibly, depending on the particular environment, to fulfil their goals.

8.5 Conclusion

This study portrays an ethnographic study about the teaching of Mandarin as a foreign language and a heritage language in the United Kingdom. There are four analytical points made in this study, and they are related and connected to each other. The study of culture and intercultural communication provides an overview of these contexts within a cultural background, and participants' identities were also explored. The language ecology chapter explained how the power within society influences the teaching and learning of Mandarin in the classroom. The details of multilingual practices is investigated in the last chapter. These four themes together serve to present a picture of teaching Mandarin in the three educational contexts in the UK in detail through the researcher's lens.

According to Phillips and Pugh (2006: 22), 'a holder of a PhD is someone who is recognized as an authority by the appropriate faculty and by fellow academics', and the researcher must have 'a command of what is happening in (his/her) subject so that (he/she) can evaluate the worth of what others are doing'. Instead of seeing this thesis as the end of my research, I prefer to think of it as just a beginning. As a language educator whose first degree is Chinese literature, I prefer to work in the field where I can teach the language to people who want to learn it. However, it does not mean that I will stay away from research. After these years in the academic environment, I believe that the attitude of a researcher will be carried with me throughout my life as a precious experience. In addition, I believe that the position of both teacher and researcher in one individual can be beneficial as each role will complement each other in contributing to the field of education.

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