Identity and interaction in second language acquisition: An investigation of Chinese learners’ use of ‘English’ names

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Abstract

The present research investigated the common practice among Chinese students of adopting 'English' names, and explored its implications on intercultural communication as well as the students' identities. A QUAL-QUAL approach was adopted, using pair discussions (focus groups) and semi-structured interviews as the methods of investigation. The former involved discussions carried out in pairs of either Chinese MA students or native-English EFL tutors, and was aimed at identifying the main parameters by which they analyse the 'appropriateness' of certain 'English' names. The latter focused solely on the Chinese students, in order to gain a deeper insight into the relationship between their names and sense of identity, and to explore possible links between the practice of 'English' name adoption and levels of investment in language learning.

The study has found that there are many similarities in the approaches taken by the Chinese students and native-English tutors, when evaluating the 'appropriateness' of a particular name. Moreover, it was found that the differences are not limited to nationality but can also be a matter of individual opinion. Cultural differences were also noted, however, with regard to the emphasis each group placed on how one is perceived publicly and how one relates to oneself. The Chinese students demonstrated a stronger concern for the former than the native-English tutors, who tended to highlight the role of individual agency in determining 'appropriateness'. This seemed to highlight the sensitivity felt by some of the tutors toward the imposition of cultural norms that 'English' name adoption might imply. In addition, the analysis of the interview data revealed a tension that exists between 'acculturation' and 'preservation' for some of the Chinese students in British Higher Education. The analysis and discussion also served to highlight the complex processes of positioning and identity negotiation which are occurring during intercultural communication.
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<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>First or native language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second or foreign language</td>
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<tr>
<td>RQ</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>TL</td>
<td>Target Language</td>
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<td>2LL</td>
<td>Second Language Learner</td>
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<td>PT</td>
<td>Positioning Theory</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1. Aims

This study investigates a common practice found among Chinese learners of English: the adoption of 'English' names. Although this practice is widespread among many East Asians studying English, a study carried out on the self-naming practices of Chinese, Korean and Japanese students at a Canadian university (Heffernan, 2010) has shown that it is most common among Chinese learners of English. This has also been confirmed by my own observations whilst teaching on pre-sessional courses in British higher education, which attract a large number of Chinese students. The study will focus particularly on the role this practice plays in the construction of learners' social and personal identities, and how these may impact on intercultural communication.

My interest in the topic stems from observing students' unusual name choices and the apparent detachment and flexible attitude they displayed towards their 'English' names. The majority of students arriving on the pre-sessional courses seem to already have an 'English' name which they have used in their English language classrooms at school and/or university. As Heffernan's study (2010) has shown, these names are often given to the students by parents, friends or teachers. While many of them continue to use these names, some decide to adopt a new name upon their arrival in the UK. Moreover, others seem to choose an 'English' name for the first time, and those who choose to continue using their Chinese names are in the minority. There is also a large variety of names adopted by the students, which range from traditional English types such as Roger and Ada to words seldom used by native-speakers such as
Sweet and Sherry. The latter two examples belong to one individual I have taught; this learner had used the name Sweet as her 'English' name since high school, and shortly after her arrival in the UK decided that she would prefer a name which reflected her age and maturity, naming herself Sherry from thereon. This demonstrates how the naming practice is being carried out in a variety of ways, and suggests there are individual differences with regard to the significance placed on the selection of names. Although anecdotally some students have explained that the reasons behind their choices are quite arbitrary, the fact that many wish to change their names or choose not to adopt an 'English' name points to a deeper significance to name-selection. The present study therefore aims to investigate the relationship between learners' name selections and their identity. In addition, by exploring the motivations behind their choices, it is hoped that an insight could be gained into the processes of integration that the learners may be engaging in during their stay in the UK.

The effect of the practice on intercultural communication is another major focus of this study, as the learners' reasons for selecting particular names may not be evident to their interlocutors in social interactions, and could lead to confusion, undesirable impressions or misunderstandings. Thus the study will also consider the potential consequences of second language learners' adoption of 'English' names on their interpersonal relations during their stay in the UK. If name choices do indeed have an impact on one's interactions with others, this must be taken into account when learners are selecting their names. Moreover, informal discussions surrounding the topic seem to point at cultural, as well as individual, differences with regard to the importance placed on names. For example, it has been observed that on the pre-sessional course at the University of [anonymous], many tutors insist on using learners'
given names instead of 'English' names, whilst many of the students prefer to use
'English' names as they feel it is easier for tutors and native-speakers to pronounce
and to remember. Further investigation into such differences in attitude will enrich our
understanding of cultural differences with regard to the 'self', and an awareness of
these could enhance our capacity for intercultural communication. Furthermore, it will
inform existing discussions on linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), enabling a
critical evaluation of the practice of teachers giving 'English' names to Chinese
students. For the purpose of this study, the names adopted by students will be
referred to as 'English' names, in inverted commas, as this encompasses a far greater
variety of names which would not be commonly used by native-speakers.

1.2. Background

The study was carried out at the University of [anonymous], from June to
September 2014, involving staff from the summer pre-sessional course and Chinese
students who are peers of the researcher on the MA TESOL programme. The pre-
sessional programme recruits around 370 students annually, of which about 330 are
Chinese nationals. Majority of the Chinese students are destined to study on
programmes offered by the University's Business School. A relatively small number
(approximately 15-20) of students enrol on the MA TESOL programme, which has a
higher IELTs requirement compared to other degrees, thus generally attracting
students with stronger abilities in English. It is these (latter) students who will be the
subjects of this study. However, it is important to note that they represent a small
minority in the wider context of the University, and this may be reflected in some of
their views and attitudes. Given the large size of the Chinese student cohort in the
Business School, there is an observable tendency for students to remain in their nationality group and few seem to show an interest in 'integrating' into the local student community. One may see the adoption of 'English' names as a sign that the students intend to adapt to their new environment. However, the observed attitude and behaviour suggest the contrary. It is this contrast of expectation and reality which has provoked my interest in investigating the purpose and significance of this naming practice. Moreover, as interpersonal communication is often understood to be the site of subtle and constant negotiations of identities (Davies & Harré, 1990), an exploration of this practice may reveal how they are "play[ing] with the various identities available to them" (Holliday, Hyde & Kullman, 2010: 21) through the adoption of 'English' names.

1.3. Chapter outline

Chapter 2 will review the existing literature and research of relevance to this study and identify the key Research Questions (RQs) to be addressed. In Chapter 3, the research design and methods employed will be explained, detailing the rationale behind the way in which this research has been carried out. A description and analysis of the data will be provided in Chapter 4, focusing on how the findings relate to the study's RQs as well as previous research. Chapter 5 will include a summary of the discussions from earlier sections and aim to draw conclusions with regard to the RQs as well as identify possible directions for further research.
2. Literature review

2.1. Introduction

This project is interdisciplinary in nature, touching upon issues that span across various fields of research including Applied Linguistics, Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology. It relates to some of the major themes of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research, namely motivation theories and the acculturation model, as it explores possible reasons underlying Chinese learners’ adoption of ‘English’ names. Moreover, the subject of names inevitably leads to a discussion of naming practices and the perception of selfhood, which may differ across cultures. In addition, the notion of identity, which has long been a subject of interest in fields such as Psychology and Anthropology, is now gaining increasing attention among applied linguists. This study therefore draws on such existing resources in order to explore the nature of learner identity, whilst bearing in mind the limitations imposed by the given (three month) timescale. This chapter provides a review of the literature found in these various fields, highlighting relevant theories and similar studies. The aim is to identify a research gap in the field, which would enable Research Questions for the present study to be formulated.

2.2. Motivation theory

The study of motivation in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has its origins in the 1970s, when Gardner and Lambert proposed that the various sources of learner motivation could be divided into two main categories of orientation: integrative and instrumental. The former refers to the types of motivation characterised by "a sincere
and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group”, whilst the latter refers to interests deriving from “the practical value and advantages of learning a new language” (Gardner & Lambert, 1972: 132). There has been criticism of this binary distinction, as it does not sufficiently account for the dynamic nature of human psychology and the “multiplicity of internal, social, and contextual factors” (Ushioda & Dornyei, 2012: 398) that underlie our motivations. However, the model has not been entirely discredited; indeed, it continues to offer a useful analytical framework and is still seen as “a powerful predictor of success in formal contexts” (Ellis, 1994: 513). In relation to the present study, it serves as a basis for considering the reasons behind the practice of ‘English’ name adoption among Chinese learners. Some students may select English names as an attempt to integrate into British society, demonstrating integrative motivation; others who choose to maintain their Chinese given name may display instrumental motivation. However, it is expected that this study will also reveal an array of motivating factors, and in order to address these in a comprehensive manner, it will be necessary to adopt the “dynamic systems perspectives” advocated by Ushioda and Dornyei (2012). The study will also explore notions of the “ideal language self” (Dornyei, 2007: 690), to investigate possible links between the ‘English’ names adopted and the attributes that the learners wish to possess. Furthermore, it will aim to reveal how the intentions behind students’ name choices may not necessarily lead to a desired effect. For example, the adoption of traditional English names, whilst possibly motivated by the wish to integrate, could potentially distance the learner from the target language (TL) group because the name is out-dated or considered so British that it is perceived as strange for a foreign national to use such a name.
2.3. Acculturation

Another relevant aspect of SLA research for the current project is found in the acculturation model (Schumann, 1978), which was first developed on the basis of individual differences observed among Hispanophone immigrants learning English in the United States. Schumann argued that the degree to which a learner acculturates to the TL group would determine the extent to which he/she acquires the second language (ibid. 34). According to his theory, second language learners (2LL) tend to adopt one of "three general integration strategies...: assimilation, acculturation or preservation" (1976: 136), depending on the degree of social distance or proximity between them and the TL communities. Social distance can thus either promote or hinder second language acquisition. This notion of strategies adopted by learners to integrate in the TL culture could be applied to the present study, in order to illuminate the motivations behind Chinese students' adoption or non-adoption of 'English' names. A logical starting point would be to investigate whether the adoption of a name represents the desire to acculturate and the maintenance of Chinese names indicates a preference for preservation. As already discussed above, however, a detailed study of this subject is likely to reveal a far more complex blend of motivating factors. Indeed, Schumann suggested that social distance is influenced by a combination of factors, including the size of the 2LL group, their "intended length of residence in the target language area" (ibid.: 138), "enclosure" (Schermerhorn, 1970 cited in Schumann, 1976: 136), cultural congruence or similarity and attitudinal orientation. This study will consider these factors in the analysis of participants' motivations for adopting or not adopting 'English' names. The acculturation model has been criticised failing to clearly indicate how "social factors influence the quality of
contact that learners experience" (Ellis, 2008: 329). Some have also suggested it gives "implicit support to cultural assimilation" (Norton, 1998: 4), arguing that further emphasis on the "inequitable relations of power that exist between second language learners and target language speakers" is needed (ibid.). The latter critique relates to the debate initially launched by Phillipson (1992) on linguistic imperialism, which has since made the issue of power relations a prominent concern in the field of ELT research. The present study will therefore take into account such issues when exploring the subject of name adoption among Chinese learners. However, it must be noted that the model does address the issue of power, and discusses how the political, cultural, technical and economic power of the 2LL and TL communities can influence the acculturation process, as "one group may be either dominant, non-dominant or subordinate" (Schumann, 1976: 136). Moreover, despite these criticisms, it offers many useful insights into the factors influencing the SLA process, and the notion of social distance could be used to enrich the discussion of the potential impact of 'English' name adoption.

2.4. Naming practices in the People's Republic of China

A study of naming practices among Chinese students in the UK requires an understanding of the accepted practices in their home contexts. In her article, Naming practices and the power of words in China, Blum (1997) gives an overview of naming practices in China, particularly focusing on the role played by kinship terms, pronouns and proper names in "the face-to-face interactions of everyday Chinese life" (372). One of the key arguments she puts forward is that there are fundamental differences between the ways identity is conceptualised in Western societies and China:
The tightness of fit that many Westerners often claim to exist (or wish to exist) between their unitary individual essence and name appears more malleable for people in China. (364)

As a result, Chinese "[p]eople are accustomed to being addressed and referred to by an assortment of names, and they do not necessarily retain any of them as their "real" name or as the one that they feel reflects their identity" (365). This raises a pertinent question regarding the practice of 'English' name adoption among Chinese students in the United Kingdom: whether or not they feel that their 'English' names represent their identity or merely constitute one of multiple labels to be used interchangeably. Blum also suggests that the practice of manipulating one's own name is historically widespread among aristocrats and therefore indicates high social status (364). In view of the present research, this would indicate that one of the factors motivating Chinese students' decisions to use an English name could be a transfer of such cultural assumptions and norms. Moreover, Alleton (1993), who has carried out extensive research on the use of proper names in Chinese society, explains the flexibility of naming practices in the PRC, noting that "the names may be made of virtually any words that are not inauspicious" (Alleton, 1993: 21-32, cited in Blum: 365). Thus if the significance and process of naming practices do indeed differ so greatly between the PRC and Western countries such as the United Kingdom, it would not be surprising to find that these cultural and attitudinal differences are reflected in the selection and use of 'English' names by Chinese students.

2.5. Identity in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research

The above discussion of naming practices has already touched on the issue of identity, which has become an object of study relatively recently in the field of SLA research. The article, The Rise of Identity in SLA Research, Post Firth and Wagner (1997) (Block,
2007), provides a comprehensive overview of empirical research linking second
language learning and identity. According to Block, Firth and Wagner's 1997
publication marked the beginning of a rising interest in social theory among SLA
researchers. The link between second language acquisition and one's sense of identity
is thus described:

...when individuals move across geographical and psychological borders, immersing
themselves in new sociocultural environments, they find that their sense of identity is
destabilised and that they enter a period of struggle to reach a balance. (Block, 2007: 864)

Indeed, it is now understood by many that engagement in language learning is an
"investment in a learner's own identity, an identity which is constantly changing across
time and space" (Norton, 2013:51). The period of destabilisation described above has
also been referred to as the third place (Bhabha, 1994; Hall, 1996), in which the past
and present "encounter and transform each other" (Papastergiadis, 2000: 170). Block
also provides an overview of the vast number of approaches that have been taken in
addressing the issue of identity, the first of which emphasises the role of individual
agency. Here, he cites Mathews (2000) on his suggestion that individuals have the
possibility of assuming a range of identities which are available in the cultural
supermarket. The second approach he mentions is one which emphasises the
importance of social structures in placing limitations on individual agency, and the
third emphasises the interrelationship between social interaction and social structures,
suggesting that identity is both "constitutive of and constituted by the social
environment" and therefore "a process as opposed to an essentialized fixed product"
(Block: 866). Finally, he explains how these developments have led to the emergence
of such terms as identification (e.g. Hall, 1995), which encapsulates the processual
nature of identity; subjectivities (Weedon, 1997), which is described as "the conscious
and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her
ways of understanding her relation in the world" (32); and *positioning*, which is a "discursive process whereby people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines" (Davies & Harré, 1999: 37). This notion of positioning has been explored extensively by sociolinguists. The proponents of Positioning Theory (PT) reject the treatment of identity as a fixed entity and "claim that people may resist, negotiate, modify or refuse positions, thus preserving individual agency in identity construction" (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006: 43). Underlying this theory is the assumption that human beings feel consistency to be a "strongly sanctioned normative requirement for being a sensible, accountable, rational, reliable human being" (Edwards & Stokoe, 2004: 502). Positioning Theory (PT) thus "posits an intimate connection between subject positioning (that is, identity) and social power relations" (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006: 43), and therefore could be a useful approach for highlighting the negotiations of power that may be hidden behind the practice of 'English' name adoption.

Another influential work which has brought the issues of belonging and identity to the fore of SLA investigation is *Second language learning as participation and the (re)construction of selves* (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Here, the ‘Participation Metaphor’ (PM) of learning (Sfard, 1998), described "as a process of becoming a member of a certain community" (6), has been applied to the study of SLA. Drawing on examples of first person narratives, Pavlenko and Lantolf highlight the importance of maintaining coherence in one's own narrative and the role played by language in mediating that process, during and after border crossings. The case they put forward is indeed a very compelling one. In particular, the description they provide of the loss of agency experienced by immigrants in the USA whose names had been changed or...
Americanized (e.g. from Ewa and Alina to Eva and Elaine) is very pertinent to the present study. Building on the notion that first person pronouns form part of the indexical system of language (Harré & Gillett, 1994: 106), with which one experiences the world from a unique special and temporal location, Pavlenko and Lantolf highlight the crucial importance of such changes: "the loss of social manifold affiliated with their respective indexical "I's"" means that they have "no way of organizing and making sense of [their] experiences" (2000: 165). According to them, the second language acquisition process is composed of several phases, and the name change constitutes part of an initial phase of loss: they explain that one initially experiences a "loss of one's linguistic identity", "frame of reference and the link between the signifier and the signified" and one's "inner voice" (162-163); this is eventually followed by the "appropriation of others' voices", "emergence of one's own new voice, often in writing first", and "continuous growth 'into' new positions and subjectivities" (163). This model, however, may not be applicable to all second language learners, due to circumstantial differences; the examples provided here relate to successfully acculturated individuals who are long-term residents and professionals in an Anglophone country. The examples they cite of the "shattering loss of their linguistic identity" (164) experienced by authors Eva Hoffman (author of Lost In Translation: A Life in a New Language, 1989) and Helen Yakobson (author of Crossing Borders: From Revolutionary Russia to China to America, 1994) through their name changes could be explained by contextual factors, including the fact that they arrived in the USA as immigrants in mid-20th century and those names were imposed on them. It is therefore questionable whether second language learners living in Britain with the plan to remain for only a year would experience the same processes. The article does, however, raise pertinent questions regarding the effect of language learning on one's
identity. Indeed, it is worth exploring the extent to which the above-mentioned processes could be seen among Chinese students in British higher education with short-term plans to remain in the country, and whether the adoption of ‘English’ names reflects an attempt to negotiate a new indexical system. Based on Pavlenko and Lantolf’s study, moreover, it could also be suggested that the successful acculturation and acquisition of English in part result from this struggle of identity. Thus a close investigation of Chinese students’ motivations for and experience of adopting ‘English’ names may reveal that there is a positive correlation between this practice and successful language acquisition or acculturation.

2.6. Similar studies on ‘English’ name use by non-native speakers

While research into identity of second language learners has been developed since the 1990s, and despite the widespread nature of the practice of learners adopting ‘English’ names, surprisingly little has been written on the subject. It seems, however, that over the past decade there has been a growing interest in the phenomenon, likely prompted by the increasing number of students attending overseas institutions and the move towards internationalisation of higher education. Indeed, the number of students now attending higher education institutions in the United Kingdom has reached 435,000, of which the largest group by far comes from the People’s Republic of China (PRC) at over 78,000 (figures from 2011-12, UKCISA), more than double the number the second largest (Indian) group of international students.

In Canada, there have been studies which investigate the ‘English’ name usage among East Asian university students (Heffernan, 2010) and Korean ESL immigrants in Toronto.
(Kim, 2007). Another study by Tan (2001) focuses on the Englishisation of ethnic-Chinese Singaporeans, providing a description of traditional naming practices in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and highlighting the tendency for "meaning [to] feature highly in the choice of any Chinese-based given name" (47). These studies touch on some issues relevant to the present study, such as the interrelationship between ethnic name maintenance and Positioning Theory:

*the tendency of Korean name maintenance...depends on a person's subjective self-positioning in the target culture (Kim, 122)*

However, most of the studies have relied on survey data and a few on interview data, and none has sufficiently uncovered the nature and implications of this practice. Moreover, the majority have been carried out on immigrants, and not on temporary residents who intend to return to their countries at the end of their one-year degrees. The impact of this naming practice on intercultural communication would therefore merit further attention, and a more detailed approach to the investigation of the relationship between this practice and students' identity is needed.

One relevant and similar study to this present research, however, has been carried out by Edwards (2006) in a British higher education institution, focusing on attitudes of Chinese learners and their tutors towards the practice of adopting English and Anglicised names. She suggests that the experience of adopting an 'English' name can have either a negative or positive effect on students' sense of identity. Furthermore, she points at the diversity of factors underlying students' choice regarding name adoption, including: the difficulty teachers experience in pronouncing Chinese names, the students' wish to be remembered by having an unusual name, and the names acting "as a kind of 'screen'" (98) in interpersonal communication. It has also been
suggested by Heffernan (2010) that 'English' name adoption is a way of "signalling [students'] affiliation with western culture" (32), as Chinese students often use those names with one another, with whom the use of Chinese names should not pose any linguistic problems. On the other hand, however, Edwards proposes that, rather than bringing the students closer to Western cultures, the ‘English’ names enable them to feel a sense of belonging within the community of Chinese students in Britain:

> what the adoption of an English name can paradoxically allow them to do is to retain a sense of cultural identity abroad, in that most Chinese students change their names in favour of English ones. (101)

In addition, Edwards highlights the underlying power relations between the students and their teachers, which can be "either coercive or collaborative relations of power" (95), and can have an impact on the process of name selection and adoption.

The present study will therefore take the findings of Edward’s study as a starting point from which to explore the issue in more detail. One way this study proposes to achieve this aim is by using a mixed methods approach, incorporating two types of qualitative data collection and analysis, and focusing on a limited number of participants in order to gain quality data within the given timeframe. Edwards’ study is based on questionnaire results and interviews, and its participants are either students who have chosen an English name themselves, those who have been given their English names by teachers, friends or classmates, or those who have retained their Chinese names. However, there is no mention of the name changes that the students may have had during the time they have been studying English. In my experience, some students decide to change their 'English' name to another one every few years, such as the example of Sweet and Sherry cited above. This seems to correlate with the claim made by Scollon and Scollon (1995: 124) that there is a "Chinese pattern of adopting new
names as situations change”. This present study will therefore take into account the flexible attitude demonstrated by some students towards their ‘English’ names, as a potentially important indicator of the nature of the relationship between students’ ‘English’ names and sense of identity.

Many of the above-mentioned studies refer to an article published on the New York Times (Lee, 2001), 'China Youth Take Names From West: Hi Medusa!'. Written by a journalist who herself has an unusual name (Jennifer 8. Lee), this article describes how Chinese youth are adopting ‘English’ names such as Medusa, Satan, Echo and Feeling, by "incorporating the flexibility of Chinese naming conventions with stimulus from Western popular culture". While its author presents this phenomenon in a rather positive light, others have raised questions regarding the impact this could have on intercultural communication. Heffernan (2010), in particular, has explored the issue of ‘appropriateness’ of name choices, by asking students from Mainland China and Hong Kong to rate the acceptability of seven pseudo-names in questionnaires. The comparison drawn by Heffernan suggests that there are some differences in attitude between Mainland respondents and Hong Kong respondents; in particular, the latter "has a clearer idea of what is and is not an acceptable English name", whereas the Mainland respondents "are more tolerant towards creative and bizarre English personal names" (32). While this finding is interesting, the quantitative data analysis does little to reveal the reasoning behind the respondents’ choices. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the sociocultural and psychological factors influencing these choices, the present study proposes to explore the question of 'appropriateness' through the use of qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Furthermore,
the notion of ‘appropriateness’ itself will be explored with criticality, comparing how this is conceptualised by Chinese students and native-English speakers.

2.7. Research gap

As highlighted in the sections above, there is a need for more in-depth qualitative research into the practice of ‘English’ name adoption, and this study proposes to focus in particular on students from the PRC, who represent the largest group of international students in Britain. As an MA dissertation, the combination of factors including limited timescale and complex subject of study favours a qualitative approach, and this also fulfils a gap that currently exists in this field of research; while the practice of ‘English’ name adoption has been documented in several different studies, the location, subject and contextual factors all differ and there has been no detailed analysis of individual cases. In addition to investigating the relationship between students' sense of identity, investment in language learning and 'English' name adoption, the study also aims to explore the implications of such naming practices on intercultural communication. In particular, there seems to be an interesting mismatch between students' and teachers' perceptions, as while 'English' name adoption is a widespread practice carried out mostly voluntarily by students across the globe, there are many teachers who regard it as an imposition of one's culture onto another. Thus the student seems to be seen by teachers as "a passive agent who is the victim of a kind of linguistic imperialism" (Edwards, 2006: 97). However, it has been argued that the practice could also indicate an ultimate act of defiance:

*While using an English name therefore seems to comply with what is required, the very act of taking on an English name can be construed as an act of resistance to perceived cultural and educational requirements (Edwards: 99)*
It would be therefore interesting to see how this compares to the name-users’ own perceptions, and to question the value placed on a name in western cultures. Thus this study adopts a stance that acknowledges the culturally-bound nature of approaches to identity, and aims to avoid such assumptions such as the notion that a name represents one's sense of the self, and therefore that one's given name must be kept as a sign of respect. In addition, as already mentioned, the issue of ‘appropriateness’ has been evoked in several studies (Heffeman, 2010 and Edwards, 2006), yet there is still much to be explored on this topic. Adopting a qualitative approach, this study will compare the attitudes of students and British teachers, and attempt to make some suggestions as to the potential difficulties that this could pose to intercultural communication. It is hoped that the understanding gained will enhance our communicative competence and intercultural awareness, which is essential in the current context of an increasingly internationalised educational sector.

2.8. Research Questions

Based on the above review of existing research and literature, the following questions have been identified as the focus of the present research:

I. Are there any differences in attitudes between Chinese students and tutors towards the ‘appropriateness’ of particular names?

II. What are the implications of such naming practices on intercultural communication?

III. What is the relationship between students’ sense of identity, investment in language learning and ‘English’ name adoption?
3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the methods adopted in the study and an explanation of the rationale behind their selection.

3.2. Research Design

In order to address the research gap identified in the above review of relevant literature, this study has adopted a QUAL-QUAL approach, combining two methods of qualitative data collection and analysis. Careful attention has been paid to the design of data collection techniques to employ, as these "impact on the study's validity, reliability, and replicability" (Podesva & Sharma, 2013: 126). The decision to adopt this approach was partly dictated by time and practical constraints. Initially, a mixed-methods (QUAN-QUAL) approach had been considered, as a means to strengthen the validity of the study through triangulation. This would have involved gathering quantitative data through surveys and qualitative data via interviews. As the period of this study coincided with the University of [anonymous]'s pre-sessional English course, a logical choice would have been to target the approximately 330 Chinese students enrolled on the course. However, the aim of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon rather than to record the patterns of 'English' name usage. As already mentioned in the literature review, such studies have been carried out, yet no other study has adopted a solely qualitative approach and there is still much to be explored regarding the link between the practice and learner identity. The "discovery-oriented character of qualitative inquiry" (Dornyei, 2007: 125) is best
suited for such cases as these, as it enables the topic to be approached with a degree of openness, without placing excessive limitations on the scope of the findings.

Another factor which has led to the selection of a different target group is their linguistic and analytical capacity. In order to investigate issues related to identity, it is essential that the participants have the ability to use English to reflect and express their thoughts on complex and abstract concepts. Given that the aim of a pre-sessional course is to aid students in improving their English and adapting to the new environment, such tasks may be too demanding and therefore produce unreliable or superficial results. Thus it was decided that a group of MA TESOL students at the end of their year of study would be a more suitable target, as their views on intercultural and interpersonal issues surrounding the choice of 'English' names would be informed by experience. Although the number of participants was reduced significantly, in qualitative studies a relatively small number of respondents is sufficient to "yield the saturated and rich data that is needed to understand even subtle meanings in the phenomenon under focus" (127).

As previously mentioned, the adoption of a name can be understood to be playing a part in the negotiation of identities; on the one hand related to the image one projects to the world, and on the other regarding how one perceives oneself. The design of this study incorporates these two aspects of identity; the first phase sets out to mainly address the Research Questions (RQs) I and II, which deal with issues related to intercultural communication and societal factors, and the second phase is aimed primarily at answering the RQ III which focuses on the personal experiences and views of individual learners and their investment in language learning.
3.3. Phase 1: Pair discussions

3.3.1. Sampling

The first phase of this study involved a discussion task, carried out by pairs composed of either students from the PRC or native-English EFL tutors. For both groups, *convenience* and *homogenous* sampling were applied, whereby the participants were recruited from the University of [anonymous] and selected on the basis of shared characteristics. The study has also relied on participants’ availability and willingness to take part in the discussion. The aim of this phase was to scope the data, while also seeking to address the issues surrounding RQs I and II.

3.3.2. Participant profile

Group A:

The group consisted of students from the MA TESOL programme at the University of [anonymous], some of whom had used their Chinese names throughout the academic year and others who had consistently used their ‘English’ names.

Group B:

The group consisted of tutors working on the pre-sessional summer course at the University of [anonymous]. Only native-speakers of English were recruited, in an attempt to maintain a certain degree of homogeneity across the group members in terms of cultural and social backgrounds. However, since English language tutors are typically well-travelled individuals with diverse cultural experiences, this may be a somewhat arbitrarily defined group. It can, nonetheless, be argued that there is a
common denominator linking the tutors: their experience of teaching international students in various countries. They can therefore be expected to possess a heightened sense of cultural awareness and sensitivity, fostered through this contact with different cultures.

3.3.3. Setting

The data collection took place on campus at the University of [anonymous]. All of the discussions were carried out in private rooms, except on one occasion (Pair 3), where it was necessary to use the common room at the Postgraduate School, where there were a few other students in the room. 3.3.4. Task

3.3.4. Task

In the task (see Appendix B), the participants were provided with a list of ten names and were requested to assess how ‘appropriate’ the names would be for use by Chinese students studying at a British university. The familiarity of the context was intended to aid the discussion by stimulating thoughts which are based on the experiences of each participant. The need to place the names in a hierarchical order served to provoke debate and highlight the factors that influence different individuals’ evaluation of the ‘appropriateness’ of particular names. Furthermore, this study draws on aspects of sociolinguistic research in order to account for the impact of the social and communicative context on the data collected. Trechter (2013) highlights the crucial importance placed by sociolinguistic researchers on "personal and community

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1 The selection of names provided in the task is a combination of those found in a study carried out by Heffernan (2010) as mentioned in the literature review, and others which reflect the 'types' of names found among Chinese students at the University of [anonymous]. These were chosen on the basis of a preliminary scoping exercise carried out at the University (see Appendix A), in which names were collected from among the Chinese students on the pre-sessional English course.

22
obligations” (33), stressing that the “analysis of relationships of power is of vital consideration if we are to appropriately assume obligations to speakers and communities” (40). This was the rationale behind the use of a pair discussion task on ‘appropriateness’, as a discussion between two members of a group composed of people with similar backgrounds can be expected to incite a negotiation of a shared understanding of what is normal. The role of the researcher was therefore only to observe, except to occasionally ask for clarification and provide prompts. On the whole, the task can be described as a type of focus group, except for the fact that the discussions were carried out in pairs, instead of involving 6-10 people as suggested by Dornyei (2007: 144). This format is well suited for the aims of the task for several reasons. For instance, one of the weaknesses of focus group interviewing has been identified as “the tendency for certain types of socially acceptable opinion to emerge and for certain types of participant to dominate” (ibid.: 146). In the present study, however, the former issue becomes an advantage, as one of its aims is to reveal cultural assumptions and norms that underlie the participants’ choices. The latter also does not pose a problem to this study, as the task has been carried out in pairs, in order to allow the participants to debate and negotiate the order in which they would place the names, and enable even quieter participants to speak.

This discussion task was designed to ensure that “the social categories used by the researcher for data analysis closely resembles the categories used by the participants” Clopper (2013). The participants’ discussions are therefore used to identify the main parameters by which they analyse the appropriateness of a particular name. This approach also takes inspiration from ethnographic research, which “aims at the discovery of emic categories, the social, cognitive, cultural, and linguistic contrasts that
are salient in a particular community (as opposed to etic criteria, namely, extrinsic concepts and categories imposed by the researcher)” (Buchstaller & Khattab, 2013: 79). However, it also differs from most ethnographic research, which usually involve long periods spent within communities and becoming a participant observer; this was not possible within the scope of this present study.

Following this task are four questions, designed to investigate the extent to which interpersonal communication was seen as important by each participant, when considering an appropriate ‘English’ name for a Chinese student. Moreover, they aimed to test whether, and how, the names and personal identity were perceived to be connected. The discussions were recorded using an audio-recorder (see attached CD). An analysis of salient themes identified through coding, and a discussion of their implications for the RQs will be discussed in Chapter 4.

3.4. Phase 2: One-to-one interviews

3.4.1. Sampling

The second phase involved semi-structured one-to-one interviews with four students, selected from among those who had participated in the first phase of the study. Of the eight Chinese students who participated in the first phase, four had used their ‘English’ names (when speaking English) consistently throughout the academic year, and three had continued to use their Chinese names; the remaining one had used both names interchangeably. Selection for the second phase was based on criterion and convenience sampling; due to availability, only two participants who had used their
'English' names and two who had used their Chinese names took part in the interviews.

3.4.2. Participant profile

**Group 1:**

**SL:**

Her 'English' name is Mira, and she has used this name throughout the academic year except when her tutors have insisted on using her Chinese name. Unlike her peers on the MA TESOL programme, SL had studied Business at the University of [anonymous] one year prior to starting the MA. At the time of the interview, she had therefore lived in the UK for nearly two years. She has a British partner, to whom she is engaged to be married.

**SZ:**

Her 'English' name is Selina, and she has used this name throughout the academic year. During the pair discussion activity, she entered a debate with her partner (LL) over the role played by names in becoming integrated in another culture. Her view was that "the name is the first step to get involved", to the extent that she would give her children 'English' or Japanese names if they were likely to spend time in countries where those languages were spoken. Interestingly, SZ was also the only participant to sign the consent form (Appendix C) using her 'English' name.
Group 2

LT:
At the time of the interview, this participant was chosen as an example of a Chinese student who had used her Chinese name throughout the academic year. However, it became apparent, during the interview, that she had been using 'Lynn' as her 'English' name as it has the same phonetic properties as her family name, Lin. Having had no opportunities to see her name in the written form, this distinction had not been apparent to the researcher, who had known the participant for nearly a year. This highlights the difficulty of drawing a clear division between 'English' and own name usage, and the fact that the difference may not necessarily be clearly conceptualised by the users themselves. The interview was therefore carried out by focusing on the fact that the participant had chosen a phonetically similar name to her family name, instead of a completely new 'English' name.

MJ:
This participant has used her Chinese name, Jing, in all English-speaking contexts throughout the academic year. During the pair discussion activity, she expressed the view that names which were common and "used by most of the British people" were appropriate, and made repeated use of the term "reliable" to indicate names which suit a person's character. This seems to highlight an underlying belief that people behave the way that their names suggest, and that efforts should be made to avoid misleading people by ensuring that the name matches the person's character.
3.4.3. Setting

The interviews were carried out in private rooms on campus and in individuals’ homes.

3.4.4. Task

Since the first phase of the study mostly centred on issues surrounding RQs I and II, this phase was primarily aimed at addressing RQ III and expanding on some of the salient points highlighted in the earlier phase. Semi-structured interviews are characterised by an open-ended format and an emphasis on encouraging the interviewee to "elaborate on the issues in an explanatory manner" (Dornyei, 2007: 136), whilst structure is also provided through the use of pre-prepared questions. It has been chosen for the present study because it remains flexible enough to avoid limiting "the depth and breadth of the respondent's story" (Dornyei: 136), while the maintenance of some structure ensures the comparability of the data sets. The interview guide contains 13 questions and the discussions lasted on average 30 minutes. There are two sets of questions, mostly identical but with several adaptations reflecting the differences between the two groups: members of Group 1 have adopted 'English' names, whilst those in Group 2 have maintained their Chinese names. Following Dornyei's model (2007), the interview guide is divided into three sections: opening questions, designed to "set the tone and create initial rapport" (137); content questions, addressing the main issues related to the RQ III; closing question, giving the interviewee an opportunity to "have the final say" (138), which can often yield rich data. Furthermore, as seen in figure 1 below, the following six categories have been applied to the design of the interview questions, in order to address the Research
Questions from various angles: (a) experiences and behaviours, (b) opinions and values, (c) feelings, (d) knowledge, (e) sensory information and (f) background or demographic information (Patton, 2002 cited in Dornyei: 137-138).

2 In figure 1 these will be referred to as ‘Focus’
**Figure 1. Interview questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>How long have you had your English name? Have you had any others?</td>
<td>Have you always used your Chinese name, or have you ever used an English name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>How did you choose your English name?</td>
<td>How did you choose your English name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>During your stay in the UK, when have you used your English name and when have you used your Chinese name?</td>
<td>During your stay in the UK, have you always used your Chinese name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>a, b, c</td>
<td>Why do you think many Chinese people use English names?</td>
<td>Why do you use your Chinese name instead of an English one? Would you ever consider using an English name (again)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>a, b, c, d</td>
<td>How do you think people would treat you if you used your Chinese name instead of an English one?</td>
<td>How do you think people would treat you if you used an English name instead of your Chinese one?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>a, c</td>
<td>Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again?</td>
<td>Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>a, c</td>
<td>Do you feel like a different person when you're speaking English to when you're speaking Chinese?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>b, c, d</td>
<td>What do you think about the NYT article on 'English' name adoption by young professionals in China?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>a, b, c</td>
<td>What would you do if you found out that your English name actually had a hidden meaning in English which was rude? Or that it was a very rude name? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic group, e.g. African, Indian, etc.?</td>
<td>What would you do if you found out that your name in English was rude? Or that it was a man's name and not a woman's? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic group, e.g. African, Indian, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>a, b, c</td>
<td>Thinking back at when you first arrived here, how well do you feel you have adapted to life in the UK? (e.g. British culture, frequency of English usage, number of British friends, number of international friends, extra-curricular activities)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>What do you think helped you the most to adapt to life here? How much do you think your English has improved since you came to the UK?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>b, c</td>
<td>Would you be interested in living in the UK or outside of China long-term? Why/Why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>a, b, c, d, e, f</td>
<td>What should I have asked you that I haven't yet asked?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9 2
3.4.5. Question design

Questions 1-3 are primarily designed to elicit simple, background information and put the interviewee at ease. Question 4, although different in the two groups, deals with the interviewees' opinions, feelings and knowledge about the use of 'English' names by Chinese students. Question 5 asks the interviewee to consider whether the name they use might have an impact on the way they are treated, thus highlighting issues relating to intercultural communication. Question 6, which was only addressed to members of Group 1, examines the level of attachment the students have formed with their 'English' names. Similarly, question 7 explores the notion of developing a voice, which has been discussed in the literature review and been identified by Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) as one of the key stages to the development of a language learner's grasp of a new language. Question 8 asks the interviewees to react to a phenomenon described by a *New York Times* article (Lee, 2001), whereby young professionals in the PRC are adopting unusual 'English' names. Question 9 focuses on behavioural and emotional aspects of the naming practice, including the attachment formed by the interviewees to their names, by seeing whether they would change their names if they discovered that their own or 'English' names carried hidden or undesirable meanings.

Questions 10, 11 and 12 are primarily aimed at assessing the level of investment the learners have made in acculturating to their local environment, and how this may be reflected in their self-assessed level of linguistic development. Question 13 is simply a means to close the discussion and allow the interviewee to volunteer any further information they may consider to be important.
The task was carried out with a critical awareness of the role of the interviewer, as questions surrounding one's identity and views could potentially touch on sensitive and personal issues. In order to create an environment in which the interviewees feel at ease to share their thoughts openly, it has been suggested that researchers should maintain neutrality. On the other hand, there have been voices which argue against this, suggesting that the notion of neutrality is "largely mythical" (Fontana and Frey, 2005: 696) and it is simply impossible for the researcher to remove him/herself because interviews are co-constructed social exchanges just like any other conversation. Thus, discursive psychologists "suggest that in order to understand how features are co-constructed, interview data need to be subject to the same standards of discourse analysis as any piece of spoken interaction" (Mann, 2011: 10). This study has adopted the latter view, and considers that the power dynamics between the researcher and interviewees and the sociocultural context will inevitably influence the course of the discussion. In order to put the interviewees at ease, the interviewer has employed 'empathetic interviewing' advocated by Fontana and Frey (2005), and made use of the knowledge she has of the interviewees to build rapport and elicit pertinent information. As the two parties are peers from the same degree programme, this is a more natural approach to take than to adopt a formal interview format. Furthermore, the researcher has deliberately avoided correcting any language errors made by the interviewees, unless required as a means for clarification or to assist the interviewee. Thus a relaxed environment for an open discussion could be created.
3.5. Ethics

The research has received approval from the ethics committee at the University of [anonymous]. Participants were recruited on a voluntary basis. Initial contact and the arrangements for the meeting were made via email and social media, and participants were provided with information sheets and consent forms (See Appendices C and D) which outlined the aims and nature of the present research. In order to ensure that their data could be dealt with anonymously, the participants are referred to by their initials for the first phase of the study. However, as the interviews explored issues surrounding the different patterns of usage for 'English' and Chinese names, interviewees were requested to provide permission for their 'English' names to be mentioned.

3.6. Data collection and Analysis

The first phase of data collection was carried out over a three-week period between 1st July and 22nd July 2014. The interviews for the second phase of data collection took place between 28th August and 1st September 2014. The responses of the first phase enabled the focus for the second phase to be defined and were used to design some of the interview questions.
4. Results and Analysis

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the two phases of data collection, and analyses their implications for the Research Questions (RQs) identified in section 2.8. The results of the two phases will be discussed separately, but correlations between the two data sets will be highlighted, and a detailed analysis combining findings from both phases will be provided in Chapter 5.

4.2. Phase 1: Pair discussions

4.2.1. Presentation of codes

Recorded data from the eight discussions have been used to generate codes based on participant categories, and the lists of ordered names produced by each group have been collated into a table (Appendix H). A brief description of the patterns found in the data accompanies the table, enabling the salient points to be highlighted. Detailed analysis of the results from this phase will be provided in section 4.2.2, where the salient issues will be compared and discussed in relation to the RQs. In the following section, it is important to note that Group A refers to MA TESOL students who participated in this study, and includes Pairs 1-4, and Group B includes Pairs 5-8, who are the tutors on the Pre-sessional course at the University of [anonymous].
Reasons why the names are appropriate

- **Familiarity**

This code incorporates various comments, which surround the notion that a name is ‘appropriate’ when the participants have heard it used by acquaintances or in popular culture and the media. The fact that it can be found in the dictionary is also mentioned several times by members of Group A, suggesting they use this as a measure of ‘appropriateness’. This reliance on familiarity to judge the appropriateness of names can also be observed in the selection of names provided by students as exemplifying suitable choices (see Appendix G). Laura, Nicola, Geoff, Andrew and James and several other names mentioned here belong to native-speakers that the students have encountered during their stay in the UK. This notion of familiarity is also strongly present in the discussions among tutors. For example, NP in Pair 8 asks, "Is there a name with a number?", suggesting that if a similar name exists, the number '8' would also be considered 'appropriate'. Many also demonstrate openness to names that they have encountered before, either as names of students or those found in TV programmes and films. This therefore highlights that both tutors and students look to precedence as a form of legitimate reasoning for their choices.

- **Real names**

This code is related to the previous one, ‘Familiarity’, but encompasses the view held by participants in both Groups that names are acceptable when they are in common use either in the UK or other countries. Names such as 'Happiness', for example, may not have any negative associations but are uncommon and thus seen to be a little strange. Common usage therefore seems to underlie participants' perception of normality and the acceptability of a name, as illustrated by MJ (Pair 3)’s statement that
a name is appropriate if it is "the common name used by most of the British people". On the other hand, there are names which are clearly uncommon, but which would nonetheless be considered acceptable, if they are likely to exist. In the following quote, for instance, DW (Pair 6) suggests that if names such as River, Rain or Summer are acceptable for the celebrity Phoenix siblings, 'Echo' could also be seen as 'appropriate': "there must be a Phoenix sibling called Echo". Moreover, he adds that students "are never gonna be English, so I don't think... a Chinese 'English' name has to be English", suggesting that normality is not expected and the selection of 'English' names does not need to be based on common usage.

**Similar surname/middle name**

Several of the participants from Group A consider some of the names in the list to be 'appropriate' as surnames or middle names. Moreover, SL explains that while 'Monday' seems like a strange name to her, she has seen it used as a family name, and concludes that there may be other names which are acceptable to the native-speaker that she would consider to be 'inappropriate'. Thus she demonstrates a strong awareness of her own culturally-influenced views of 'appropriateness' and an openness to accepting other norms. This leads her to evaluate the name 'Dollar' in a positive light, proposing that "if a family name can be a strange one, why can't first names be strange?" In a similar vein, RX comments that since "lots of Americans, they have weird names", there is no reason to consider any of the names in the list unacceptable. Members of Group B also mention that some of the names could be used as surnames, such as 'Dollar' and 'Tower', implying that this somewhat renders them more 'appropriate' as students' 'English' names.
Positive association

One of the recurring comments found in all the discussions is the positive association that names carry. In many cases, the participants expressed surprise or amusement at seeing the list of names provided, suggesting that most of them seemed strange and unusual to them. However, when faced with the task of comparing and assessing the degree of ‘appropriateness’ of each name, it became apparent that names seen to carry positive associations were considered more ‘appropriate’ than those which had negative connotations. Thus as seen in figure 3 (Appendix H), in all of the discussions ‘Happiness’ was placed higher than ‘Pooh’, as the latter was deemed to have negative connotations for various reasons (as explained under ‘Negative connotations’), and ‘Echo’ - which many classed as neutral - was placed in between the two names. Among the members of Group A, descriptions for names indicating positive association included: “sounds cool”, “sounds lovely”, “a lucky number” and “a character you like”. Those in Group B included: “reminds you of a cartoon”, “Dollar sounds like Dolly/Donna”, “affectionate” and “cute”. LC in Pair 4 explained that the importance placed on auspiciousness is due to the fact that “when our parents pick up name, when we’re child, the meaning should be positive in Chinese culture”. This correlates with the literature, which suggests that auspiciousness is a key element of name selection processes in the PRC (Alleton, 1993). However, these results indicate that this is not unique to naming practices in the PRC but also extends to other countries including the UK.

Nicknames

In both Groups, several participants suggested that some of the ‘inappropriate’ names could be acceptable for use as nicknames, for pets or in classrooms. Moreover, one
member questioned why unusual 'English' names were considered inappropriate while strange nicknames were accepted, and suggested that a name is "just a symbol to distinguish you and others" (SL, Pair 1). The distinction drawn by participants between nicknames and proper names indicates that they place a different value on those two types of names. The difference between real names and nicknames is not always so clear, however. Pair 7 for instance draws attention to the ambiguity surrounding the value of an 'English' for the Chinese students: on the one hand, CM suggests that since they are not official names to be used in formal contexts such as on certificates, "they are just names to be used by people"; on the other, she comments that they can indeed become names for life. Thus her partner (IH) suggests: "I suppose it's kind of splitting their identity, isn't it. They've got their Chinese name which appears on all their certificates but most people would maybe refer to them using their English name". They conclude, therefore, that "it's really important to have a name which they can use afterwards" (CM). Similarly, Pair 3 commented that some of the names were too childish and therefore could not be used when one has grown up. This preoccupation with the longevity of ‘English’ names suggests that the Chinese participants consider their long-term use as not only possible but desirable. Such comments point at the possibility that some of the MA TESOL students (Group A participants) favour making investments in a social identity which is associated with the use of the English language.

Closeness to Chinese name

This code incorporates a number of issues surrounding the phonetic or semantic resemblance of a student's 'English' name to his/her own name. One such example is the use of ‘Pooh’ as an ‘English’ name. It is worth noting, first of all, that while all
members of Group B identified this name as a homophone of 'poo' and therefore having an undesirable connotation, it was not mentioned by any of the members of Group A. This is one of several examples where the lack of similar associations and cultural or linguistic references could lead to problems in cross-cultural interactions. However, negative connotations do not necessarily prevent the names from being considered 'appropriate'. As HS (Pair 5) notes on several occasions, although it could cause the students to be ridiculed, the use of 'Pooh' as an 'English' name could be seen as appropriate, because this is phonetically similar to a Chinese family name:

Pooh would be accepted by Chinese because of surname, but it wouldn't be appropriate in Britain, and yes it might cause potential problems.

Pair 5 therefore placed 'Pooh' at 6th, considerably higher than the other members of Group B. This preference for maintaining students' own names even when they contain undesirable associations is seen in several other discussions among the tutors (Group B). Moreover, another tutor (AC, Pair 5) commented that an abbreviation or variation of a Chinese name would be "more fitting for a young adult" than some of the other name choices. Finally, there appears to be a general consensus across both Groups that the translations of one's Chinese name, however strange the effect may be, would be appropriate, thus highlighting the important value placed on one's official given name by both tutors and students alike.

Easy to transfer back into Chinese

According to members of Pair 2, the possibility of easily transferring it back into Chinese phonetics is a desirable attribute for an 'English' name. LL (Pair 2) explains that 'Pretty' would lead to an awkward pronunciation, Pu rei ti in Chinese, whereas 'Sunny'
can be easily transferred into Chinese: Su ni. Although this issue was mentioned by
only one Pair, according to them this is a common habit among Chinese people:

You will translate it into Chinese naturally if you're a Chinese as well (LL)

- **Shows personal characteristics**

In both Groups A and B, there were instances where the link between one's name and
personality or character was mentioned. For example, Pair 2 commented that
adjectives are more suitable for "showing personality" than nouns. CM (Pair 7) also
suggested that "it's quite nice to call somebody…somebody who's really happy and
cheerful all the time. As long as the person smiles a lot". The latter part of this
comment highlights an issue referred to as 'reliability' by MJ (Pair 3); she suggested
that, in order to avoid misleading people, the meaning of a name should match the
character of a person and thus be 'reliable'. This preoccupation with giving an accurate
impression to others is evoked several times in Pairs 2 and 3, with SZ and LL
highlighting the risk that "local people might think you're stupid" if one chose an
'inappropriate' name.

- **Embodies a wish**

This code refers to the notion that a name may reflect students' wishes of becoming
something that is represented by the name, thus their image of how they would like to
be perceived, i.e. their "ideal language self" (Dornyei, 2007: 690). Several members of
both Groups referred to this point, with comments such as:

If you feel like that is who you are or that is what you would like to be like, then maybe
it's OK. (NP, Group 8)

According to MJ (Pair 3), this is a particularly common practice among young men, who
"give to their name a lot of their own wish". This idea is echoed in several other
discussions, including comments about rural Chinese parents who may name their child 'Dollar', wishing he/she would grow up to be wealthy.

Ease

This code refers to several comments made by members of both Groups, which alluded to the ease of using certain names, both for the students and their interlocutors. This includes ease for spelling, pronouncing and remembering the names. For example, Pair 6 commented that the use of 'English' names made it easier for them to remember students' names. However, among most of the tutors, this issue is only mentioned occasionally and never developed further as a key issue influencing their judgement of 'appropriateness'. On the other hand, members of group A focused more on the issue, particularly on the negative effects of using names which are difficult for others to pronounce. For example, LT (Pair 4) suggests that such names could 'build a bridge' (intended here as a barrier) because people would not want to call the person by their name. In addition, SL (Pair 1) and MJ (Pair 3) both pointed at the potential difficulty a Mandarin or Cantonese-speaker could encounter when pronouncing the name 'Tower', which could easily be confused with 'Towel', and would result in making the speaker sound "ridiculous" (MJ). Finally, in Pair 1, FG describes how the different pronunciations of her 'English' name, 'Ada', has caused her "embarrassing problems", as people do not know whether to pronounce it in the American or British way. However, she explains that despite these problems she would not change her name, as it was given to her by her first English teacher and is easy to spell. She also indicates her preference for the British pronunciation of her name. Thus she clearly demonstrates a sense of attachment to her 'English' name, as well as a specific preference for how it is pronounced. On the other hand, while she is sensitive
to the reactions of her native-speaker interlocutors, what this also highlights is a lack of awareness on her part that 'Ada' could be seen as rather old-fashioned and unusual in the UK.

**Reasons why the names are not appropriate**

- **Mockery**
  
  Mockery and ridicule are recurrent issues identified in discussions of both Groups, as many regard them as reasons for considering a name to be 'inappropriate'. For example, FG (Pair 1) describes an 'appropriate' name to be "when people recognise...know your name, and they will not laugh." Moreover, AC (Pair 5) stresses the need to avoid names which "would be regarded as amusing by native speakers" and to choose one which is "appropriate for the student and appropriate for the context" so as not to be ridiculed.

- **Negative association**
  
  An antithesis of 'Positive Association', this code includes comments made by many of the participants in both Groups expressing discomfort at the use of names which carry negative connotations. These include the description of 'Pooh' as "disgusting" by Pair 2, who thought that the name resembled the sound of spitting. As already mentioned, this is different from the interpretation made by most of the members of Group B, although the outcome appears to be similar (see figure 3, Appendix H). Many of the participants in Group A also expressed a negative view towards the name 'Dollar', as it gave the impression of being "not so generous" (LL, Pair 2) and implied that the person worships money (MJ, Pair 3). As mentioned above, it has also been suggested that names such as 'Dollar' or 'Money' could be an embodiment of a wish to become
wealthy, but LT (Pair 4) warns that this type of practice is common among poor families in rural China, thus by adopting such names one risks associating oneself with the poor and illiterate. In contrast, the responses of the participants in Group B towards 'Dollar' were more ambivalent, with some suggesting that it had a negative connotation with being a 'money-grabber', and others commenting that it sounds "street" or cool because it evokes the image of a gangster.

**Causes misunderstandings**

This code relates to the ‘Shows Personal Characteristics’ described earlier, as it refers to the notion, highlighted by both Groups, that names which cause confusion or misunderstanding are 'inappropriate'. As already mentioned, MJ (Pair 3) makes repeated use of the term "reliable" to describe names which accurately portray a person's personality.: 

(Pair 3: Discussing the name 'Tower')

MJ: it just feels a little bit ridiculous… and he is ridiculous so..
RX: so the name is suit him
MJ: yeah (laughs)
RX: and I…
MJ: (interrupts) so it's more reliable

Underlying this is the notion that people's behaviour or personalities are characterised by their names, which is a belief expressed by several of the Chinese participants. Among the tutors, Pair 8 discussed the need to meet the "expectation of what people think they're going to say" (NP) in order to avoid communication problems, and the following comment by MJG correlates with this view:

*Amongst themselves, obviously it's not a problem, is it? But within the university context someone's maybe putting their name to a piece of work…'8' could cause a bit of confusion.*
It was also noted that there could be problems if there is a mismatch of associated meanings, such as the use of 'Happiness' as a name for a student whose character is the complete opposite. The confusion of gender was also mentioned, citing the example of a male student who had wanted to use the name 'Penny', even with the knowledge that this name is usually given to girls in British culture.

**Self-created**

Several of the participants in Group A indicated that they did not consider names, which were self-created, to be acceptable. RX (Pair 3), for example, explained that an inappropriate name is one which is "not from the Oxford dictionary", and SL (Pair 1) described an appropriate name as something "we can read from the dictionary, the names from the dictionaries. That's the kind of appropriate. Not just we create by ourselves like '8' or 'Happiness". Such attitudes were not found among the members of Group B, and DW (Pair 6) even noted that it could be fun to adopt new names, as it is "a chance to play around with your identity".

**Old-fashioned**

It was indicated by several members of both Groups that old-fashioned names would not be appropriate for use by Chinese students. According to AC (Pair 5), for example, such names are not suitable for young students. Moreover, regarding the popularity of flower names amongst Chinese students, LC (Pair 4) commented, "we don't know if this is old-fashioned in British culture", thus demonstrating an awareness of the need to consider cross-cultural issues when selecting names.
**Classic British names**

Similarly to 'Old-fashioned', this code refers to comments made by members of Group B, expressing a doubt over the 'appropriateness' of classic British names being adopted by Chinese students. In fact, while the presence of 'Harry' and 'Roger' in the top two positions (figure 3, Appendix H) may suggest that there is a general consensus over the 'appropriateness' of these names, the discussions reveal that this is not so. One tutor (NP), for example, questions the use of names such as 'Harry', which could have regal connotations. In her view, personal preference and personality should be the basis on which name selections are made, rather than notions of normality or common usage tied to the British context. Others have also commented that the use of a classic British name may be "too much of a leap" (AC, Pair 5) and sounds "funny when given to Chinese people because you know they're not their real names" (CM, Pair 7). This seems to contrast with the views held by many in Group A, who consider appropriate names to be "the common name used by most of the British people" (MJ, Pair 3).

**Unexpected/hidden meanings**

This code refers to comments regarding connotations and meanings hidden behind names. While some of the participants in Group A demonstrated an awareness of the potential problems caused by the use of 'English' names with connotations (e.g. LC in Group 2 explained how she discovered that her 'English' name was popular among black women), these issues most regularly featured in the discussions in Group B. Among the tutors, comments such as "need to make students aware of the connotations" (MJG, Pair 6) and "you're positioning yourself with an identity that people might not take seriously" (DW, Pair 6) shows a strong concern for the image students are portraying with the use of particular names. For example, DW, who in
general has shown greater tolerance for unusual name choices than most other participants, considers names such as 'Candy' and 'Barbie' to be 'inappropriate' because of the potential association they have with strippers. Another tutor (HS, Pair 8) adds that a name is "a symbol" and "you just can't help making connections", thus the need to consider the 'appropriateness' of names which are "symbolic of faeces or a children's toy". However, there are varying degrees of acceptance demonstrated by different tutors, with NP (Pair 8) for instance insisting that all of the names could be 'appropriate'.

- **Highlighting foreignness**

Another issue, which has been predominantly raised by members of Group B, is the alienating effect that the use of 'English' names could have for the students:

> If they're actually taking an English name to fit in with English society and trying to be more English…they're pushing themselves out rather than into the culture (CM, Pair 7)

The following comment echoes this very closely, highlighting the importance of name selection on the impression one makes on others, and therefore interpersonal communication:

> If they're using an English name to integrate better into British culture while they're in the UK, and then it almost has the reverse effect because they're such strange names that they're automatically seen as foreign (AC, Pair 5)

- **Sensitivity to imposing cultural norms**

This code refers mainly to the concern expressed by members of Group B regarding respect for different cultural practices and values. Many of the tutors demonstrated wariness towards appearing to impose their own culturally-biased views on students, as AC (Pair 5)'s comment illustrates:

> Would they perceive me as forcing an English name on them?
MJG (Pair 6) also suggested that, while teachers may prefer normal names, "that's taking something away from the individuals themselves if you impose that type of label of appropriateness", again displaying caution against the imposition of cultural norms. In fact, in many cases the tutors seemed to feel that the task required them to make judgements which they did not consider to be necessary:

_Firstly I'm going to argue I think they're all appropriate because I think that, actually, a name is just a name that symbolises... anybody, so I don't know how I feel about ordering them, but if we are going to order them then we can do that (NP, Pair 8)_

Some also commented that they were discussing the names from a "British perspective" (AC, Pair 5), as the task referred to the 'appropriateness' of names in the context of British higher education. Moreover, DW (Pair 6) indicates that he is aware of the possibility that the value placed on names may differ across cultures:

_I seem to be attached to my name more than other people in other cultures seem to be_

These examples help to explain the tutors' preference for using names which maintain a connection with the students' own names, as described under 'Closeness to Own Chinese Name', since this is seen to indicate respect for students' culture and identity.

### 4.2.2. Data analysis

In this section, the above-mentioned data will be analysed in relation to the key issues identified in the literature review, with the aim of addressing the three Research Questions (RQs). As already mentioned, the primary focus of this first phase of the study was to address the RQs I and II. However, many of the discussions have touched on aspects of RQ III, enabling relevant issues to be highlighted and applied to the design of the interview for the second phase.
RQ 1. Are there any differences in attitudes between Chinese students and tutors towards the 'appropriateness' of particular names?

As the above descriptions of codes demonstrate, both Groups apply similar criteria in order to evaluate the 'appropriateness' of names. This apparent homogeneity may also suggest that, despite the differences highlighted in the literature review, attitudes towards names may not differ so greatly between Eastern and Western cultures. A closer inspection of the discussions, however, reveals many divergences within similar categories, which could serve to provide insights into the potential problems that may arise in intercultural communication.

One of the main differences noted between the attitudes of Groups A and B is that the latter showed more concern for issues surrounding cultural imperialism, placing a stronger emphasis on respect for individuals' choices and maintaining a link with students' Chinese names. As a result, several of the tutors considered all of the names to be 'appropriate'. Moreover, among this Group, unease and resistance to creating a hierarchy of names were observed, highlighting the importance the tutors placed on the individual's preference and background when considering the 'appropriateness' of any name choice. In contrast, members of Group A seemed to question less the task and hold a relatively uniform view of 'appropriateness' centred around auspiciousness, native-speaker norms and familiarity, i.e. looking to external or societal rules for validation. It is important to note, however, that this apparent acceptance of the task may be a result of the power relations between the participants and researcher. The fact that both are peers would suggest that they are social equals, but the former may also feel a sense of obligation to assist the latter. In addition, the researcher is a
native-English speaker, which may place her in a superior position of power and authority when discussing issues related to the English language and culture, compared to the participants, who are non-native speakers. As discussed in section 3.5, it is crucial that such power dynamics are taken into consideration in the analysis of the data, as their influence on the discussion is inevitable.

Although ‘Shows personal characteristics’ was a code which could be identified in discussions of both Groups, there were key differences to the issues they focused on. Among the Group A members, the need to choose names which reflect students’ personalities and convey an accurate image of the self figured numerous times. Similarly, in Group B, some of the participants discussed the problems that could arise from a mismatch of expectations and the need for such names as ‘Happiness’ to be used by “somebody who's really happy and cheerful all the time” (CM, Pair 7).

However, while this seems to be of crucial importance to the members of Group A, those in Group B placed a stronger emphasis on individual agency. For example, AC, NP and DW all share the view that a name is appropriate if it is "appropriate for the student" (AC, Pair 5), and only the former mentions the need for those names to also be appropriate for the context. Furthermore, DW (Pair 6) mentions the creative process of selecting an 'English' name ("a chance to play around with your identity"; "a bit of fun"), once again placing more importance on the individual's choice of name than on contextual factors. In Group A, LL (Pair 2) also alludes to the importance of the naming process for the individual, as she states she would not give her children ‘English’ names, in order to allow them to choose one for themselves. This could be seen as correlating with the stance of Group B members. On the other hand, it can also be understood simply as a reflection of LL’s wish to position herself with the elite, as
manipulation of one’s name is seen as a sign of high social status (Blum, 1997: 365) in the PRC (see section 2.4.). These examples demonstrate that the notion of a link between names and individual identity is found among members of both Groups. However, the Group A’s primary focus on the accurate portrayal of the self suggests that its members are more concerned with the public aspects of identity, whereas the relative importance given to individual preference and choices by the Group B members indicates that they place a higher value on the private aspects of identity.

Such differences could be used to support the argument, put forward by Blum (1997), that the relationship between one’s “unitary individual essence and name” (364) is conceptualised differently in Chinese and Western cultures, with the former regarding it as much more “malleable” (ibid.) than the latter. Indeed, RX and SL, who are both from Group A, consider the ‘English’ names to be “just a symbol to distinguish you and others” (SL). However, this appears to be an issue divided by individual opinion, rather than national culture. For example, tutors such as NP echo the views expressed above, stating:

*I think they’re all appropriate cos I think that actually a name is just a name that signifies…symbolises anybody.* (NP, Pair 8)

On the other hand, many others appear to consider this relationship between name and identity to be more significant. One such example is the preference expressed by members of both Groups for the use of names which are either phonetically close to or translated from their Chinese names. On the part of the students in Group A, this could be interpreted as a wish to maintain a strong link with one’s sense of identity, which is tied to one’s Chinese name. Another possible interpretation, especially regarding the use of phonetically similar names would be that it makes the ‘English’ names easier for
the students themselves to remember and recognise as well as for others who know them by their Chinese name. In comparison, the tutors' preference for maintaining a close link with students' Chinese names could be interpreted differently. As already mentioned above, this may reflect the tendency in the West to assume there is a close relationship between one's name and identity, but it may also be a result of the increasing sensitivity within the EFL profession towards issues surrounding linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992). The use of names which closely relate to students' sense of identity can thus be understood as a sign of respect for the culture and identity of the individual.

Finally, in order to illustrate how cultural knowledge and references can influence the perceptions of 'appropriateness', several of the names provided in the list (Appendix G) will be discussed. One of the most striking differences was found in the discussion of the name, 'Poppy'. Within Group B, there was a quasi-unanimous view that this was a typical British name, although a few of members seemed to perceive it as a nickname, rather than a proper name. Within Group A, however, almost all of the members confused the name with 'puppy', with recurring comments such as "When I see this word, I...the dog come across my mind" (SZ, Pair 2), prompting them to place the name low down in the list (6th-10th places). When one pair (4) realised that the name referred to a flower, the name was still placed at 9th place because poppies are associated with narcotics in the PRC and this rendered the name 'inappropriate'. Another name, which has different associations to members across the two Groups, is '8'. While the majority of participants in Group B considered this name highly unusual and 'inappropriate', several of the participants in Group A discussed how it could be acceptable in view of the fact that, when pronounced in Chinese, the number 8 is
phonetically very close to the word meaning wealth or fortune. Thus RX (Pair 3) comments: "Chinese 8 means you're going to be rich...8 is our lucky number". There are other names, which have numerous associated meanings for different individuals, such as 'Candy', which features in the list (see figure 2, Appendix G) of 'inappropriate' names produced by both Groups A and B. The reasons for which that name has been placed there is different, however. As already mentioned, DW (Pair 6) considers it highly 'inappropriate' because it resembles the type of names used by strippers. SZ (Pair 2), on the other hand, explains that this name is an inappropriate choice because it is "boring" and used by "too many girls". Similarly, 'Dollar' has a simply negative association for the students in Group A, evoking images of someone who is mean or worships money, whereas there are mixed interpretations among the tutors. Several other tutors also suggested that it was phonetically pleasant, as it resembled names such as 'Dolly' or 'Donna'. Finally, in the case of 'Pooh', it appears that the name is phonetically close to a Chinese word with the meaning of 'to spit', thus carrying a negative association which is not so different from the one which the native-speakers have, which is of human waste. These examples serve to illustrate that whilst the table of results (figure 3, Appendix H) may suggest that the two groups are very similar in their interpretations of the names, closer inspection reveals subtle differences in the reasons behind their choices. As it has already been noted, there is a tendency across the Groups to use precedence and familiarity as a measure of how appropriate a name is. While these do not seem to result in wide divergences of opinion, it must be noted that there could be some cases in which the different references would lead to serious misunderstandings.
RQ II. What are the implications of such naming practices on intercultural communication?

In both Groups, the code 'Embodies a wish' has figured a number of times, indicating that this was an important issue for the participants when discussing the 'appropriateness' of a name. Examples include the wish to portray a particular image, (e.g. 'Emperor', 'Steel', 'Ironman', 'Queen', as mentioned by MJ) as well as avoiding mockery and giving the wrong impression to others, such as being treated as stupid or someone who worships money. The latter point was a particularly strong concern for both Groups, and the question of how native-speakers would react to the name was a recurring issue. However, the potential reaction of other Chinese speakers to the names was only discussed by members of Group A. This may have implications on intercultural communication, as it suggests that in a communicative situation between a Chinese student and a native-English speaker, the former may be unconsciously positioning him/herself in relation to not only the immediate interlocutor but also the invisible Chinese community. The fact that members of Group B did not refer to this issue at all would suggest that native-English speakers, in the same communicative situation, would not be aware of this negotiation of positioning which may be occurring.

Instead, one of the primary concerns of the tutors in Group B was surrounding the reception of students' 'English' names among native-speakers, and the impact this could have on the acculturation or foreignisation of students. Based on this observation, it can be suggested that they have a heightened awareness of issues that could prevent the students from acculturating. Underlying this concern is also the
assumption that the reason behind students' adoption of 'English' names is, at least in part, a wish to blend into the local culture. Such an interpretation would suggest that 'English' name adoption is a manifestation of students' integrative motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Elements of integrative orientation can indeed be observed within the discussions among students in Group A. However, there is not enough evidence to suggest that there is a correlation between this and 'English' name usage. In fact, SZ (Pair 2) is the only participant to explicitly discuss the role of names in facilitating integration into another culture. According to her, "the name is the first step to get involved". This is an issue which merits further attention, as it relates closely to the RQ III, which examines how the name adoption is linked to students' sense of identity and investment in language learning. The interviews in the second phase will focus more closely on these issues.

Another recurring theme, particularly prominent among members of Group A, is the issue of 'Ease'. Although the tutors in Pair 6 do mention once that 'English' names are easier to remember than Chinese names, most of the tutors either avoid or simply do not mention this point. This could be explained by the above-mentioned sensitivity towards the imposition of cultural norms and a preference among tutors to use Chinese students' own names as a sign of respect. In comparison, the discussions among students indicate that they are strongly aware of the fact that their own names could cause difficulties for native-speakers. Furthermore, their comments suggest that they are making conscious decisions in favour of using names that are easier for native-speakers to pronounce and remember, thus demonstrating integrative motivation and efforts to close the social distance (Schumann, 1976) between themselves and the TL community.
Precedence, familiarity and common usage are another of the recurring issues, mentioned by members of both Groups to justify their selection of ‘appropriate’ names. One example of this is found in the way MJ (Pair 3) places the name ‘Tower’ at fourth place, a considerably higher position than what any of the other participants have chosen (see figure 3, Appendix H), because she knows a person who uses this as his ‘English’ name. This illustrates how perceptions can vary greatly depending on whether or not one has previously encountered a person with a particular name. Thus it can also be inferred that tutors, who have frequent contact with students with ‘English’ names are likely to have encountered a variety of names and therefore consider a wide range of names to be acceptable. Caution should therefore be taken in inferring from this data, as the opinions expressed in the discussions among tutors cannot be considered to be representative of most native-speakers, who do not have the same level of contact with international students. It is, however, possible to suggest that such differences in perception could lead to misunderstandings and misrepresentations, creating potential problems for communicative situations between Chinese students and native-speakers or people of other nationalities.

Given that every communicative situation is context-specific, it is not possible to draw any conclusions at this stage as to the exact nature of the impact ‘English’ name adoption could have on intercultural communication. However, there is clear evidence to suggest that mismatches of expectations exist between individuals of different backgrounds, and this is likely to affect the communication that takes place between them.
RQ III. What is the relationship between students’ sense of identity, investment in language learning and ‘English’ name adoption?

The question identified in the literature review of whether ‘English’ names holds a significant link with the students’ sense of identity can be discussed in light of the comment made by RX (Pair 3), that some of the names could not be used long term because they were too childish. Pair 2 also mention that names which follow or resemble Chinese phonetic patterns are preferable, as this enables the name to be transferred into Chinese easily. This correlates with Heffernan (2010)’s findings that the ‘English’ names have a wider usage than simply for communicating with non-Chinese speakers, but are also often used among Chinese speakers. The comments indicate that for these students, the ‘English’ names are not limited to temporary use for communicating in English during their stay in the UK, but can have long-term value and occupy a significant place in their personal or public identity. This issue will be explored further in the next section, which will explore the investment students make in acculturating to the local British context, and how this is reflected in their attitudes towards their ‘English’ name usage.

4.3. Phase 2: One-to-one interviews

As RQ I has been covered extensively in the above section, the discussion in this phase will be focused on addressing RQs II and III, exploring how the notions of belonging and identity figure in the data, as well as investment in language learning and intercultural communication. Transcriptions of the relevant sections of the interviews have been presented in full in Appendix F.
RQ II. What are the implications of such naming practices on intercultural communication?

Firstly, it must be noted that although the interviews were originally designed to involve two participants who had adopted an ‘English’ name and two who had not, it became apparent during the interview with LT that she was in fact an example of the former. This does not affect the validity of the study, as the principal issues being explored remain unchanged. Indeed, this discovery led to a realisation that such distinctions are somewhat arbitrary when one considers cases like LT’s; her ‘English’ name is ‘Lynn’, which is a homophone of her surname, Lin. The difference is only evident in writing, which is why the researcher had failed to realise that the name she had been using throughout the year was, in fact, English. This indicates that LT considers each of the two names to have a function, and therefore raises the question of the mode of usage and purpose served by ‘English’ names.

Among those participants who use ‘English’ names, there is a clear division of purpose for their Chinese and ‘English’ names. For example, LT explains how she uses her Chinese name with Chinese people, while she introduces herself as ‘Lynn’ to English people, as she believes they would have difficulty pronouncing her Chinese name. This is surprising considering her Chinese name, Lin Tao, seems relatively easy to pronounce, especially compared to names such as Sijia (SL). A more plausible explanation may lie in the following citation:

*But if I introduce myself to English people... if I introduce first my Chinese name and explain my Chinese name, the meaning, because you know, every one of us have a meaning. And then, as for English name it is like a signal for us, to make others know who we are.* (LT)
From this, it can be suggested that the Chinese name is one which has a personal significance for LT, as it carries a meaning, whereas the 'English' name is used as a label to facilitate social interaction with non-Chinese people. Similarly, SZ has a clear sense of division of usage for her two names, using her 'English' name for non-Chinese people. One exception to this rule is when her lecturer addresses her by her Chinese name. This demonstrates that she is willing to adapt her personal rules of usage to the expectations of others. Such consideration for others is also observable in the interview with SL, who uses the name 'Mira' in order to save embarrassment for non-Chinese people who are unable to pronounce her name, Sijia, correctly. However, if her interlocutor is someone who is interested in Chinese culture, she would use her Chinese name, as he/she is likely to have the "capability to pronounce your name right" (SL). Thus it appears that all three interviewees place greater emphasis on accommodating the needs of others, rather than their own personal preference. One exception to this pattern is MJ, who has not adopted an 'English' name; although she mentions that her Chinese name is relatively easy for English-speakers to pronounce, she stresses that she would not have adopted an 'English' name had the pronunciation been more difficult:

10:16
But still, I do not have the intention to change. Because I look like a Asian, and I talk like a Asian, I behave like a Asian. Everything I do was a Asian. If I have another name, it's like I have another character. (MJ)

MJ's stance correlates closely with that of the tutors who participated in the pair discussions, as higher importance is given to individual preference than making the name more accessible to others. Moreover, both MJ and SL cite examples of British names, which are considered 'appropriate', yet have a negative or undesirable connotation, such as 'Di', which is short for Diana but also a homophone for 'die', and 'Dick', which is short for Richard. Given that her friend, Richard, does not seem
concerned by the meanings associated with his name, SL concludes that such issues are a matter of individual preference: "It's just up to person individually, I think". (21:46)

Such examples serve to highlight that in many instances names with negative connotations are considered 'appropriate' in the UK. Thus it is also plausible that if Chinese students insisted on using their own names, even if they cause pronunciation difficulties or have negative connotations attached to them, with sufficient time they may become accepted and normalised. Furthermore, given that 'Familiarity' was one of the salient points raised in the first phase of this study, the availability of diverse names in the population may eventually lead to those names being considered appropriate by native-speakers. Evidently, this would require openness on the part of native-speakers to different cultural norms, and while tutors participating in this study may be accustomed to this, it may take longer for the general public to adopt this approach.

Another relevant issue raised during the interviews is the power relations underlying the adoption of 'English' names. This is highlighted in the interview with SL, who normally uses her 'English' name with all non-Chinese people, except with her lecturer, because he has always called her by her Chinese name. Surprised that a native-speaker would want to use her Chinese name, she explains her interpretation of the situation thus:

*Actually, when I... before I come to the my English teacher ask me to choose a English name, because he told me, When you go to the university, many teacher...teachers would like to call your English name. But when I... when such as DH called my Chinese name seemed a little bit weird, but I think, maybe because he is interested in Chinese culture, so he likes calling Chinese name. (SZ)*
She tells the interviewer that she does not mind this, and nothing in her voice or manner seems to reveal any signs of hidden feelings. However, this accommodating attitude could be interpreted as pointing at underlying power relations; it is possible, for instance, that SZ has accepted her lecturer's use of her Chinese name because she regards him as a figure of authority. Indeed, this is the reason given by MJ to explain why she was not able to change her 'English' name, which was given to her by her teacher at school:

*Interviewer: Did you not say, “I want another name”?*
*MJ: No, because...you see, Chinese people always obey the rules, obey the orders. It's like a order - I'm order...I'm number 11. It's like a number or something in her class.*

Such relations of power therefore have a strong influence over one's behaviour, and often not evident because they can differ across cultures. If Chinese students are transferring such patterns of behaviour to new contexts such as the UK, it is crucial that this be recognised in order to ensure there is good intercultural communication.

Finally, another key aspect of the interview which relates to RQ II is the importance given to the native-speaker. SL, who has used the name 'Mira' as her English name for over 10 years, describes how she was given the name by a stranger she met at the swimming pool. Previous to that, she had used the name 'Polly', which was given to her English teacher. When she met the "foreigner" at the pool, she asked him to give her a "proper" name, because she felt that her teacher "may not be that professional about names, because they're also foreign to the native language, I mean to English" (2:45). She did not research the name and adopted it immediately:

*Once I adopt it, I just told others my name is Mira, so it became my name naturally.*

This relates to the issues of power relations discussed in the former paragraph, as SL treats the native-speaker as an authority in selecting 'English' names, despite having
only just met him. Later, however, SL contradicts herself by suggesting that teachers do know how to select proper names, as they have the necessary knowledge and awareness of cultural issues:

18:43
I think that teachers will choose more proper name, like Eddy or yeah... as far as I know, some of my mates are working as teachers in educational institution but their name is quite proper.

Thus it suggests that her lack of confidence in her teacher's ability to choose a proper name may not only be related to the fact that she is a non-native speaker. Perhaps an alternative interpretation could be that the name, 'Polly', carries negative associations for SL: The name refers to a parrot in an English textbook, and seems to have been given to her as a form of reprimand for talking too much in class. However, there are other instances in LS's interview where a superior status granted to native-speakers. For example, she describes how her concerns about the accuracy of her grammar results in her feeling more nervous when speaking English in front of native-speakers:

SL: Sometimes, when I speak English... especially in front of... but not in front of people who are native-speaker, because there will be many grammar mistakes, but compared to people from other countries, maybe speak in front of them maybe I will feel more confident. But if I speak Chinese, of course I will find more confident because there is no barrier of communication and things.

It could be suggested that the image of the native-speaker is somewhat intertwined with SL's image of the 'ideal language self' (Dornyei, 2007: 690), and this is contributing to an imbalanced power relationship, in which she is inferior to the native-speakers.
RQ III. What is the relationship between students' sense of identity, investment in language learning and 'English' name adoption?

This section investigates whether the interviewees are developing a new social identity, and how this is related to culture, language and names. One of the ways in which this question was dealt with was by exploring the level of attachment the participants displayed towards their Chinese and 'English' names. This is most directly addressed through Question 6, to which SL and SZ (who both use 'English' names) replied that they would not change their 'English' names again because they have become used to them. LT, who uses the name, 'Lynn', because of its closeness to her surname, Lin, explains how she would change her name if she found a more 'appropriate' one:

LT: Yeah. But I am searching for a more appropriate name for me, but no result, so I just keep Lynn as my English name.

On the other hand, MJ, who has not adopted an 'English' name, demonstrates a very strong attachment to her Chinese name, explaining that it has a personal significance to her:

23:35

If I like it, I will continue using it. For example, my name was given by my grandfather. And I worship him, and he's a good man, and he's my hero ever since I was a little girl, so I do not have any intention to change that.

Thus among all the participants, MJ demonstrates the strongest degree of attachment to her name. Those who have adopted an 'English' name seem to want to continue using their names mainly for pragmatic considerations. This would suggest that they the level of personal investment in a new social identity may not be very high. However, their responses to Question 7 indicate that they may be developing a new voice or character through the use of English and 'English' names, as all of the
participants described experiencing changes to their character. In the case of LT, the anxiety of making mistakes in English appears to be at times prohibitive, with the former stating that she does not feel herself:

LT: Yeah (laughs) And I think er... yes, no like the real me, when I speak English, because sometimes I will feel anxious.

As already mentioned, SL also describes similar feelings, but in her case she explains that she has become accustomed to speaking English, to the extent that certain issues related to her studies, as well as some daily topics, are easier to discuss in English:

10:00
Actually now, I'm more used to use English to explain things, because some concepts are difficult to find... to explain in Chinese now", such as professional knowledge she has acquired during her studies.

11:25
SL: sometimes we will just have small things we can only explain in English

This is most probably due to the fact that SL spends the majority of her time in company of her partner, a native-English speaker. This clearly marks SL as a unique case, as none of the other interviewees have reported similar experiences and they have limited contact with native-speakers and few opportunities to speak English:

(SZ, 17:08)
SZ: English is our second language, but when we want to express some... something if we use Chinese we can understand... we can totally understand, but English maybe cannot...
Interviewer: Not fully? SZ:
Yeah, not fully.

SZ and MJ, on the other hand, describe positive changes to their personality and an increased level of confidence. Moreover, the former states that when she uses her 'English' name, she feels like she is "half foreigner and half Chinese". Her responses suggest that she may be at the beginning of developing a personality, which she associates with the use of English and her 'English' name, in other words a voice in her L2. If indeed this is the case, it is worth noting that a perfect command of the language
is not needed in order to begin this process. Similarly, MJ explains how the changes to her behaviour and communication style has impacted on her sense of identity:

(MJ, 15:50)
When I speak in English, I become much more outgoing or something. When I speak Chinese I'm more reserved, and even though I am reserved others can understand what I mean. But when speaking English I have to explain it in case do not get any confusion about that.

(MJ, 17:31)
for me I feel like a different person.

In her case, however, the changes are not related to the use of an 'English' name, as she has maintained the use of her Chinese name. This implies that such investments in social identities need not be linked to the adoption of 'English' names, but rather to one's willingness to adapt to the norms of the TL group. Indeed, SZ mentions her willingness to "communicate with others", which may be one of the keys to developing a new social identity.

Thus it appears that all of the interviewees demonstrate, in varying degrees, signs of developing a sense of identity associated with the use of English or 'English' names. But how is this reflected in the level of investment they have made in improving their language skills and adapting to cultural norms and practices in the UK? It has already been noted that SL is the only interviewee to use English more often on a daily basis than Chinese, as the other three participants appear to spend most of their time in the company of Chinese speakers:

26:21
LT: And also to communicate with native speakers, and…
Interviewer: Have you done a lot of that?
LT: No, only communicate to you, and to our classmates, because I have no opportunities…
Interviewer: Oh, it's such a shame
LT: Only to the supermarkets, shop, restaurant, something like that
Interviewer: Did you try to create opportunities or…at first maybe?
LT: No, because at first I will feel very shy to speak to a person I don't know, so…
One of the questions (10) was aimed at finding out whether the interviewees had been able to make friends with local and other non-Chinese students. This revealed that even SL, who has lived in the UK for two years and is engaged to be married to a British person, nonetheless has no British friends she would consider to be close. According to her, this may be because British people "like to keep a distance" (25:44). This supports the view put forward by Schumann (1976) that resistance from either the 2LL group or the TL group to close the gap. While this suggests that there is a lack of willingness, on the part of British people, to befriend non-British or Chinese people, comments by the other interviewees indicate that there may be other factors involved. Of particular interest is a comment made by MJ, where she describes her need to maintain a good relationship with her Chinese circle while also making English friends. She explains that although she values the friendships of English people, she needs the support of Chinese people as she can rely on them when faced with a serious problem. In her view, they can be trusted better, because they are in the same position as her. She also highlights the fact that they share the same habits and customs, which are different from British people's (e.g. going to bars and pubs). However, it appears that maintaining a close relationship with other Chinese students has consequences on the level of closeness one can have with students of other nationalities:

24:40
for Chinese people, if you are the person who always surrounded by local people, native...foreigners...English people or...they do not like you.

25:03
They will say that they worship the foreigners, so they feel ashamed for their own culture or something.
These citations highlight a new dimension to the issue of social distance, as there is a direct conflict between the relationship one has with the TL group and with the L1 community. This also correlates with the suggestion made earlier (section 4.2.2.) that in any instance of intercultural communication, the way in which one interacts with another may be influenced by factors beyond the immediate context (e.g. the ‘invisible’ Chinese community), and that an awareness of this is crucial for understanding the dynamics of the communicative taking place.

The final discussion of the interviews centres on the various strategies of positioning (Davies and Harré, 1990), which have been observed among the interviewees. These serve to highlight the nature of the identity the participants attempt to project through discourse. The first of these is the position all of the participants take, which is that of an ‘English major’, who has a better understanding of cultural issues than other students in the University. One such example is found in LT’s explanation of the adoption of unusual ‘English’ names found in the New York Times (Lee, 2001) article:

13:58
LT - It depends, I think if a person who doesn't have a long experience of learning English, maybe they will choose this kind of name to make them feel more like fashionable. And if for a person who learn English well, and also the culture of English well, they will not choose this kind of names, because they know the rules of choosing a name.

By presenting those people as having limited knowledge of English culture, and distancing herself from them, LT highlights the fact that she has a better understanding of both the language and cultural norms. Similarly, in the following citation, MJ distances herself from the other Chinese students in the University, underlining the fact that she is better integrated in British society than many of them, who rarely have any contact with non-Chinese people:
For them, they just change place to study. It does not seem like living in the UK.

They're all using the English name, but they still behave like the same as... when they go shopping, they say "I want this, I want that" and I can see that the sales lady do not feel that pleased, because it's not that polite, right? But it's still the same way in China, so for them it's the same. But for me I feel like a different person.

SZ also criticises the Chinese youth from the New York Times article for choosing unusual names to "make themself be different" (8:41), thus positioning herself as someone who understands and respects the cultural norms in the UK:

(SZ, 7:25)
SZ: I think it's not a good way to choose these names, because so ridiculous. Because I think, maybe, these people want to be... want to show their difference and want to be special, but I think it's not a good way to respect other people.
Interviewer: No? Oh right. How is it related to respect for other people?
SZ: You can use some normal... not normal but some English names which sounds great or nice and most of the people can... are familiar with. But these names, er... 'Feeling' I think is quite weird.

Through these discussions, and by positioning themselves in contrast with others, the interviewees are presenting themselves as being far more invested in integrating and adapting to the culture in the UK.

Another example of positioning, which also has implications for intercultural communication, is found in the responses to Question 5 in two separate interviews. When asked whether the use of an 'English' name or Chinese name could result in a difference in the treatment one receives, both SZ and SL indicated that they would prefer to not mention their nationality if it is not required by the situation. SL explains that while in face-to-face contact her Chinese origin is evident, in written communication she uses her 'English' name because she would be shown more respect: 

because I will find people will respect you more. It's not because you're Chinese because you can use the language quite properly. And they may not know your
nationality, so even if they have any discrimination or this, like, to the foreign people, they may not know you are English or from any nationality.

Her comments suggest a certain degree of cautiousness and demonstrate how she attempts to manipulate the communication she has with others by deliberately making her nationality ambiguous to avoid being positioned as Chinese. In a similar fashion, SZ states that if she uses an 'English' name others would not be able to guess if she is Chinese, Japanese or Korean. Although she insists that she is proud of her heritage and does not believe Chinese people are treated differently to other foreigners, she would nonetheless prefer to avoid revealing her nationality:

(SZ, 9:17)
Treat me as a Chinese. If I use my English name, someone would think I'm a Japanese or Korean maybe. But Chinese name...when I use my Chinese name, she can notice that, oh, I am Chinese.

(SZ, 10:00)
I just don't want to tell the foreigners I'm a Chinese.

(SZ, 11:06)
No, I use my English name not to cover my nationality, but use English is only a good way to get involved with foreign cultures, but I'm still proud of my Chinese name, because it's my real name in the reality so...yes

It is not clear from her account why she feels that it is preferable to keep her nationality ambiguous. However, both examples suggest that the interviewees perceive their nationality as somewhat hindering or impacting on their interactions with others. SL describes feeling like an outsider and an inability to find a "sense of belonging" (32:05), and gives an example which illustrates the type of communication problems they have encountered. According to her, it is very common for Chinese people to call a local taxi service and to find that the employees end the call when they have difficulty understanding the caller or recognising the street name. She attributes this treatment not only to language-related difficulties but also the fact that she is an outsider:
On the other hand, SL also acknowledges that she may also be interpreting the situation in a negative light:

maybe it's because I found myself still not belong to here, so I can have this kind of sensitive feeling. Maybe they're not, but it's just my feeling.

However, this example provides an insight into the challenges faced by the Chinese students in integrating into the local culture, and highlights how successful intercultural communication depends on our ability to "deal with unfamiliar cultural practices when we encounter people from different cultural backgrounds" (Holliday, 2013: xvi).
5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1. Summary and Conclusions

I. Are there any differences in attitudes between Chinese students and tutors towards the 'appropriateness' of particular names?

The results of the study suggest that there are in fact many similarities in the approaches taken by Chinese students and native-English tutors when assessing the 'appropriateness' of names. However, they have also highlighted many subtle differences which could potentially lead to communication problems. The study has helped to demonstrate that nationality is not enough to explain many of these differences, as similarities and differences can be found within, as well as between different nationality groups. Indeed, culture has traditionally been perceived as almost synonymous to nationalities, but this has led to essentialist notions which are not helpful to facilitating interpersonal communication between individuals of different backgrounds. The results of this study lend support to the "critical theories of culture" (Baker, 2009: 570) which takes "a more dynamic and heterogeneous perspective on culture and reject as simplistic the equation of a language, culture, and national identity" (ibid.). This is not, however, to imply that there are no similarities within each nationality group. Evidently, being part of the same historical and cultural heritage leads to a certain amount of shared cultural resources. By carrying out the first phase in pairs and in multiple sessions, instead of one focus group, it was possible to identify certain attitudes and patterns of thinking which characterise each nationality group. The tutors in Group B, for example, tended to hesitate to make any strong statements about the names, emphasising instead the role of the individual in determining its
'appropriateness'. Factors such as how it represented the person's character and self-image, and the creative process of selecting a name were considered by some as important, but opinions were somewhat divided when these conflicted with another major concern: the risk that the names would alienate the students from the TL community or cause them to be ridiculed. The MA students in Group A generally showed less hesitation in taking part in the task, and considered familiar and classic British names to be most 'appropriate' choices. RX (Pair 3) was the only member of this Group to state that he saw no problems arising from the use of any of the names. Most of the students also tended to emphasise native-speaker norms, which has the effect of placing native-speakers in a superior position, and could be a reflection of the power imbalance that has lately become a major concern in ELT (see section 2.3.). They demonstrated awareness of there being a difference between current and old-fashioned names, as well as potential problems caused by the use of names with connotations. However, they did not identify the same issues as Group B members, such as the fact that the use of classic English names by Chinese people may not match the expectations of native-speakers, and could lead to confusion rather than smooth intercultural communication.

II. What are the implications of such naming practices on intercultural communication?

One of the findings from the study is that great importance is placed by all participants on the avoidance of embarrassment, both for the students themselves and their interlocutors, who may find difficulties with the pronunciation of a name. Although this means that caution is applied to the selection of names, the different cultural
resources available to each individual could result in mismatches of expectations and thus misunderstandings. For example, members of both Groups rely on 'Familiarity' as a means to assess the 'appropriateness' of names. However, there is a risk that the types of names they have had contact with differ greatly, resulting in different notions of 'appropriateness'. Furthermore, some of the discussions between the students provide an insight into the process of navigation and sense-making that they are undertaking. An example of this is found in SL's argument that since names which she would find strange, such as 'Monday', is an accepted surname, 'Dollar' may also be considered to be 'appropriate'. She is thus applying what she knows to the analysis of names, and demonstrating flexibility in order to accommodate cultural norms which are foreign to her. This willingness to adapt could help to facilitate cross-cultural communication. A similar sort of openness can be found among the tutors, many of whom consider names with negative connotations to be 'appropriate', so long as they are students' real or preferred names. This suggests that the Western tendency to place importance on the link between names and individual identity (see section 2.4.) may be playing a facilitative role in intercultural communication.

### III. What is the relationship between students' sense of identity, investment in language learning and 'English' name adoption?

In section 1.2., it was suggested that 'English' name adoption may possibly signal a desire to acculturate to the TL culture, and the maintenance of Chinese names could thus represent a preference for preservation. However, as predicted in the literature review (section 2.3.), the picture is far more complex than this would suggest. In her interview, MJ explains how the majority of students in the Business School adopt
'English' names but make no efforts to adapt their behaviour. Moreover, although the interviewees themselves state their interest in integrating, and certainly do demonstrate examples of adapting their behaviours, they also report to mainly spending time with other Chinese students. Thus 'preservation' and 'acculturation' are both present in their attitudinal orientation, perhaps indicating that they are investing in language learning but not a new identity. However, there is also evidence to suggest the contrary; as discussed in 4.3., there are signs that SZ and MJ in particular are beginning to develop a voice which they associate with the use of English and 'English' names. Another related issue is whether or not the selection of 'English' names point at integrative motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972) on the part of students. According to the data, tutors believe this to be somewhat true. The students, however, describe both, with some commenting that names are the first steps to getting involved in a culture, and others stressing the practical ease of using an 'English' name.

Finally, the study highlights that power relations also have an important role to play in the practice of 'English' name adoption. As seen in the interviews, students very often decide to adopt an 'English' name, prompted by their teachers; some feel obliged to "obey" (MJ) their teachers and use the names they are given, even if they do not like them. If the adoption of names is seen as a means to "play around with your identity" (DW, Pair 6), it can be suggested that the absence of individual choice may inhibit the students' ability to develop a strong sense of attachment towards their 'English' names. In this light, MJ's refusal to use an 'English' name, and SL's decision to replace the name given by her teacher could be seen as examples of the 'coercive relations of power' described by Edwards (2006: 95). As already mentioned, there may not be a causative relationship between 'English' name adoption and the students' investment in language learning; however, it is nonetheless important to note that the relations of
power, which underlie the imposition of names, may be preventing many students from developing a sense of ownership towards their use of English. Tutors who participated in the present study demonstrated acute awareness of this power imbalance and its potential implications, and attempted to redress it by focusing on the preference of students themselves. As a consequence, some seem to consider the use of students' Chinese names as a sign of respect. Such good intentions, however, can still result in a miscommunication: SZ considers it "a little weird" that her lecturer calls her by her Chinese name, but believes this is because of his interest in Chinese culture. This particular example is unlikely to have any serious consequences. However, it demonstrates that the processes involved in *positioning* and identity negotiation are particularly complex in cross-cultural communication, as those involved are likely to have many different cultural resources. Thus intercultural communication requires an ability to adapt behaviours and attitudes according to the context and people involved.

5.2. Limitations

Due to the small scale of this study and the qualitative methods employed, there is not sufficient evidence to draw general conclusions, although it has served to raise many pertinent questions. As the interviews were carried out with only four participants, it may face the problems of generalizability typically associated with case studies. As suggested by Dornyei (2007: 153), multiple case studies would "have satisfactory face validity because of their comparative nature". The interviews were designed to cover a number of issues, which resulted in some of the issues being left unexplored. The nature of learner identity would merit closer attention through further studies,
perhaps focusing solely on the attachment one forms with the adopted names. Moreover, as with any self-reported data, the reliability of the data could be affected by the 'social desirability bias' (Dornyei, 2007: 54). In other words, interviewees may have given responses that they consider to be socially acceptable, rather than the truth. Moreover, “in order to meet social expectations”, they may have over-reported "desirable attitudes and behaviours while underreporting those that are socially not respected" (ibid.).

5.3. Further Research

The findings of this study provide insights into the power relations underlying the practice of 'English' name adoption. As it relates closely to key current debates in the field of ELT, such as English as a lingua franca (House, 1999; Seidlhofer, 2001) and linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), this issue would merit further investigation, perhaps through case studies of long-term residents in the UK who have adopted 'English' names. Another issue raised by this study, which could be investigated further, is the challenge faced by students who attempt to strike a balance between 'preservation' and 'acculturation' (Schumann: 1976), by maintaining closeness with their L1 community and also reaching out to the TL community. Both Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis would be possible approaches for exploring this, as they could offer new perspectives and enable the underlying power relations to be unveiled.
References


House, J. (1999) 'Misunderstanding in intercultural communication: Interactions in English as a lingua franca and the myth of mutual intelligibility'
In C. Gnutzmann (Ed.), *Teaching and learning English as a global language.* Tubingen: Stauffenburg, 73-89.


Bibliography


Appendices

Appendix A - Names from pre-sessional course

This list of names was created based on names collected from a sample of students enrolled on the Pre-sessional course at the University of [anonymous]. The names were then organised into categories in order to create a list of names for the first phase data collection (see section 3.3.). It must be noted that a certain degree of subjectivity was unavoidable. However, as a scoping exercise it proved to be useful in ensuring that the final list reflected the range of names currently being used by students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Manny</th>
<th>Lippo**</th>
<th>Emma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fancy**</td>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Corki**</td>
<td>Joyce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady</td>
<td>Sicily</td>
<td>Pooh**</td>
<td>Felixus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>Jay</td>
<td>Deon</td>
<td>Katherine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Danney (spelling?)</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Julie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Quintus</td>
<td>Roson</td>
<td>Michael</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leo</td>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Ace</td>
<td>Janice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Jocelyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pixie**</td>
<td>How (Chinese forename: Hao)</td>
<td>Lilly</td>
<td>Tommy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline</td>
<td>Hulk**</td>
<td>Ivy</td>
<td>Teddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Coral</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dora</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>Iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benny</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>Cesar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Saber</td>
<td>Aleph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil</td>
<td>Bear</td>
<td>Hunter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td>Lampard*</td>
<td>Wish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Keys

- Normal British/American names
- Derivatives/nicknames
- Names which are close to own Chinese name
- Words which are not often used as names
  - *names which are usually surnames
  - **Could cause ridicule
- Positive Adjectives
- Number
- Old-fashioned names

81
## Final List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAMES</th>
<th>CATEGORIE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>Positive adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooh</td>
<td>Word which is not often used as names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Could cause ridicule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>Normal British/American name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old-fashioned name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poppy</td>
<td>Normal British/American name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nickname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echo</td>
<td>Word which is not often used as names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Normal British/American name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar</td>
<td>Word which is not often used as names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(from Heffernan, 2010:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower</td>
<td>Word which is not often used as names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(own data: former student)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; #9238;</td>
<td>Word which is not often used as names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(from Heffernan, 2010:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Word which is not often used as names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B - First phase task: ‘Appropriateness’ of names

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study.

Below is a list of names adopted by Chinese students in a British university. Please discuss and put these into an order of ‘appropriateness’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooh</td>
<td>2.3.4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poppy</td>
<td>6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echo</td>
<td>7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>8.9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar</td>
<td>10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions

☐ Can you think of any potential problems that the Chinese students could encounter by using these names in the UK?

☐ Would you use any of these for yourself / your children?

☐ Can you think of any other names you would consider to be ‘appropriate’?

☐ Can you think of any other names you would consider to be ‘inappropriate’?
Appendix C - Information sheet & Consent form: Task 1

**INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM**

**MA Dissertation research:** English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

My research investigates the use of English names by Chinese students in British higher education. In this pair activity, I am interested in finding out how you think about the 'appropriateness' of particular English names used by Chinese students.

Participation is voluntary. If you would like to participate, please sign below to show that you agree to your discussion being recorded and the data being discussed in my research.

The data will be kept securely in the University of [Redacted] computer system, which is password protected.

**Consent Form**

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

**Name:** [Redacted]

**Signed:** [Redacted]

**Date:** 17-7-2014

For further information, please contact me on [Redacted]
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

MA Dissertation research

Topic: English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

My research investigates the use of English names by Chinese students in British higher education. In this pair activity, I am interested in finding out how you think about the 'appropriateness' of particular English names used by Chinese students.

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The data will be kept securely in the University of [redacted] computer system, which is password protected.

Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: [redacted]
Signed: [redacted]
Date: 17th July 2014

For further information, please contact me on [redacted].
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

MA Dissertation research

Topic: English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

My research investigates the use of English names by Chinese students in British higher education. In this pair activity, I am interested in finding out how you think about the 'appropriateness' of particular English names used by Chinese students.

Participation is voluntary. If you would like to participate, please sign below to show that you agree to your discussion being recorded and the data being discussed in my research.

The data will be kept securely in the University of [redacted] computer system, which is password protected.

Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: Selina ZHONG
Signed: Selina Zhong
Date: 17/7/2014

For further information, please contact me on [redacted].
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

MA Dissertation research

Topic: English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

My research investigates the use of English names by Chinese students in British higher education. In this pair activity, I am interested in finding out how you think about the 'appropriateness' of particular English names used by Chinese students.

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Name: [ ]
Signed: [ ]
Date: [ ]

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I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: RUI XIONG

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 23/07/2014

For further information, please contact me on [Contact Information].
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: M. Jing

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 23/07/2014

For further information, please contact me on [Contact Information].
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I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: [ ]
Signed: [ ]
Date: 24th July 2014

For further information, please contact me on [ ]
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Topic: English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: LI CHEN
Signed: LI CHEN
Date: 24th July, 2014

For further information, please contact me on
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

MA Dissertation research

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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: Hooman Sattari

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 25/7/14

For further information, please contact me on [Contact Information]
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: A [REDACTED]
Signed: [REDACTED]
Date: 25/7/14

For further information, please contact me on [REDACTED]
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Name: [Redacted]
Signed: [Signature]
Date: 25/7/14

For further information, please contact me on [Redacted]
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Name: [Redacted]
Signed: [Redacted]
Date: 25/3/14

For further information, please contact me on [Redacted]
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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: Catherine Michel

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 1. 8. 2014

For further information, please contact me on [ ]
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: IAN HUTCHINSON

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 18.08.2014

For further information, please contact me on [redacted]
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

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Topic: English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

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The data will be kept securely in the University of [redacted] computer system, which is password protected.

Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: Helen Steward

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 7/8/14

For further information, please contact me on [redacted]
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

MA Dissertation research

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The data will be kept securely in the University of __'s computer system, which is password protected.

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I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: [Sign]

Signed: [Sign]

Date: 7/8/2014

For further information, please contact me on [Contact Information]
Appendix D - Information sheet & Consent form: Task 2

INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM
MA Dissertation research

Topic: English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

First of all, thank you for participating in the first phase of my research. As you know, I am investigating the use of English names by Chinese students in British higher education.

In this follow-up interview, I am interested in finding out more about your personal experience of and attitudes towards the adoption of English name by Chinese students.

Participation is completely voluntary, and I will make arrangements to be as flexible as possible to find a convenient time for you. The interview should last about 30 minutes, and the data will be kept securely in the University of _____'s computer system, which is password protected. Please note that because this research deals with name choices, your name will be mentioned in the dissertation.

Finally, to thank you for your participation there will be a small gift and I would also be happy to participate in any of your research projects in return.

If you would like to participate, please sign below to show that you agree to your discussion being recorded and the data being discussed in my research.

Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: SIYU ZHANG

Signed: SIYU ZHANG

Date: 21/9/14

For further information, please contact me on ☑️ ☑️
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: Sijin Lu

Signed: Sijin Lu

Date: 21.09.2014

For further information, please contact me on
INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

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Topic: English name choice of Chinese ESL learners

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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: [Redacted]
Signed: [Redacted]
Date: 21.09.2014

For further information, please contact me on [Redacted]
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Consent Form

I give my consent to the use of my responses in the above-mentioned research project, and accept that my name will be mentioned in the research.

Name: [Redacted] (Mu Ting)

Signed: [Redacted] Mu

Date: 21/09/2014

For further information, please contact me on [Redacted]
### Appendix E - Interview questions

#### Figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>How long have you had your English name? Have you had any others?</td>
<td>Have you always used your Chinese name, or have you ever used an English name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>How did you choose your English name?</td>
<td>How did you choose your English name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>During your stay in the UK, when have you used your English name and when have you used your Chinese name?</td>
<td>During your stay in the UK, have you always used your Chinese name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>a, b, c</td>
<td>Why do you think many Chinese people use English names?</td>
<td>Why do you use your Chinese name instead of an English one? Would you ever consider using an English name (again)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>a, b, c, d</td>
<td>How do you think people would treat you if you used your Chinese name instead of an English one?</td>
<td>How do you think people would treat you if you used an English name instead of your Chinese one?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>a, c</td>
<td>Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again?</td>
<td>Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>a, c</td>
<td>Do you feel like a different person when you're speaking English to when you're speaking Chinese?</td>
<td>What do you think about the NYT article on 'English' name adoption by young professionals in China?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>b, c, d</td>
<td>Do you feel like a different person when you're speaking English to when you're speaking Chinese?</td>
<td>What would you do if you found out that your English name actually had sounded like something ame in a hidden meaning in English? Or that it was aruden's name and not a woman's? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic group, e.g. African, Indian, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>a, b, c</td>
<td>Was very rude? Or that it was a man's name and not a woman's? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic group, e.g. African, Indian, etc.?</td>
<td>name and not a woman's? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic group, e.g. African, Indian, etc.?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>b, c</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking back when you first arrived here, how well do you feel you have adapted to life in the UK? (e.g. British culture, frequency of English usage, number of British friends, extra-curricular activities)

What do you think helped you the most to adapt to life here?

How much do you think your English has improved since you came to the UK?

Would you be interested in living in the UK or outside of China long-term? Why/Why not?

What should I have asked you that I haven't yet asked?

104
Appendix F - Interview transcriptions

1. LT

1. Have you always used your Chinese name, or have you ever used an English name?

The interview revealed that the participant is in fact an example of a student who uses an English name, which is phonetically similar to her Chinese name. This resulted in the questions, which were prepared for use with those who had not adopted an English name, being adapted during the interview.

00:58
LT: This is my English name. L Y N N. It is similar pronunciation to my surname so I just pick it up from the dictionary. I searched for dictionary there are thousand of English names, so I want to keep the L, the first letter, so I just looked for the L and then I found Lynn so I choose this as my English name.

As this citation shows, this participant selected her name from an English dictionary. In addition, this was prompted by the fact that she was studying English as her major and therefore requested by her teacher to use an English name.

2. How did you choose your English name?

3. During your stay in the UK, have you always used your Chinese name?

2:18
LT: Erm… it depends. For Chinese students, they use my Chinese name, and for other students, you just call me Lynn. And I guess no one call me Tao.”

2:50
Interviewer: What do your Chinese friends call you?
LT: Lin Tao
Interviewer: Ahh, Lin Tao, not Tao Lin
LT: Yeah

3:30
Interviewer - I noticed that the teachers were calling you Tao Lin”
LT - Yeah, I don't know why

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
LT: For Chinese people, it is more comfortable for them to use Chinese name, so I just introduce myself in Chinese name. And for you, maybe it's hard for you to pronounce my Chinese name, so I will introduce myself: I am Lynn.

LT: If I speak to them (Chinese people) in English maybe I will use English name because it's more casual… sounds more natural. If I say Tao Lin, I think it's not a … If I want to introduce my Chinese name, I will speak Chinese.
Interviewer: I see, so it's kind of like kept for Chinese language, and Lynn is for when you're speaking English. LT:
Yeah.

LT: In most time, I'm with Chinese people

4. Why do you use your Chinese name instead of an English one? Would you ever consider using an English name (again)?

7:03
LT: Maybe, is it more fashion?
Interviewer: Ah yeah?
LT: Yeah. You know, I think this situation will happen when I speak to Chinese people, because if I introduce myself, "Hi, I'm Lynn", you know...this will make me sound more international.

LT: But if I introduce myself to English people...some foreigner...if I introduce first my Chinese name and explain my Chinese name, the meaning, because you know, every one of us have a meaning. And then, as for English name it is like a signal for us, to make others know who we are.

The reason why she feels the need to explain the meaning is:

8:08
LT: It's more...how to say...it's a kind of characters. It will, you know, there is a saying in China that the name will influence your life. My name is more like a boy name, boy's name, so I'm more outgoing. And like Li Chen, her name is more girl, you know
Interviewer: And she's very girly?
LT: Yeah
Interviewer: Really?
LT: Yeah, so the name will influence somebody, in China

5. How do you think people would treat you if you used an English name instead of your Chinese one? (opinion)

6. Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again? (experience and behaviours)

7. Do you feel like a different person when you're speaking English to when you're speaking Chinese? (developing a voice)

10:12
LT: After I came to the UK, you know, I sometimes I will imitate the pronunciation of the native speaker, their pronounce. I think it's more...how to say...it's more like British people, not so open like American people. It's like more...royal...royal.
Interviewer: Royal? (laughs)
LT: Yeah (laughs) And I think er...yes, no like the real me, when I speak English, because sometimes I will feel anxious.
Interviewer: Anxious?
LT: Yeah, anxious when I speak English, because I will think "oh is it correct?" or "is it grammatical correct?" something like that.

Although she has been taught and had a lot more contact with American accepts, LT says, "But I prefer British English now." (12:00)

8. What do you think about the article on 'English' names adoption by young Chinese in China? (for example the employees in a Shanghai based company)

14:15 LT: I think the reasons why they choose this kind of English name is that, like Skywalker, maybe this is the person who really like the Star War, or like Satan? I don't know why people choose this kind of name. Cherry, I know Cherry, many Chinese girls will like this, yeah because... As for me, I have actually another kind of... not English name, erm for the application like Whatsapp in China. Ah, so like a username? Yeah, a username. I use 'Peach'... it's a fruit, so...

15:35 LT: If somebody around me took this kind of name, I will ask her or suggest him or her to change. Because it's not like a name, it's more like a username.
Interviewer: Yeah, ok, yeah there's a difference?
LT: Uhuh

16:06 LT: I just come across a few old-fashioned names, but they are name that Asian people would choose, but not this kind of names.

13:58 LT - It depends, I think if a person who doesn't have a long experience of learning English, maybe they will choose this kind of name to make them feel more like fashionable. And if for a person who learn English well, and also the culture of English well, they will not choose this kind of names, because they know the rules of choosing a name.

9. What would you do if you found out that your name sounded like something rude in English? Or that it was a man's name and not a woman's? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic community, e.g. African?

18:58 LT: I will change.
Interviewer: Yeah?
LT: Yeah. But I am searching for a more appropriate name for me, but no result, so I just keep Lynn as my English name. And if one day someone tell me that Lynn is a weird name or African group, or Indian group, maybe I would change it. Maybe Poppy is more fashion
Interviewer: But why would you change it? You know, what... I mean, wouldn't you feel attached to your name? After all, Lynn is very close to your real name. Or do you not feel that attached to it?

LT: Because it's not really close to the main British culture, because it's like the African culture, so I would like to choose English name more close to British native culture. Interviewer: Like Elizabeth or... something safe?

LT: Nicola

*Again, she mentions Nicola, which is one of her native-speaker classmates. Given that according to her she has little contact with native-speakers, it is evident that the familiarity of that name has a strong influence on her perception of what is typically British.

10. Thinking back at when you first arrived here, how well do you feel you have adapted to life in the UK? (specifically refer to British culture, frequency of English usage, number of British friends, number of international friends, extra-curricular activities.) What do you think helped you the most to adapt to life here?

LT responded that she had adapted to "the way people communicate", such as apologising and thanking more, and become aware of cultural differences with regard to socially acceptable types of questions:

23:42

LT: And also the way how to ask questions, you know, because sometimes Chinese people will like to ask you some private questions, but here, you know, we'll never ask somebody private questions.

Interviewer: Ah, right, like personal information?

LT: Personal questions, yeah. Maybe "you're single? or you're married?" I will never ask, because I think it's not polite way to ask somebody. So this is why I don't know how to, you know, get along with foreigners, because sometimes if I think this is a common question but others will think that it's impolite or rude...

This demonstrates an awareness LT has about her lack of knowledge about the cultural differences, and willingness to learn about the social conventions of British culture. However, she describes how this sensitivity has become a source of anxiety, preventing her from engaging in deep personal exchanges with other international or British students.

In response to the question, what helped her to adapt to life in the UK, LT responded that travelling to different cities and using English more often had played a significant role:

25:18

LT: When I travel to different cities and countries, I will... actually, I will use English more often. And I will hear somebody say how to buy a shoes, if I want this kind of size. Actually, at first I don't know how to ask the sales assistant to, you know, the size what I want, but now I can. And before I asked Nicola how to ask sales assistant something I want, she told me that "Can I have something?" it's more polite to ask, and don't say, "Do you have something?" like that.
LT: And also to communicate with native speakers, and…
Interviewer: Have you done a lot of that?
LT: No, only communicate to you, and to our classmates, because I have no opportunities…
Interviewer: Oh, it's such a shame
LT: Only to the supermarkets, shop, restaurant, something like that
Interviewer: Did you try to create opportunities or…at first maybe?
LT: No, because at first I will feel very shy to speak to a person I don't know, so…
Interviewer: And you had all these Chinese people around you?
LT: Yeah, this is the thing. At first, I want to speak English to the Chinese roommates, but I failed. Because often, several sentences, we will change to Chinese again.

However, she does not regret this as she still considers the experience of living abroad to have been beneficial:

LT: I think this is the kind of immersion to a culture, different culture from Chinese culture.
Interviewer: So you feel you’ve still had an immersion even though you’ve spent a lot of time with Chinese people?
LT: Yeah, because we are English majors, so we will come across some culture thing or we've learnt before, so we know that.

*Here she positions herself as an English major, emphasising that she has superior knowledge of British culture compared to others, such as those who are mentioned in the NYT article.

11. How much do you think your English has improved since you came to the UK?

LT believes her speaking has improved in particular, and that she has learnt a lot of daily language, as she is now able to understand native-speakers which was not possible when she first arrived in the UK. With regard to writing and reading, she feels her "Chinglish" has been replaced by "more native-language" that "people will use". However, she also expresses a wish to improve:

LT: I wish to be better

12. Would you be interested in living in the UK or outside of China long-term? Why/Why not?

LT: I'd like to live in UK now, but you know my parents asked me to go back home, so have to go back.
LT: I’d like to be a teacher here, if I have a chance, no matter Chinese teacher or in Chinese English school in UK, or staff in a company.
Interviewer: Yeah? Like what kind of company?
LT: Like a cooperation company between China and UK, because maybe they need this kind of stuff.

13. What should I have asked you that I haven’t yet asked?

LT: When I send an email to my supervisor, I will use my Chinese name, because is it more easy to recognise me? If I use my English name… maybe she will not know who you are. If I use Tao Lin she will recognise me immediately. Interviewer: I see.
LT: And she also send email to dear Tao.

2. MJ

1. Have you always used your Chinese name, or have you ever used an English name?

MJ responded that when she was in secondary school, she used to use the name ‘Catherine’, which was given to her by her English teacher:

MJ: Personally I do not quite like it, so… but I had to adopt it because she is my teacher and she know me and she call me Catherine every time in her class, so…
Interviewer: Was she Chinese?
MJ: Yeah, she’s a Chinese, but she gave all of us an English name. Interviewer: Did you not say, “I want another name”? MJ: No, because… you see, Chinese people always obey the rules, obey the orders. It’s like a order - I’m order… I’m number 11. It’s like a number or something in her class.

However, since senior high school MJ has used her Chinese name, Jing, as her Australian English teacher preferred to call all the students by their Chinese names. The impact this teacher has had on MJ’s views can be observed in her comments, as she states that “it’s good to use my own name” (2:06) and describes how she became familiar with a Western way of address, calling his teacher by his first name.

2. How did you choose your English name?

3. During your stay in the UK, have you always used your Chinese name?

She has used her Chinese name, Jing, throughout her stay in the UK.
4. Why do you think many Chinese people use English names? (knowledge, opinion)

According to MJ, there are various reasons why Chinese people adopt 'English' names. Her comments reflect a view that this practice is led by a willingness to adapt to a different culture and anticipate pronunciation difficulties for Europeans:

I think they want to be more local, they want to be more European, so they all choosing their English name. That's one reason. And I think another reason is for Chinese people, they always consider that our pronunciation of own name is difficult for Europeans.

She also mentions how an interest in European and English culture lies at the root of this phenomenon:

and also Asian students I know has…they like European cultures, especially English culture. They adore English culture, from the films, TV dramas, so they want to be more local. That's why they use English name.

Thus she presents their motivations as being characterised by open-mindedness and consideration for others, instead of an interest in promoting their own self-image as suggested by the other interviewees.

Nonetheless, MJ highlights that the use of 'English' names can lead to some communication difficulties, because many Chinese people choose names which are "a little bit weird for local people" (5:23). For example, she mentions her Chinese friend, 'Vera', whose name often perplexes native-English speakers, who in turn decide to call her by her Chinese name. Her friend does not understand why they would not use her 'English' name. This example illustrates how problems with interpersonal communication could arise from the use of 'English' names, if one is not aware of the cultural references and associations attached to them. In this instance, although MJ has observed that there is a subtle mismatch of expectations between the two parties, she is not able to clearly identify the cause:

I do not know what the local people are thinking, is that because that weird looks Asian face have an English name or?

There may be other factors underlying the issue. Although one can only speculate, it is possible that the problem is caused by a combination of the fact that 'Vera' is an old-fashioned name, and the notorious difficulty Chinese speakers have in pronouncing V. As discussed in Chapter..., names such as these, which cause confusion and misunderstandings, are regarded by many of the participants (both students and native-speaker tutors) to be 'inappropriate' choices.

5. How do you think people would treat you if you used an English name instead of your Chinese one? (opinion)
Regarding the students who adopt 'English' names, MJ highlights that despite their willingness to adapt many of the students do not succeed in becoming integrated in British culture:

6:48
the one who have the kind of intention to choose the English name is to want to be more naturally to be accepted by local people, native-speakers, to regard themselves as one of them. But that's impossible, right?

7:40
native speakers still treat them as, "You're Asian" and "We are English"

As for her own name, MJ has always been aware of the relative ease with which her name could be pronounced by English-speakers. Once again, this touches on a theme highlighted in the first phase of the study, as 'Ease' was an important factor influencing the perception of 'appropriateness', particularly among the Chinese participants. MJ stresses, however, that even if her name had been difficult to pronounce, she would not have adopted an 'English' name:

10:16
But still, I do not have the intention to change. Because I look like a Asian, and I talk like a Asian, I behave like a Asian. Everything I do was a Asian. If I have another name, it's like I have another character.

6. Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again? (experience and behaviours)

7. Do you feel like a different person when you're speaking English to when you're speaking Chinese? (developing a voice)

In response to this question, MJ describes changes to her behaviour and communication style that she experiences when speaking English:

15:50
"When I speak in English, I become much more outgoing or something. When I speak Chinese I'm more reserved, and even though I am reserved others can understand what I mean. But when speaking English I have to explain it in case do not get any confusion about that. But I feel it's good for me, it's easy for me, but I do not know how the others feel about it." (her classmates or students in the Business School)

Moreover, she describes the behaviour of many of the students in the Business School, majority of whom rarely have contact with non-Chinese people:

16:36
For them, they just change place to study. It does not seems like living in the UK.

17:08
They're all using the English name, but they still behave like the same as...when they go shopping, they say "I want this, I want that" and I can see that the sales lady do not feel that pleased, because it's not that polite, right? But it's still the same way in China, so for them it's the same. But for me I feel like a different person.
Thus she positions herself as different from the majority of other students at the University, noting that the changes she has made in her behaviour, in order to adapt to life in the UK, makes her feel like a different person:

18:36
"I will try to explain myself as much more being more accepted, and not getting any confusion, and for me like another person."

18:55
"In the UK, you have to behave like a different way, cos it's polite, it's more acceptable"

20:36
"As long as I living here, I learnt to apologise a lot of times. It's not the same me when I was in China."

Once again, this points at the possibility that this interviewee has begun developing an identity which is associated with the use of her L2, English. There is not enough evidence to clearly identify the various factors affecting this, as more detailed data, focused specifically on this issue is needed. However, it is highly probable that context and one’s willingness to adapt to the norms of the TL group have an important role to play. Moreover, based on the fact that MJ uses her Chinese name, it can be suggested that adopting an ‘English’ name is not essential in this process.

8. What do you think about the article on ‘English’ names adoption by young Chinese in China? (for example the employees in a Shanghai based company)

In response to this question, MJ comments that she can understand how one may choose such names, which are associated with one's interests and positive attributes. However, she also considers them to be inappropriate, highlighting the misunderstandings it could cause between the Chinese people and native-English speakers:

14:22
"I can understand a lot of them using that. Because I do not know where they get fond of that. Because you can understand someone is fascinated by Harry Potter, he will choose the name Slytherine as his name, and it doesn’t sound good. But for him, Slytherine means noble, means mysterious, means the high level, means kind of noble blood, and something pure, so he will continue using Slytherine. It doesn’t mean anything, but to English people just the meaning, like that."

Moreover, to illustrate this point, she cites an example of a friend who lives in America and uses the name, ‘Astroboy’, derived from a Japanese cartoon character. Despite explaining to him how such a name was “weird” and “creepy” and could cause surprise and even offence to others, she failed to persuade him to change his name.

9. What would you do if you found out that your name sounded like something rude in English? Or that it was a man’s name and not a woman’s? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic community, e.g. African?
MJ comments that she would probably continue using the name but explain the meaning of her Chinese name, because her name has very positive associations:

23:35
If I like it, I will continue using it. For example, my name was given by my grandfather. And I worship him, and he's a good man, and he's my hero ever since I was a little girl, so I do not have any intention to change that."

Moreover, she believes that even if her name sounds similar to a rude word in English, there will be subtle differences in pronunciation. She therefore would continue using the name and highlighting the differences whenever necessary.

Upon further reflection, however, she changes her stance and decides that if the connotation is a curse she would choose a name which has a similar pronunciation to her own, but different enough to ensure that the meaning is altered:

b)
MJ: If the name has a meaning of die, or kill or murder, I will change it.
Interviewer: What's the difference between that and…
MJ: Shit or bitch? Like a curse, right? I won't like others call me every time it's cursing me"

Finally, in a similar vein to the comment made by SL (Question 9), MJ suggests that there are some British names which are appropriate yet have a negative connotation, such as Di, which is short for Diana but also a homophone for 'die'.

10. Thinking back at when you first arrived here, how well do you feel you have adapted to life in the UK? (specifically refer to British culture, frequency of English usage, number of British friends, number of international friends, extra-curricular activities.) What do you think helped you the most to adapt to life here?

In response to this question, MJ comments that she has needed to maintain good contact with her Chinese circle while also making English friends. She explains that although it is good to have English friends, she needs to have Chinese people she can rely on for when she faces serious problems, because they can be trusted better, since they are in the same position as her. She also states that "you cannot lose your Chinese friend" (26:06) because they have the same habits and amusements (e.g. going to bars and pubs), which is something she values. However, it appears that maintaining friendships with both Chinese students and students of other nationalities poses many challenges:

24:40
for Chinese people, if you are the person who always surrounded by local people, native…foreigners…English people or…they do not like you.

25:03
They will say that they worship the foreigners, so they feel ashamed for their own culture or something.
These citations highlight a new dimension to the issue of social distance (Schumann, 1976) as there is a direct conflict between the relationship one has with the TL group and with the L1 community.

11. How much do you think your English has improved since you came to the UK?

MJ feels that her pronunciation has improved greatly, and that she has come to understand the many varieties of English and become able to distinguish different accents. One of the fundamental issues underlying her improvement is her enthusiasm for culture:

30:19
I always ask the different of cultures because I’m really interested in that - and that will keep you being enthusiastic to learn another language

12. Would you be interested in living in the UK or outside of China long-term? Why/Why not?

MJ responds that she would like to travel abroad for work or pleasure, but could not imagine living in the UK long-term. The fact that she is the only child also has a bearing on this, as she needs her family and they need her.

31:38
I was born in China, and I grow up in China, and I really like China because… I know it’s a little bit ridiculous to say something like that, but I really do love China.

13. What should I have asked you that I haven’t yet asked?

3. SZ

1. How long have you had your English name? Have you had any others?

SZ has been using the name ‘Selina’ for one year. Before that, she had been called Helen, Julia, Elva and Maggie. Several of the codes devised in the first phase of this study can be applied here, namely ‘Positive association’ and ‘Familiarity’, as SZ chose the name ‘Maggie’ based on a character she knew from a soap opera, and because she thought it sounded sweet. She used this name from ages 17 to 19. She describes her use of ‘English’ name during high school as a “personal hobby” (1:42), as she only used it in the ‘English Corner’, an extra English class she used attended as at the weekend.

2. How did you choose your English name?

The name ‘Selina’ is based on the name of one of her favourite American singers, who is called Selena. She changed the spelling because she thought “too many people know Selena, so I want to make some little different from that girl” (2:39).
3. During your stay in the UK, when have you used your English name and when have you used your Chinese name?

SZ seems to have a very clear division of usage for her Chinese and 'English' names:

3:10
If I want to introduce myself to a foreigner, I want to use my English name, and when I want to make friends with Chinese, I can give my Chinese name, because we are so familiar with Chinese.

The one exception she mentions is that her lecturer, who is a native-English speaker, calls her by her Chinese name. She does not seem to mind this, and although this is different from what she had expected to find in the UK, she finds a way to explain the situation:

4:29
Actually, when I…before I come to the my English teacher ask me to choose a English name, because he told me, When you go to the university, many teacher…teachers would like to call your English name. But when I…when such as Duncan called my Chinese name seemed a little bit weird, but I think, maybe because he is interested in Chinese culture, so he likes calling Chinese name.

The fact that SZ has not expressed her preference to her tutor could also be potentially pointing at underlying power relations. If, for example, Chinese people have the tendency to follow rules and avoid questioning authority, as MJ has suggested in her interview, it is possible to speculate that this has resulted in SZ accepting her lecturer’s use of her Chinese name. Having said this, she does indicate that she has no preference regarding the name used by her lecturer, and nothing in her voice or manner seems to reveal any signs of hidden feelings.

4. Why do you think many Chinese people use English names? (knowledge, opinion)

One of the reasons why people use English names, according to SZ, is to "get involved in the foreign cultures" (5:31), and this is also one of her reasons for using an 'English' name. Similarly to SL, she also comments that the use of an 'English' name has now become "a fashionable trend" (5:45).

5. How do you think people would treat you if you used your Chinese name instead of an English one? (opinion)

In response to this question, SZ commented that if she uses an 'English' name her interlocutors would not be able to guess if she is Chinese, Japanese or Korean. Although she insists that she is proud of her heritage and does not believe Chinese people are treated differently to other foreigners, she would still prefer to avoid revealing her nationality. These comments echo some of the views expressed by SL (Section…Question 5), who states that there is no need to share her name or nationality in written communication, where the lack of visual information would somewhat conceal her ethnicity and nationality. Despite SZ’s insistence, this
preference raises the question of whether the interviewees perceive their nationality to be somewhat hindering or impacting on their interactions with others.

9:17
Treat me as a Chinese. If I use my English name, someone would think I'm a Japanese or Korean maybe. But Chinese name...when I use my Chinese name, she can notice that, oh, I am Chinese."

10:00
I just don't want to tell the foreigners I'm a Chinese.

11:06
No, I use my English name not to cover my nationality, but use English is only a good way to get involved with foreign cultures, but I'm still proud of my Chinese name, because it's my real name in the reality so...yes

6. Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again? (experience and behaviours)

SZ does not expect to change her name again, as 'Selina' has positive associations:

11:57
I'm familiar with it. And I think Selina...our classmate Yulia one day she told me that Selina sound so sweet, so I like this name, so I will keep it.

7. Do you feel like a different person when you're speaking English to when you're speaking Chinese? (developing a voice)

SZ's response to this question suggests that she is beginning to develop a personality associated with English, in other words a voice in her L2. If this is indeed the case, it is interesting to note that it is not necessary to have perfect command of a language in order to begin this process:

12:46
When I use my English name, I think I'm half foreigner and half Chinese.

13:42
When I use my English name to speak English, I think actually I'm become a little confident than before, and I want to show my English to others and to communicate. I think I feel comfortable.

8. What do you think about the article on 'English' names adoption by young Chinese in China? (for example the employees in a Shanghai based company)

SZ believes that such naming practices among Chinese youth in China are a way to "make themself be different" (8:41). However, she strongly opposes the use of such unusual names, favouring more commonly available English names:
SZ: I think it's not a good way to choose these names, because so ridiculous. Because I think, maybe, these people want to be... want to show their difference and want to be special, but I think it's not a good way to respect other people.
Interviewer: No? Oh right. How is it related to respect for other people?
SZ: You can use some normal... not normal but some English names which sounds great or nice and most of the people can... are familiar with. But these names, er... 'Feeling' I think is quite weird.

9. What would you do if you found out that your English name actually had a hidden meaning in English which was very rude? Or that it was a man’s name and not a woman's? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic community, e.g. African? (opinions)

In response to this question, SZ indicates that she would choose another name if she discovered that her name had hidden or undesirable meanings:

14:49
SZ: If it sounds rude, I think I will change it. Because maybe, I am not familiar with the culture before...
Interviewer: Before you chose it?
SZ: Yeah. But if it is really rude for others, I will change it.”

Similarly to the issues raised in the first phase of this study, SZ considers it necessary to avoid using names with negative associations, as well as those which are misleading and could lead to misunderstandings:

15:26
SZ: “because I am not an Indian (laughs), so I don’t want to give the other people the impression that I’m an Indian.
Interviewer: You don’t... yeah, it might be confusing?
SZ: Yeah, confusing. Someone might think I am an Indian.

10. Thinking back at when you first arrived here, how well do you feel you have adapted to life in the UK? (specifically refer to British culture, frequency of English usage, number of British friends, number of international friends, extra-curricular activities.) What do you think helped you the most to adapt to life here?

SZ describes how she has adapted to different cultural norms, such as the shops closing early on Sundays in Britain. Another example she provides is how she has become aware of different expressions of politeness and associated practices, such as thanking drivers when alighting from buses. She explains that this has left her with a deep impression and wishes to adopt similar attitudes in China:

19:11
When I go back to China, I want to show the polite... politeness to others.

During the past year, the main occasions on which she has spoken English have been in shops, classes, house-shares and parties. The majority of her friends are Chinese, and she does not speak in English with them:
SZ: English is our second language, but when we want to express some...something if we use Chinese we can understand...we can totally understand, but English maybe cannot...
Interviewer: Not fully? SZ: Yeah, not fully.

11. How much do you think your English has improved since you came to the UK?

SZ believes that her listening skills have improved, as she is able to understand people most of the time. She attributes this to her open attitude and improved confidence since she arrived in the UK:

16:30
I'm willing to communicate with others, including foreigners or Chinese, but when I was in China, I think I don't have the courage to communicate with others in English.

12. Would you be interested in living in the UK or outside of China long-term? Why/Why not?

As her name selection processes suggest, SZ is very interested in American culture, especially music and films. She expressed a strong wish to travel in America while teaching Chinese, if given the opportunity.

22:00
Because we are young, I want to experience different life, go outside to broaden your view and make friends, and you can bring your own culture to others, introduce your own culture to others, and can enjoy different kind of foods. Yeah, maybe. So I like making friends and like travelling. Really really like travel.

13. What should I have asked you that I haven't yet asked?

3. SL

*Note that she is engaged to be married to a British man soon. The 'boyfriend' she refers to is therefore her fiancé.

Opening comments:

I think it's just individual preference. As we are in a new environment, we may want to use a new name to fit in this kind of society, but some people like to use their real name because maybe it's kind of a sense of belonging, and it will be very...not very funny but very happy if other foreign people around you can call you Chinese name. Because it's in Chinese, so the pronunciation maybe funny but it will makes you find something that
belong to yourself. Some people use English name because...I don't think many people will think lots about if they have to choose an English name or not, just naturally people have English name since they were in China and things, so when they come here they just use their English name because it's more easier for people to call them.

1. How long have you had your English name? Have you had any others?

She has used 'Mira' for more than 10 years. Previously, she had used the name 'Polly', which was given to her English teacher, after a parrot with the same name who figures in a textbook, since Mira liked to talk a lot in class.

2. How did you choose your English name?

SL was given the name 'Mira' by a 'foreigner' she had met at a swimming pool. She had asked him to give her a "proper" name, because she felt that her teacher, who had given her the name 'Polly', "may not be that professional about names, because they're also foreign to the native language, I mean to English" (2:45). She did not research the name and adopted it immediately:

Once I adopt it, I just told others my name is Mira, so it became my name naturally

3. During your stay in the UK, when have you used your English name and when have you used your Chinese name?

3:33
SL: When I use my English name, sometimes...most of times, I use my English name, because like my boyfriend, my friends, some of them are not Chinese speaker, but when I'm with my classmates who are from China, we will use Chinese name. But I think now more people remember my English name rather than Chinese name
Interviewer: Even the Chinese people?
SL: Yeah, even Chinese people, so...because people are more used to use that. Most of time, I use English name.

4:27
The signature still will be Sijia, because it's my real name. And I can't use 'Mira' to prove my identity here. It's not about sense of identity, the kind of belonging or things. It's just because all the official documents are written in Chinese name, so I will need it. Like I'm sending some form to the agency or things, I have to write Sijia, or if just for a random enquiry I will just write Mira.

She would therefore use 'Mira' for informal enquiries such as calling a theatre to ask for available tickets, whereas she would use 'Sijia' for any official contacts such as when applying to buy a house.

4. Why do you think many Chinese people use English names? (knowledge, opinion)
5. How do you think people would treat you if you used your Chinese name instead of an English one? (opinion)

For her, there is a difference between face-to-face contact and email contact. For the former, she says that "they already see I'm a Chinese person", but in written communication she would prefer to use her English name, "because I will find people will respect you more. It's not because you're Chinese because you can use the language quite properly. And they may not know your nationality, so even if they have any discrimination or this, like, to the foreign people, they may not know you are English or from any nationality.

Her comments suggest a certain degree of cautiousness on her part, in order to manipulate the communication with her interlocutors, by deliberately making her nationality ambiguous to avoid being positioned as foreign and specifically Chinese. However, she also take a pragmatic approach in suggesting that "It's not necessary to let the other person know what my nationality or what my name is. Even they see Sijia, they're not necessary to know it's a Chinese or something"

She has always used 'Mira' because it's easy to pronounce. She does not want to cause embarrassment for the other person because they are not able to pronounce her name correctly. On the other hand, if the other person is interested in Chinese culture she would introduce herself using her Chinese name, because the person has "that capability to pronounce your name right"

*She talks about preventing embarrassment for the other speaker, and making it easier for them.

6. Do you expect to keep using your English name when you go back to China? Would you change your name again? (experience and behaviours)

7:59
SL: I won't change it, because I'm already used to it

8:12
SL: In China, we don't have much opportunity to use English name. But if I go back to work in like international company, I will still use 'Mira' as my name" if required by the company.

7. Do you feel like a different person when you're speaking English to when you're speaking Chinese? (developing a voice)

9:17
SL: Sometimes, when I speak English...especially in front of...but not in front of people who are native-speaker, because there will be many grammar mistakes, but compared to people from other countries, maybe speak in front of them maybe I will feel more confident. But if I speak Chinese, of course I will find more confident because there is no barrier of communication and things.

*native-speaker reverence? The ideal self - maybe interfering with her performance
She explains that certain topics, such as issues linked to her studies, are easier to explain in English, perhaps due to the fact that she has acquired the terms and concepts in English:

10:00
Actually now, I'm more used to use English to explain things, because some concepts are difficult to find...to explain in Chinese now, such as professional knowledge she has acquired during her studies.

She also finds it difficult at times to explain daily issues to her mother without using English, which she believes is because she always uses English to communicate with her boyfriend and speaks it more often than Chinese:

11:25
SL: sometimes we will just have small things we can only explain in English

This clearly marks SL as a unique case in comparison to the other interviewees, who report to have very limited contact with native-speakers and opportunities to speak English.

8. What do you think about the article on 'English' names adoption by young Chinese in China? (for example the employees in a Shanghai based company)

14:10
SL: Sometimes, people just choose a name according to their preference, and because they don't know the culture and...maybe still not their real name, still not used most frequent so they don't care much."

15:21
SL: This may be just choose by something they like.

15:44
SL: they just find it unique. I think it's unique, and we don't know the pro...because the proper name are too...can I use too dull? Too boring.

She comments that she finds Mira special because it is not a name often used by Chinese people. Names such as Jack, Tom and Steven, on the other hand, are "so common", and most youths would not be attracted to these names because they are "not like fresh, new and things":

16:37
SL: Because people want to be different, especially our generation - 90s, so we will just think unique.

She proceeds to comment that she would use her 'English' name in China if she were to work either for an international company or educational institutions, as a teacher.

18:43
I think that teachers will choose more proper name, like Eddy or yeah...as far as I know, some of my mates are working as teachers in educational institution but their name is
* As with the discussions in the first phase of the study, SL distinguishes between attitudes towards real (proper) names and nicknames. Perhaps contradicting what she had said earlier about her lack of confidence in her teacher’s ability to choose a proper name.

9. What would you do if you found out that your English name actually had a hidden meaning in English which was very rude? Or that it was a man’s name and not a woman’s? Or that it was a popular name among a particular ethnic community, e.g. African? (opinions)

SL responds that she would be unhappy if her ‘English’ name were associated with something negative, and would change it:

because it’s still not my real name, so I don’t have much… I like my name, but… I don’t know how to say… I won’t mind

Thus she highlights the difference between a real name and an ‘English’ name. However, she also comments that if she discovered this now, after many years of using the name ‘Mira’, she would not change her name because it has become like a real name to her:

I already use it for such a long time, and it’s just a symbol of me, so I won’t…Identity.

Thus she demonstrates how an ‘English’ name could begin as a nickname but one could become more attached to it with use over time.

Citing an example of a native-speaker she knows, whose name is Richard and is referred to as ‘Dick’, she highlights that British people do not seem to express surprise at the use of such names with obvious connotations. As her friend is not concerned by such meanings associated with her name, SL concludes that it is a matter of individual preference:

It’s just up to person individually, I think.

10. Thinking back at when you first arrived here, how well do you feel you have adapted to life in the UK? (specifically refer to British culture, frequency of English usage, number of British friends, number of international friends, extra-curricular activities.) What do you think helped you the most to adapt to life here?

SL believes she adapted to life in the UK quickly, and this was helped by her personality and experience of having lived alone in China before arriving in the UK:
I'm quite used to settle quite quick because maybe I'm more independent and I like to embrace different culture.

I learnt to do everything independently, so after I come here I just feel it's the same.

However, she explains that despite having lived in the UK for two years, her friends are mainly international, and apart from her boyfriend she has no close British friends. She wonders if this is because English people “like to keep a distance” (25:44).

11. How much do you think your English has improved since you came to the UK?

She responds that she has learnt some idioms, slang, and local Yorkshire expressions, and feels her speaking ability has improved, as even if she does not use correct grammatical forms she is able to make herself understood.

She would like to improve further, and comments:

Actually, I quite like English, this language. I'm very happy when I'm using it. I just made a joke to my boyfriend - I said, "Oh now I'm going to stay here so I can speak English every day." But sometimes we will quarrel I will say, "Why can't you speak Chinese? I don't want to speak in English!

12. Would you be interested in living in the UK or outside of China long-term? Why/Why not?

Actually, to me I still want to go back to China. It's not because I like it there very much. It's because my family are all there, and it's a root. And to me, no matter how long I am staying here, I will still feel that I'm an alien. Now, this kind of feeling is stronger because if you need to do something, they will say...they won't say you're Chinese, or something, but the way they treat you is still different.

*She feels that she will always be an outsider (social distance - Schumann)*

One example of such differences in treatment she describes is when using a taxi service in [name of city]. According to SL, in many instances, if the employees at the company has difficulty understanding the caller or recognising the street name, they would simply end the call. She attributes this treatment not only to language-related difficulties but also the fact that she is an outsider:

maybe they can just tell from you accent that you are not native or you are not local.

She acknowledges, however, that this may be a false impression, influenced by her sense of being a foreigner in the country:
maybe it’s because I found myself still not belong to here, so I can have this kind of sensitive feeling. Maybe they’re not, but it’s just my feeling.

She gives another example, in which she describes the different attitudes of the employees in bars, which she explains is due to the fact that Chinese people are hesitant, whereas English people know what they will order:

21:53
maybe because we’re different so they treat us different

These examples serve to illustrate how SL, despite being relatively well-integrated into British culture, compared to her peers from the MA course, she “still cannot find the sense of belonging” (32:05).

13. What should I have asked you that I haven’t yet asked?

In this final part, SL described a discussion she had recently had with her boyfriend about whether or not she would like to change her surname when she is married. As it is not common to use one’s surname when introducing oneself in China, her response was:

33:00
I said, definitely not. If I say I’m Sijia Bouldrey they will think you are insane. You can just say you’re Lu Sijia

Although she believes she would change her name if she were to stay in the UK for a long period, because “it’s more recognised and it’s more kind of culture thing” (33:52), she intends to continue using her Chinese name in China. Her reasoning here is that her Chinese name would be more understandable for Chinese people.

In terms of her Chinese name, on the other hand, she does not insist on non-Chinese people pronouncing her name correctly, because she recognises that it is very difficult for them. Instead, if she uses her Chinese name in the UK she uses an anglicised pronunciation.

* thinking of how to make it easier for the speaker - not just for the native-speaker, but also to the Chinese - therefore showing that this is not a simple matter of power imbalance between native-speaker and learner.
Appendix G - Example names provided by participants

Figure 2

Group A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate</th>
<th>Inappropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laura, Steven, Catherine, James, Michael, Michelle, Eva, Justin, Mary,</td>
<td>Lion, King, Ice, Candy, Sweetie, Astroboy,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa, Garfield, Alex(ander), Edward, Lilly, Ali, Amy, Lillian, Mike,</td>
<td>Ironman, Captain, Queen, Emperor, Empress, Doggy,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria, Edward, Sarah, Anna, Nicola, Nicolas, Alex, Bill, Jack, Geoff,</td>
<td>Piggy, Fisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate</th>
<th>Inappropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George, Tom, John, Paul, April, June, May, Poppy, Daisy, Lilly</td>
<td>Adolph, Candy, Stalin, December, January, brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>names/objects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H - List of names in order of 'appropriateness'

Figure 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Member initials</th>
<th>GROUP A (Chinese students)</th>
<th>GROUP B (Native-English tutors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG &amp; SL</td>
<td>RX &amp; MJ</td>
<td>TL &amp; LC</td>
<td>HS &amp; AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>Harry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>Roger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dollar</td>
<td>Echo</td>
<td>Happi ness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pooh</td>
<td>Happi ness</td>
<td>Echo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Echo</td>
<td>Poppy</td>
<td>Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Poppy</td>
<td>Tower</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tower</td>
<td>Dollar</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Happi ness</td>
<td>Pooh</td>
<td>Pooh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Poppy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 'Happiness' is found between 3rd and 7th place, although it is also found twice at 9th place.
- 'Pooh' is found mainly in 9th and 10th place. However, Pairs 1, 4 and place it between 4th and 6th.
- 'Dollar' is interesting as it is considered by the majority as moderately inappropriate, at 6th to 8th place, it can also be found in 3rd, 4th and 10th places.
- 'Tower' mainly occupies the space between 6th and 8th, indicating that it is generally considered a little inappropriate but not the worst. One participant, MJ, does however place it at 4th, explaining that she knows a (Chinese) person with this name.
'Roger' is unanimously considered to be appropriate, and feature exclusively in 1st and 2nd places, except in the case of Pair 5, who placed it below 'Sunny' at 4th place.

'Harry', similarly, occupies 1st to 3rd place.

In the majority of cases, 'Sunny' is found at 3rd and 4th places. However, it is also found at 1st, 5th and 7th places.

In the case of 'Poppy', there is a wide divergence between the choices made by Groups A and B, as it is found in 6th to 10th place in the former but in 2nd and 3rd place in the case of the latter.

'Echo' occupies 4th to 7th place, reflecting comments which suggest that while it is somewhat unusual it does not cause any offence and is therefore neutral.

'B' is found mainly at 9th and 10th place, but also at 8th.